

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume VI

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the DEFENDER

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

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WHICH BIBLE?

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Solomon said, "Of making many books there is no end." (Eccles.12:12). His words could very well be applied to the proliferation of translations, versions, and paraphrases of the Bible that keep flooding the market today. There are literally scores of such "Bibles" available and every year sees two or three more to add to the confusion. Denominationalists have long preached, "Join the church of your choice." If one cannot find his theories, hobbies, and "pet" interpretations in one "Bible" he can keep on looking and very likely will find them in another. If not, then he has only to wait and sooner or later, a "Bible" will come out that teaches what he wants it to.

There are some dangers and many problems in the flood of new "Bibles" that keep coming from the press. One is the resultant confusion. There was a time when one could quote a verse or cite a passage and everyone knew what he was talking about. No longer is this so. The wording is so different in some of the modern speech versions that it is nearly impossible to conduct a class where students have four or five variant versions. Try

refuting the false doctrine of original sin when some of your students have the "Living Bible" or worse still, teach against "faith only" in conversion or the unscripturalness of instrumental music in Christian worship when some of your hearers have an "Amplified Bible" and you will quickly see that this is so. Another danger is the fact that the real text of the Bible can be lost to the common man in all of the loose paraphrasing, twisting, and changing that is being done in some modern translations. Perhaps the greatest danger of all is that people will simply miss the true meaning of many Scripture texts because the translator (?) has said what he thinks the inspired writer meant rather than simply translating it and leaving the reader to interpret for himself. In this way Satan has won a great victory for people are deceived into following what they believe is the Word of God when, in reality, it is the word of men.

We believe that there are some values in some of the modern versions. In a few of them, the simple wording is helpful. However, this has been greatly over-rated by many.

(Continued on page 4)

A Solution To The Problem

WILLIAM S. CLINE
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The first twenty-five days of nineteen-hundred and seventy seven have not shown any improvement as far as the problems in the church go. On every hand there is the constant reminder that the church is facing the biggest battle of its existence since the restoration movement. It is this writer's conviction that when lines are finally drawn between those that are determined to follow the BOOK and those that are equally determined to not follow it, the division is going to be one that will leave the "Bible bound" believers in the very small minority. There are knowledgeable brethren that say the number will be between 10 and 25 per cent. We would hope that such would never have to happen, and that if such does, it will not see such a large number of the churches going apostate; but from what we see we are afraid that the above is much too close to the way things really are.

We hear a lot about "great things for the Lord." In bulletins and conversations it is "great this" and "great that." Now we would be careful not to put on the robes of pessimism, and to be sure that there are some wonderful things being done for the cause of Christ. But when we go into a city and hear of how "great" things are with everyone and every congregation, and yet within a few days hear of several perplexing problems involv-

ing everything from "Childrens Worship" to "girls leading prayer in devotionals in the presence of male Christians" we can't help but raise an eyebrow at all of the swelling words of "great things for the Lord." I'm reminded of the beloved and departed brother Gus Nichols who said that some brethren never could see what was actually going on and that they were always smoothing things over. He said that to some of our brethren it was just, "Good God, good devil, good heaven and good hell." As I think about it now, more than a year since his passing, I believe brother Nichols had a lot of brethren pretty well figured out.

It is rather baffling to the mind to think of the things that are actually going on in the church today. Just here I am prone to let my mind wander, touching a few incidents for the sake of illustration. Perhaps next month I can take the space to be quite specific concerning these and other matters. I have been preaching the gospel for fifteen years, and it is shocking to note some of the changes that have taken place during that time. For example, I was recently in a meeting where a "Youth minister" from another congregation visited the services. He had a sport shirt on, open almost to his waist (no undershirt), hair down to his shoulder blades, blue jeans, beads

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and sandals. He proudly announced his position and offered his services for participation in the public worship! Fifteen years ago I would have had to have gone to the county fair and paid hard-earned money to see such in a side show, but today one can see it in the church and that even among the leaders. In another area I was greeted with an advertisement of some courses that were being sponsored by some area denominations. Among those churches was the church of Christ. Among the teachers were Lutherans and Roman Catholics. The advertisement was printed by the local church of Christ and they listed themselves as a sponsor of said event. In another city I was shown several bulletins and letters from an individual who does not believe that one can say one is condemned if he refuses to be baptized. In a long line of material this individual asserted several things such as the statement that water baptism is in no way hinted at in John 3:3-5 to the statement that the only way the Bible authorizes is by direct command. The elders who oversee this man's teaching see nothing wrong with it, and as a matter of fact some of his material to which I refer has been mimeographed and given to other congregations and they, too, see nothing wrong with it!

In another area brethren are on record (legal, court record if it should make any difference) that they believe women can have an equal part with men in the governing of the church where there are no elders. They also asserted among other things, that it is not in keeping with the New Testament to withdraw fellowship from unfaithful members of the church. This matter gets even worse when brethren in the area who have had a history of being faithful to the Bible endorsed the above and have even assisted them in their error. In yet another area there is a congregation that speaks of their "puppet ministry" (composed of both men and women) teaching an adult audience of men and women. You see, we are now learning that it is alright for a woman to get

into the pulpit on Monday, Wednesday, Sunday or whatever day you please and teach both men and women as long as she has a puppet on her hand. And mark these words! These brethren will hold on to these "puppet ministries" and other such things, because they are their pet projects, even if such is not scriptural and becomes an instrument of division in the church.

The above is only a small sampling of what is going on in the church of our Lord. I've not even mentioned the problems which relate to false doctrine regarding the Holy Spirit as well as other areas such as even denying the inspiration of the Bible. Fifteen years ago these things were not to be named among brethren, and not because they had not been thought of. Women preachers, puppets and false doctrines were as much a part of the scene a decade and a half ago as they are today. The difference then was that brethren were wedded to the Book and were not moved by every fanciful idea and denominational frill that came along.

The problem of digression is apparent. The important question is, "What can we do about it?" Quite naturally all those who stray from the "Old Paths" should be corrected, reproved, properly taught, warned and, if they do not repent, they must be marked! But in addition to that we need to be concerned with the prevention as well as the cure. The place to begin, if we are going to save this generation for the church is on the local level in the home, in the classroom, in the pulpit and in the church publications. We are going to have to divorce ourselves from philosophy, sociology, and denominationalology and wed ourselves to Bibleology. WE MUST PREACH THE WORD. There is no substitute for it. Nothing, no matter how good and dynamic it is, even comes a close second. This is God's way -- indoctrination. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and be impressed with the fact that God demanded that Israel know His word. And brethren, when we know the word we will not be

destroyed for the lack of knowledge. False doctrines and unscriptural ideas will not find their way into the church that knows the Book, for the Bible informed will not allow such to happen. There can be no substitute for a Bible-filled people, and one of our big problems is that we have been waging the biggest warfare of our life with substitute

soldiers.

Brother J. D. Tant used to close his articles and newsletters with the phrase, "Brethren, we're drifting." We have lived to see his words ring loud and true in our ears, and on this day I can think of no better way to close than by saying, "Brethren, we've drifted." Preach the word!

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WHICH BIBLE?

Some of the new versions are much more difficult to understand than the King James Version! One needs only to compare a few passages in the New English Bible with the same renderings in the KJV and he will see that this is so. One of the great strong points of the King James Version that has made it the Bible of the common man for three centuries is the simplicity of its speech. To the oft repeated charge that the KJV contains archaic words, it needs to be pointed out that of the tens of thousands of words in it, less than 300 have changed meaning drastically enough to require definition today. The average reader of the New English Bible will find himself going to his dictionary far more often than the KJV reader. There are weaknesses and strengths in all translations and there may be some passages better worded in a newer version but after much study and comparison of versions, I am persuaded that they are few and far between. One much used defence of the newer versions is that, due to the findings of more recent manuscripts, they are built upon better textual evidence and thus are more accurate. While it is true that many manuscripts have been found since the KJV was completed in 1611, one does not have to have a modern version to get the benefit of them. The translators of the very accurate and reliable American Standard Version of 1901 were able to take advantage of all the major manuscript "finds" since 1611.

What should be one's attitude toward the modern versions? First of necessity, one must be generally acquainted with them. Since so many people have them today, the personal worker or preacher will constantly confront them and must be prepared to show the errors in them and to counsel with those who use them. Second, one needs to be able to distinguish among them. While not giving wholehearted endorsement to the New American Standard Bible, I would certainly not put it in a class with the "Living Bible" or "Today's English Version." Third, one needs to understand that a translation is not good simply because it is old or bad, because it is new (the converse of this is also true) and that there is nothing objectionable about a new translation provided it is an accurate translation!

"Should I change versions?" Many times gospel preachers are asked this question. The answer depends upon what version you have been using. If you grew up with the King James and have done most of your study and memorizing from it, there is no reason why you should change. The KJV is overall an excellent translation. It is still by far the most popular English Bible in the world. Doubtless it will still be around for generations after its present day critics have all passed away. If you have not yet settled upon a good study Bible, or wish to make a change to a more reliable translation than one you may have

been using, then an excellent choice would be the American Standard Version (1901 translation which is a combined effort of 101 British and American scholars representing many different religious backgrounds; it is not to be confused with the New American Standard Version which is a different version put out by the Lockman Foundation of California). The ASV has often been called the "rock of Biblical honesty" so careful and so accurate is its rendering of the original text into English. In fact, the most frequently offered criticism of the American Standard Version is, in actuality, its greatest compliment. It is said that "It doesn't read smoothly because it is translated so literally." Surely, any conscientious student of God's Word would much rather have the actual meaning of the original brought for him than to have a smoother rendering but one which is put in the translator's own words and thus may be colored by his theology. If the

earnest student of God's Word has not had the opportunity to study the original languages of the Bible, he will want to get as close to them as he can. The literalness of the ASV makes this possible. If one does not choose to use the American Standard Version as his main study Bible, he still needs a copy of it for frequent reference.

There is a bewildering mass of "Bibles" available today. More and more new "Bibles" will continue to be added to this mass as long as sincere but gullible people, seeking a short cut to Bible knowledge, will purchase them. The thoughtful student of God's Word will not allow himself to be "tossed to and fro" by every new "Bible" that comes out but will settle on a reliable, proven, and time-tested translation such as the King James Version or the American Standard Version and will expend his energy on mastering and applying its Divine teachings.

"CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH"

LECTURESHIP MAY 8-12

This lectureship will center around debating and the defense of the faith. Such men as Franklin Camp, Rex Turner, Roy Deaver, Thomas Warren, W. L. Totty and a host of others will be speakers on this Third Annual Bellview Preacher Training School Lectureship. As before, every speaker on this lectureship is unquestioned in his Biblical soundness and his ability in the scriptures. You can attend the Bellview Preacher Training School Lectureship with confidence that everything you hear will be truth.

Special arrangements have been made with the Rodeway Inn located at Exit #2 on Interstate 10 and all lectureship guests who stay there will receive special rates.

We hope to have a complete list of speakers and subjects by next month's DEFENDER but make your plans now to attend!!

Returning From The Dead

RAY HAWK

Pensacola, Florida

In the January, 1977 issue of the Reader's Digest, the book section contains an essay on the experiences of people who were pronounced clinically dead but later revived. The author of the story gave several statements from interviews he had taken from people who had "returned from the dead":

The experiences of these people were parallel in most cases, according to the author, regardless of their educational, religious, or racial background. Most heard a high pitched sound or bells ringing. They felt as though they were passing through a dark tunnel or cave. This reminded some, who knew the Bible, of "the valley of the shadow of death" (Ps.23:4). They were then able to see their body and those who were frantically working on it to restore life. They felt they were floating and that when contacted by a nurse or doctor, that person passed through them. They felt alone until they found themselves surrounded by friends and loved ones who had passed away prior to their sickness. These spirits came to help them. They also felt the nearness and spoke with a being surrounded by light. They said they felt great peace and love in His presence. When they were told they could not remain but had to return to their body, they did not want to go. The next thing they remembered was waking up in the hospital.

Some Christians have read this story and are asking questions about it. Are these stories true? What does the Bible teach on this subject?

First, the Bible shows where the person goes who does not obey

the scriptures. The rich man "in hades...lifted up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke 16:23). How can atheists, Jews, and others have identical, pleasant experiences as those who claim to be Christians? The Bible clearly shows a distinct separation of the Christian from all others. Cf. Matt.25:46; Luke 16:19-26. In the case of Lazarus we find he went to "Abraham's bosom," (Luke 16:23). As for the rich man, he "died, and was buried. And in hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke 16:22,23). Abraham told the rich man, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish" (Luke 16:25). The Reader's Digest has all, regardless of religious affiliation, having the same experience. I'll take the Bible account for it is inspired.

Second, does Jehovah allow uninspired, nonbelievers and sectarians to reveal what He told an inspired apostle was unlawful to utter? Paul stated, "How that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor.12:4). Jesus did not reveal his experiences of death, (Acts 2:31). God has revealed what He wants revealed.

I do not know why the individuals in the Reader's Digest article had similar experiences. They were not dead in the Biblical sense for they could not have been revived except by a miracle. I cannot explain the workings of human minds, but I do know what God has revealed and I will stand upon that.

CORRECTION: Due to a misunderstanding, an error appeared in the article, "A Statement of Clarification." I stated that brother Alonzo Welch delivered a paper at the White's Ferry Road School. This is not so. The paper was delivered at a Monthly Preacher's Meeting in West Monroe, Louisiana. An official of the school informed me that the school rejects the position of girls praying in the presence of men in chain prayers as much as we do. In that preacher's meeting, brother Welch received "sharp criticism" on his paper. I apologize for the mix-up and hope all who read the article will recognize where the paper was delivered.

-Ray Hawk

THE GREAT COMMISSION IS BINDING UPON EVERY CHRISTIAN

"Go ye unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15

BILL COSS

Warren, Michigan

It is God's purpose to save the world through the gospel of His Son. The task of executing that purpose has been entrusted to His church on earth - the divine presence and co-working being always understood. Therefore the supreme duty of the church is world-wide conquest in the name of the Lord. To aim at anything short of this would be disobedience to her Great Captain. To refuse participation in the efforts directed to this end would be to be unworthy a place in His mighty army.

The New Testament knows of only two classes: those who go, and those who send.

The whole body of believers is to have fellowship in this work. If any stands aloof and gives no aid or comfort he may doubt, and with good reasons, whether he has the spirit of Christ: if he has not, he is none of his.

"And he said unto them, 'Go ye unto all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature...' These sayings of Jesus leave us in no doubt as to the extend of the work.

While repentance and remission

of sins were to be preached in His name to all the nations, the beginning was made in Jerusalem. Just before His ascension our Lord said to His apostles, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The whole world must be evangelized. This is God's purpose, and His purpose cannot be defeated. Those at home are to hear the truth: the gospel must be carried into the slums and into homes and palaces of our great cities, unto the towns and villages, and into the highways and hedges. Our whole population must be brought under its influence. But when we have done that, we must not think we have done our whole duty.

The evangelization of the world finds a large place in the Word of God. In Genesis we have the promise of a Redeemer; in Revelation we see the redeemed out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.

This is the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham. "In thy seed shall all the families of the

earth be blessed."

Christianity is a victorious faith. It pressed on like a bannered army from conquering to conquer. The first sermon led to 3,000 conversions. Soon after, the number of men was 5,000. A little later believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Again we are told that the disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly, and a great company of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Every Christian was a missionary; every church was a rallying and a radiating center. The whole body of believers was engaged in a deadly conflict with the powers of evil and with the faiths of paganism. Like their Lord and His apostles, they had no doubt whatever as to the ultimate and universal triumph of the gospel.

We today need to learn things that can be learned only through carrying the gospel to others... When we neglect this, we stunt our spiritual growth.

This is a part of Christ's training program for His church. He has always done His greatest work through small and inadequate human forces - in order that men might know that the power is of God and not of men.

Surely, if God so loved the world that He gave His Son, and if Christ so loved the world that He gave His LIFE, it should not be too much to ask that the churches of Christ so love the world as to give themselves to the fulfillment of the Great Commission -- men's only hope for eternity.

The gospel is for all men. Those who have it hold it in trust for those who have it not. Those who would keep it to themselves err,

not knowing the Scriptures, nor the gracious intention of our God.

The real reasons we have not evangelized this world are 1) we have never convinced ourselves that the world is lost without the gospel, and 2) we have never convinced ourselves that we are lost if we don't take it to the world.

One may go across the sea and another go across the street, but every one of us must go with the gospel if we would go to heaven.

How wonderful it would be if every Christian would not just be a convert, but a converter!

And we will never be able to hire someone to do our share of preaching. If you could hire some professional preacher to do your preaching for you, you could hire someone to go to church for you. You could hire someone to be honest for you. In short, you could hire your way into heaven. The idea that you can put an extra dollar in the collection plate and hire someone to preach the gospel for you does not come from the Bible. Every child of God has the personal responsibility to preach the gospel to the extent of his own capacity and opportunity. That responsibility cannot be shifted to another.

It is certainly a misconception that the responsibility for preaching the gospel lies only upon those workers who are paid for it. There is not one among us upon whom the Great Commission lies with greater weight than it lies upon you yourself.

The harvest of souls is thrilling. The man who has never had the experience of being a part of bringing a soul to harvest by God's Word has missed one of the most precious experiences of life.

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THE HERESY OF LIBERALISM (No. 3)

THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM

TOM L. BRIGHT
McAllen, Texas

The subject of baptism has long been and will continue to be a controversial issue. For many decades it has been a topic of much discussion between members of the Lord's church and those of various denominations. Needless to say, baptism has been the subject of many religious debates down through the years, that is, it was until the church became so sophisticated to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). To pacify those who were more concerned in quantity than quality, various basic, fundamental precepts of the New Testament scriptures were "watered down" so that we would not "rock the boat" (please understand that I am speaking in general terms; there were many, many faithful Christians who still had a love for the preaching of the pure gospel of Christ). The Bible teaching of baptism was one of these basic precepts that was "watered down". Need we remind anyone that when the truth of any Bible subject is not taught, error is the natural consequence? In years past, we have failed to emphasize the truth concerning baptism; error is now being taught

because of that failure.

It is now being advocated by some, that when any person believes in Christ and is baptized upon the basis of that belief, this person is to be accepted as a faithful brother (or sister) in Christ. This sounds good when we first hear it. But when we allow these liberals to continue their explanation, we readily see that they believe that it makes no difference whether a person is baptized "in order to" the remission of sins or "because of" the remission of sins. In other words, if one is taught that he is saved at the point of faith i.e., that at the instant that he accepts Jesus into his heart as his personal saviour he is saved from past sins, and that he can be baptized at a time in the future, sometimes many days, he is to be accepted as a brother in Christ. Even though this person is taught that baptism is not a condition of salvation, but is merely an ordinance of the church that brings one into full fellowship with that particular denomination, the contention is that this person has been baptized to obey the Lord,
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"GOD IS NOT MOCKED"

ERNEST S. UNDERWOOD
Gainesville, Florida

When God had finished His wonderful work of creation He instructed every living thing to bring forth after its own kind. This unalterable law stands today as firmly as it did on the very first day it was spoken.

When the farmer desires to have a bountiful harvest of corn he does not sow his fields with turnip seeds. He knows that in order to harvest corn, he must first plant corn.

When the rancher desires to increase his herd of fine cattle he does not bring together a hog and a heifer. To suggest such to him would be sheer folly. He knows that only cows produce cows. In both cases God's law in the natural realm has been observed.

However, if the farmer could sow turnip seed and reap from it the corn, or if the rancher could take the hog and from it produce the cow, then God and His law would have been mocked. This cannot happen. Paul makes a spiritual application to this physical law when he states, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." (Gal. 6:7-8). Now, let us

apply this to some situations which exist in the church today.

Every local church which seeks to please God practices discipline. Many are the passages of Scripture wherein the divine command is given to exercise discipline upon the unruly, the disorderly, and the law breaker. The expressed purpose of this discipline is to keep the church pure by removing the evil influence or leaven, to save the offender by bringing him to repentance, and to cause the faithful to continue to have fear and respect for God's law. If, therefore, a congregation can refuse to practice discipline, allowing and condoning the drinker, social or otherwise, tolerating the fornicator, smiling upon immodesty and immorality, and ignoring the disorderly and false teacher, and still be a pure church, then GOD HAS BEEN MOCKED! Yet He says that He will not, and cannot be mocked. Since then the Scriptures plainly teach that the above mentioned things are sinful, and since God says that such persons who practice those things must be disciplined if the church is to be pleasing to Him, it is obvious that a church which condones and/or allows such practices and actions to go undisciplined is not a pure church, and one that is not pleasing to God. "GOD IS NOT MOCKED."

Then there are times when a

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faithful congregation adheres to God's law of discipline. In holy concern for the purity of the church, and the salvation to the offender they exhaust every means in an attempt to bring the sinner to repentance. Finally, when all efforts to restore have failed an announcement of intent of fellowship withdrawal is made. The guilty is notified that if by a given date he has not taken proper Scriptural action for forgiveness of his sins that the fellowship of the congregation will no longer be extended to him. In such cases many times the sinner will wait until the last moment then come in feigned repentance only to go his way with absolutely no fruit whatsoever of true repentance. Sometimes he may not come personally but send a letter stating his repentance. All too often he lives only a few short blocks from the meetinghouse. He sends his letter and then "jumps" to another congregation. Is such acceptable to God? Does not the very action and evidence betray the fact that no true repentance was present? Again, it should be remembered that even if man can be deceived, "GOD IS NOT MOCKED."

Let us notice another example of this same type of thing except on a larger scale.

Because of certain unscriptural practices and teachings on the part of one congregation, a second congregation can no longer extend its fellowship to them. The offending church not only has activities and doctrines which are unscriptural, but in some of these activities they invite and obtain speakers who are known enemies of the Truth to participate with them in such activities. These speakers are encouraged to wield their influence on the lives and minds of many young people. Other speakers are obtained who, though not being known for being as radical or liberal in their thinking, give their whole-hearted endorsement to both those who are such, and to those who invite them. When the offending church refuses to repent of their actions the faithful church has no

alternative but to withdraw their fellowship.

After a considerable lapse of time the guilty party recognizes and admits its guilt. A meeting is called between the leadership of both the faithful and the unfaithful congregations. Several other concerned brethren are also present. In the meeting the offending group admits guilt and asks for forgiveness. They further state that they "plan to do everything humanly possible to avoid using any man who teaches false doctrine." One of their previous speakers had taught the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in lives today, had ridiculed to the young people their home congregation, and had manifested such a flippant attitude toward God's word as to indicate disrespect for it. Yet, in spite of their statement this same man was invited to be one of the speakers on another "seminar". To this very day there has been no evidence of any repentance on the part of the one who taught the false doctrine. Is this true repentance on the offending congregation's part?

A second speaker who was also re-invited is a well-known Mississippi based preacher and Orphan Home director. In the first "seminar" where so much false doctrine was taught and practiced, and which was the final factor which caused the faithful church to withdraw its fellowship, this speaker gave his whole-hearted endorsement to the false doctrines and practices engaged in and taught. To this very hour this well-known preacher has given no indication of repentance for his giving of "God speed" to the false doctrines and practices. Indicative of his lack of repentance is his attitude as stated by him in a recent meeting in Tennessee. In this meeting this man publicly stated that before he would discontinue the practice of allowing the girls in the Home to lead prayers in the presence of the boys in their devotionals that he would sell the whole thing to the Adventists. Isn't that a lovely spirit to manifest concerning a practice for which

there is not the slightest hint of authority in the Scriptures? Yet, this man appeared on another "seminar" sponsored by the aforementioned offending congregation. It matters not whether either speaker taught error in the second "seminar". They have not repented of the first, yet were still invited.

Again, the question can be raised, "Are such actions indicative of true repentance on the part of the offending congregation?" Was there an attempt to deceive and mock the concerned brethren who met to bring about reconciliation? Was such meeting truly the "Brotherhood's Finest Hour", or could it be justly entitled, "The Night It 'Snowed' In Gainesville." Was the meeting truly in the spirit of Romans 14 or

was it more likely in the spirit of 2 Peter 2:3?

If one can repent of stealing and continue to steal, if one can repent of adultery and continue to live in the state of adultery, if one can repent of teaching false doctrine but continue to teach and practice such, then perhaps one could conclude that repentance rather than mockery had taken place. Let the reader judge!

In any case it should be constantly remembered that one may deceive himself, he may deceive his fellowman, and he may deceive a large number of his brethren, however, "GOD IS NOT MOCKED: FOR WHATSOEVER A MAN SOWETH, THAT SHALL HE ALSO REAP."

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THE HERESY OF LIBERALISM (No. 3)

thus he is to be looked upon as a brother in Christ.

Furthermore, the concept of one being baptized with a "Baptist" baptism or any other denominational baptism is immediately rejected and openly scorned. Of course, the promoters of this false teaching will confidently state that they have brothers in all denominations.

This false teaching about baptism is just another in a long list of false theories presented by these liberals to promote open and unrestrained fellowship with all who profess a belief in Christ. To substantiate their liberalistic philosophy, of necessity they had to face the question of baptism "for" "in order to" "with a view to" the remission of one's sins. Indeed, they had to answer the question whether baptism was a condition of salvation, was baptism essential to one's salvation, was baptism "in order to" the remission of sins?

To contend as faithful brethren have for many years, even upon the platform of polemics, that baptism

is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL for the remission of an alien's sins, they would have to give up their false theory regarding unrestrained fellowship, or they would have to give up the truth with reference to baptism to continue their departure from the truth. They faced a dilemma par excellent! One was incompatible with the other. To hold to one, they would have to give up the other; or so logic would demand. They did neither! They compromised the truth! They came up with the fanciful notion that one should be baptized but that there is no real design or purpose for baptism. Just so you are baptized.

Time and space would not permit me to concern myself with every single false statement that they have penned with reference to this subject. The end result would be a book. But the seriousness of this erroneous teaching necessitates us to assigning ourselves to the task of showing that the Bible does show that there is a design for baptism and that the Bible does show that there must be a certain understanding of the one who is baptized.

One thought that seems to be a

real point of contention with some of these liberals is the idea of re-baptizing those who feel that they did not know what they were doing. Every instance of this with which I have been involved, without exception, concerned those who had been "baptized" at an early age of eight or ten (usually at the high-pressure or scare tactics of some preacher wanting to make a name for himself) and not having any idea as to the purpose of their baptism. Others have expressed to me the reason for their baptism was that they might please their parents or grandparents. Still yet, others have given as a reason for their baptism was that their young friends were doing it and it seemed to be the thing to do. Now, do we think that such reasoning is acceptable to God? We pose this question to these liberals, if a person came to you and stated that at an early age, they had been baptized merely to please their parents and had in later years begun to doubt whether God accepted this or not, what would you tell them? We can only guess at some of the answers that one might hear!

The contention that one cannot be baptized for the wrong purpose (design) borders on utter irresponsibility and is akin to absurdity. Even though this coterie of false teachers would not want to allow us to use the example in Acts 19:1-5, this passage shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that a person can honestly believe the teaching of that which is not acceptable to the Lord, can act upon that false teaching (with all sincerity) and still not be accepted to the Lord.

In Acts 18:18ff, Paul, Priscilla and Aquila leave Corinth and sail to Ephesus. Soon Paul leaves Priscilla and Aquila at Ephesus and sailed towards Jerusalem. During the time that he left Ephesus and the time that he returned, a man by the name of Apollos came to Ephesus. The Bible says that he was an eloquent man and mighty in the scriptures; he was instructed in the way of the Lord and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught

diligently the things of the Lord. But there was one thing wrong, Apollos knew (thus he preached) only the baptism of John. Luke informs us that Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and expounded unto him the way of the Lord more perfectly.

In Acts 19:1ff., Luke records the return of Paul to the city of Ephesus. Upon his arrival, he finds certain disciples and begins to question them as to whether they had received the Holy Ghost since they had believed. Their answer was, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." Paul understood that something was wrong and then posed the question, "Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." Paul then taught them what John's baptism was for, that is, that it pointed forward to the Christ. When they heard that, "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Let us look briefly at John's baptism. I am thoroughly convinced that those who were baptized with John's baptism BEFORE THE CROSS did not have to be re-immersed on the day of Pentecost or times thereafter. John's baptism was "for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4). If then, John's baptism was "for the remission of sins," when did those who submitted to it receive the remission of their sins? If it was before Christ shed His precious blood, what cleansed them from their sins? It couldn't have been the blood of bulls and goats under the law of Moses (Heb. 10:4). So what was it that cleansed their sins? There is only one thing that could have cleansed their sins and that was the blood of Christ. Paul explained this in Acts 19:4. John's baptism pointed people to Christ. "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." What remitted their sins and when? The precious blood of Christ, when it was shed on the cross.

John's baptism had a specified purpose. To point the people to

Memphis School of Preaching

4400 Knight Arnold Road
Memphis, Tennessee 38118

LECTURESHIP

MONDAY, MARCH 28

8:30 - 9:20 Keith Mosher: "God's Message That Never Changes, Ps. 119:89"
9:30 - 10:20 Gary Colley: "The Gospel of Jesus Christ, The Hope of Glory"
9:30 - 10:20 Ladies, to be assigned
10:30 - 11:20 Robert R. Taylor: "Studies in First Timothy"
11:30 - 1:10 INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH
1:10 - 2:00 Johnny Polk: "Perversions of the New Versions"
2:10 - 3:00 W. N. Jackson: "The Gospel - the Faith Once Delivered"
3:10 - 4:00 Charles W. Leonard: "What the Bible Does for Man"
4:00 - 7:15 INTERMISSION FOR DINNER
7:15 - 7:30 Congregational Singing - Led by Danny Joiner
7:30 - 8:00 Guy N. Woods: "A Medley of Matters"
8:05 - 8:50 Robert R. Taylor: "To Whom We Gave Place,...No, Not For an Hour."

TUESDAY, MARCH 29

8:30 - 9:20 John W. Barcus: "Christ's Immutable Gospel vs Self-Made Prisons"
9:30 - 10:20 Mrs. Frankie Luper: "The Essence of Time"
9:30 - 10:20 Johnny Polk: "Perversions of the New Versions"
10:30 - 11:20 Robert R. Taylor: "Studies in First Timothy"
11:30 - 1:10 INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH
1:10 - 2:00 Johnny Polk: "Perversions of the New Versions"
2:10 - 3:00 W. N. Jackson: "Liberalism - Its Challenge to the Gospel"
3:10 - 4:00 Glann M. Lee: "Exposition of Acts 2:38"
4:00 - 7:15 INTERMISSION FOR DINNER
7:15 - 7:30 Congregational singing - Led by Danny Joiner
7:30 - 8:00 Guy N. Woods: "A Medley of Matters"
8:05 - 8:50 Archie W. Luper: "The Gospel of Christ, Yesterday, Today and Forever"

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

8:30 - 9:20 John W. Barcus: "The Gospel Has Survived"
9:30 - 10:20 Mrs. Frankie Luper: "The Essence of Time"
9:30 - 10:20 Glann M. Lee: "Exposition of Eph. 2:8-10"
10:30 - 11:20 J. F. Camp: "The Great Commission in Matthew"
11:30 - 1:10 INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH
1:10 - 2:00 William Whitaker: "The World-Wide Gospel of Christ"
2:10 - 3:00 Archie W. Luper: "Be Thou Faithful"
3:10 - 4:00 Murray Marshall: "The Integrity of the Gospel"
4:00 - 7:15 INTERMISSION FOR DINNER
7:15 - 7:30 Singing led by Danny Joiner
7:30 - 8:00 Guy N. Woods: "A Medley of Matters"
8:05 - 8:50 J. F. Camp: "The Great Commission in John"

(Continued on page 16)

THURSDAY, MARCH 31

8:30 - 9:20	Murray Marshall: "The Gospel and Christians"
9:30 - 10:20	Mrs. Frankie Luper: "The Essence of Time"
9:30 - 10:20	Robert R. Taylor: "Studies in First Timothy"
10:20 - 11:20	J. F. Camp: "The Great Commission in Mark"
11:30 - 1:10	INTERMISSION FOR LUNCH
1:10 - 2:00	William Whitaker: "God's Power to Save"
2:10 - 3:00	J. F. Camp: "The Great Commission in Luke"
3:10 - 4:00	Charles W. Leonard: "Why the Word Cannot Die"
4:00 - 7:15	INTERMISSION FOR DINNER
7:15 - 7:30	Singing led by Danny Joiner
7:30 - 8:00	Guy N. Woods: "A Medley of Matters"
8:05 - 8:50	Glenn M. Lee: "Exposition of Ephesians 4:1-6"

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Vol. 6, Number 3

March 1977

THE HERESY OF LIBERALISM (No. 4)

THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM

TOM L. BRIGHT
McAllen, Texas

In a previous article under the same caption, we concerned ourselves with a teaching that is now coming from the liberal camp. As one reads all that they have written, considers all of the arguments that they set forth, one thing soon becomes clear, it is just one more thing in a long list of things that they are trying to destroy. Their purpose being that they can extend fellowship unto all professed followers of Christ, irregardless of what they might teach or practice.

It is their contention that even though a person might have some "theological hangups" with reference to baptism, viz., that one might not understand at what point one's sins are remitted, but if he believes in Christ and is baptized upon the basis of that belief, he has obeyed God, he is a Christian and should be considered as my brother in Christ.

With pen in hand, this group of false teachers lays a smoke screen that is unmatched in verbosity. These liberals could teach our politicians a thing or two about the meaning of the word "filibuster."

As Paul so aptly describes this coterie in Romans 16:18, "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

Let us now consider some of these verbal smoke screens that have been used. The argument has been made that baptism "for the remission of sins" is not man's design for baptism but God's design for those who are baptized. The reasoning behind this being, that when one is baptized, he does not need to understand that it is for the remission of sins. We all know that when one is advocating that which is false, he will grasp at everything he can to substantiate his erroneous claims. This false theory under consideration is a prime example of such.

The fact that "baptism for the remission of sins" is NOT man's but God's design for baptism disproves rather than proves their theory. In Acts 2 we see Peter confronted with those to whom he had just preached, having accused them of crucifying the Son of God. Then comes their remorseful cry, "Men and brethren,

(Continued on page 20)

A Review Of The Hicks-Waldron

DEBATE

RAY HAWK
Pensacola, Florida

INTRODUCTION

On February 21-22 and 23-24, 1977 brethren Olan Hicks and Jim Waldron met to debate the divorce and remarriage issue. Brother Hicks affirmed, "Unscripturally divorced and remarried people may continue in the remarriage without further sin," and brother Waldron denied. On the last half of the debate, brother Waldron affirmed, "Unscriptural divorce renders any succeeding marriage invalid and adulterous in the sight of God as long as the original parties live," and brother Hicks denied.

The debate was held in the Whittle Springs Jr. High School Auditorium near Knoxville, Tennessee. Star Bible and Tract Corp. recorded the debate and will sell cassette tapes as well as the printed debate. The cassettes are \$25.00 and the book sells for \$4.00 plus 10% postage and handling.

THE FIRST NIGHT

Brother Olan Hicks of Harriman, Tennessee was in the affirmative the first two nights. On Monday night he began his first affirmative. Brother Hicks was well organized and spoke with authority and confidence. He stated his proposition and then began to define it. He offered three charts to define the expression, "The scriptures teach."

He never finished defining his proposition from that point forward. This was called to his attention by brother Waldron, but brother Hicks failed to define each word in his proposition. This hurt him and kept the audience guessing concerning his definition of "unscripturally divorced and remarried people" and "may continue in the marriage without further sin." It was not until the last night of the debate that this scribe finally figured out what brother Hicks was describing as "adultery"! I believe he teaches that when a man divorces his wife and remarries, he has adulterated the first marriage and must repent of that one time act.

Brother Hicks proceeded to introduce chart 7 which gave Dana and Mantey as an authority on the Greek tense in Matt.19:9. He also introduced A.T. Robertson as an authority. Brother Hicks used these to prove that Jesus made adultery a one time action instead of continuous action. Quite a bit of time was spent on Matt.19:9 and the Greek authorities. Apparently brother Hicks felt that this verse was an obstacle in his path and he needed to neutralize it and show it taught his position rather than brother Waldron's.

When brother Hicks read off the questions given to him by brother Waldron, he failed to answer the

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first one saying he would deal with it Tuesday evening.

Brother Waldron produced charts to clarify the issue. Brother Hicks accused brother Waldron of delivering a prepared speech in anticipation of what he would say rather than answering what he actually said. Brother Waldron pointed out that Hicks was doing the same thing and Hicks started the discussion that night by anticipating what Waldron would say on *Thursday night!*

THE SECOND NIGHT

When brother Hicks began his affirmative speech on the second evening, he seemed to have lost some of the poise he had the first night. When brother Waldron finished his first negative, brother Hicks seemed unsure of what to say on different occasions. By the middle of the second evening, brother Hicks wanted to get out of the Greek, which he had introduced on Monday night, and stay with the English. He kept asking for an English version which would render Matt. 19:9 as "keeps on committing adultery." On the second evening brother Waldron reminded brother Hicks that he was to answer the question which he failed to reply to on Monday night. It was also interesting that brother Hicks failed to answer two more questions out of five given to him on the second night. He said he would reply on Thursday night.

Brother Hicks relied heavily upon his chart of 1 Cor. 7:1-40. As far as he was concerned, Paul allowed the divorced person to remarry, for each man and woman was to have their own mate. He argued that Waldron advocated bigamy because Waldron would allow the innocent party to remarry, but not the guilty to remarry because he was still bound to the wife who was innocent and remarried. Therefore, Hicks concluded, Waldron advocates bigamy. Waldron pointed out that the guilty could not marry for they would be involved in an adulterous relationship as stated by God.

THE THIRD NIGHT

On Thursday evening brother Waldron was in the affirmative and brother Hicks in the negative. As the debate proceeded, brother Waldron asked brother Hicks to answer the questions he failed to reply to on Monday and Tuesday evenings. Brother Hicks stated that he did not need to reply to them because they were *irrelevant* to the issue and were quibbles. On Thursday night brother Hicks spent a good amount of his time making emotional speeches concerning individuals who had been divorced. He said if brother Waldron's position was followed, these people would have to live a celibate life.

Brother Waldron asked brother Hicks if a man stole his neighbor's mule, would the thief have to give the mule back if he repented. Brother Hicks admitted he would, but stated that thievery and adultery are two different things. He went on to say that the neighbor after finding out that the thief was in dire conditions could give him the mule. Brother Waldron responded by saying he supposed that if a man had lost his wife, he could go next door and steal another man's wife since he was in dire need of a wife. The neighbor would then give him his wife because the man was in dire need! Brother Waldron pointed out that when a thief or an adulterer repented, he could not keep that which belonged to another. Repentance involves giving up the relationship that is sinful.

THE FOURTH NIGHT

On the last night of the debate, brother Waldron produced an English version of the Bible which showed a man lived in adultery. Brother Hicks had asked on Thursday night for one English translation of the Bible that rendered Matt. 19:9 in such fashion. Brother Waldron continued to hammer away at the Greek and brother Hicks continued to stay away from it. Brother Waldron produced chart after chart to show that baptism does not make an un-

holy relationship holy. He pointed out that if baptism made an adulterous relationship right, it would also make homosexuality right. Brother Hicks responded that homosexuality was wrong within itself, whereas marriage wasn't. Brother Waldron responded that scriptural marriage was not wrong within itself, but this debate was on *unscriptural* marriages which were wrong within themselves.

In brother Hicks' last negative speech he invited all unscripturally divorced and remarried people to place their membership at Harriman, Tennessee where they would be welcomed with open arms. He said it mattered not to them what a person's past was, only whether or not he was willing to live with his pre-

sent mate and make a go of that marriage.

CONCLUSION

I'm glad I was able to attend this discussion. This review has been written with a slanted view favoring brother Waldron because brother Waldron espoused the truth in this discussion. I wish this debate had settled the question, but I am afraid we are going to see more and more debates along this line as people drift further and further from God's word. I appreciate brother Waldron and the job he did in upholding the truth. Brother Roy Deaver was Jim's moderator and helped him with many of the points under consideration. I appreciate their stand for the truth.

** ** ** ** ** **
** ** ** ** ** **

THE HERESY OF LIBERALISM continued.

what shall we do?" Indeed, what could they do, if anything? They stood before God, pricked in their hearts with the awful realization that they had rejected the promised Messiah; that One for which Israel had looked so many centuries; that One of whom "all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken..." (Acts 3: 24) prophesied. They knew this Jesus had performed many miracles but they had rejected these proofs. They were guilty of turning upon the promised One of God and stood condemned of crucifying, of rejecting the Son of God. Yes indeed, no wonder they were pricked in their hearts and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They were guilty of sin. Their souls were stained with the condemnation of having crucified the Son of the Highest. Of a truth, what could they do?

Peter, speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, told them what they had to do. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts

2:38). Upon hearing Peter's inspired answer, what did these people understand Peter to say? What thought crossed their minds with reference to the inspired answer? Did they understand that Peter told them that they had to repent and be baptized? Did they understand that both of these things were required of them? These people were accused of crucifying the Son of God and they were at a loss as to what they could do. What did Peter tell them to do? Did they not understand that baptism was necessary for their salvation? Did they not understand that baptism "for the remission of sins" was God's design for baptism? Will anyone deny that when they cried out "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" that they had under consideration their condemnation in the sight of God for having rejected His promised Messiah? They were guilty of killing God's Anointed! What could they do? Peter gave an inspired answer, they were to repent and be baptized "for the remission of sins." They had asked a question and had received an answer. In order to have their sins remitted, each one of them was to repent and be baptized. Did they understand that baptism was "for the remission of sins"? Indeed they did.

They had asked a question as to what they should do, and had received an inspired answer to that question.

It might be well for us to look closely at the phrase "for the remission of sins" as used by Peter in Acts 2:38. What does this phrase mean? What thought passed through the minds of those who heard Peter's answer? I am sure that we will agree that the scriptures are inspired of God. This being the case, it is our obligation to so translate every word that the corresponding English words will give to English speaking people the exact idea that Greek speaking people received when they first heard it uttered by inspiration.

I would like to refer the interested reader to Handbook on Baptism by J. W. Shepherd, pages 339-359. This chapter deals specifically with the phrase as found in Acts 2:38. The author has listed the comments of fifty-eight Greek scholars as to what they thought the phrase means. It should be noted that these men were not members of the Lord's church, but were from various denominations. Briefly stated, they concurred in their thoughts that the phrase "for the remission of sins" in Acts 2:38 carried the idea of "in order to" "with a view to" or the end to which repentance and baptism brings one. Thus, we can see that many men who are considered knowledgeable in the Greek language, even though they had to go against their denominational doctrine, presented the idea that "for the remission of sins" means that they were to repent and be baptized in order that their sins might be forgiven. But our liberal brethren set forth the proposition that one does not have to understand God's design for baptism. They contend that one can be mistaken about when he enjoys the remission of sins; just as long as one is baptized on the basis of his belief in Christ, he is to be looked upon as a Christian.

Well, my friends, as the old saying goes, "What's good for the goose is good for the gander." If this philosophy is true, viz., that one does not need to understand that baptism is essential to the remission of sins, then I can only conclude that one does not need to know that repentance is essential for the remission of sins! This is something that these liberals have "conveniently" forgotten. That "repentance" and "baptism" are joined together by the word "and" in Acts 2:38. This word is a conjunction and it is used to connect. "A conjunction is a word that connects sentences, clauses, phrases, and words." (A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament by Dana and Mantey, p. 239.).

In answering the old denominational argument that baptism is not essential to one's salvation, we have long presented the thought that if this be true, "repentance" is likewise unessential. The reason being, they are connected together by this co-ordinating conjunction. Whatever baptism is for, repentance is for. Whatever baptism is NOT for, repentance is NOT for the very same thing!

If a person can have some "theological hangups" about baptism "for the remission of sins," then can he not have the same "theological hangups" about repentance? If one can misunderstand the truth about baptism, then why can't one misunderstand the truth about repentance and still be acceptable unto God?

The design of repentance is "in order that" one's sins might be remitted. The design of baptism is "in order that" one's sins might be remitted. They are both "for" the same thing, "with a view to," "in order to," or "for the purpose of." What applies to one must apply to the other.

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH)

Television Immorality Is No "Secret"

THOMAS F. EAVES
Knoxville, Tennessee

On Sunday evening, February 20, 1977, the ABC television network televised the movie "Secrets". The movie starred Susan Blakely as an habitual and uncontrollable adultress. The following quotes from UPI television writer Joan Hanauer (Knoxville News-Sentinel, Thursday, February 17, 1977, p. 13) describes the content and immoral nature of the production.

"New York - What to give the girl who has everything? Nymphomania, of course.

"The show is as close to a skin flick as network television gets. The skin mostly belongs to Susan Blakely, who was a smash last year as Julie in 'Rich Man, Poor Man.'

"So when the heroine's mother dies, the daughter contracts nymphomania with all the sudden symptoms of a flu attack. She not only acts out her problem, she also fantasizes erotic episodes, which gives ample opportunity for skin shots of Miss Blakely and her partner of the moment. Her tastes range from taxi drivers to blind piano tuners.

"If the heroine's motivations and character are underexposed, the rest of her certainly is not. The film displays plenty of skin, suggests much more than it shows, and exploits a serious problem in a manner that is much more likely to titillate than to educate its audience, which probably will be more interested in the former than the latter.

"'Secrets' carries a parental discretion warning because of 'mature' subject matter. Maybe it isn't mature, but it surely is indiscreet."

This movie, which portrayed gross immorality and attacked the very foundation of the home and marriage was sponsored by the following companies:

Static Guard
Alberto-Culver Co.
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Melrose Park, Ill. 60160

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General Mills, Inc.
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Minneapolis, Minn. 55460

McDonald Corp.
McDonald Plaza
Oak Brooks, Ill. 60521

Alka-Seltzer
Miles Laboratories, Inc.
Elhart, Indiana 46514

Dristan
Whitehall Laboratories, Inc.
New York, New York 10017

Leggs' Products, Inc.
P.O. Box 2495
Winston Salem, N.C. 27102

Timex Corp.
P.O. Box 2916
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203

Chrysler Corp.
Highland Park, Mich. 48203

Raintree Lotion
Noxell Corp.
Balto, Md. 21203

Tegrin Shampoo
Reedco, Inc.
Jersey City, N.J. 56302

Contac Cold Medicine
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Philadelphia, Pa. 19101

ALL Laundry Detergent
Lever Bros. Co.
New York, New York 10022

Ben Gay Balm
Leeming Division
Pfizer, Inc.
New York, New York 10017

Gillette Company
Boston, Mass. 02100
Attn: C.M. Mockler, Jr.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

It is evident that the television industry is not going to help remedy the problem.

"Los Angeles (UPI) - The National PTA commission confronted the television yesterday with its complaint that TV violence is adversely affecting the young and was warned that while the industry is mindful of the problem, it will not be censored." (Knoxville News-Sentinel, Wednesday, February 23, 1977, p. B-5)

In addition to this fact there has been very, very little concern (action) shown by the major Television Networks about the quality of television programs. The only course of action left is to appeal to the sponsors of the television programs and if they continue to support the obscene, immoral and violent programs - STOP BUYING THEIR PRODUCTS.

STAND IN THE GAP!

When the walls of Jerusalem were in shambles Ezekiel said, "And I sought for a man among them, that should build up the wall, and stand in the gap before me for the land that I should not destroy it; but I found none." (Ezekiel 22:30)

The wall of morality in America is in shambles, there are gaps in the wall. Show your concern, STAND IN THE GAP and write the sponsors listed above and voice your objections. Voice your convictions and objections each time something is televised which conflicts with Christian standards.

Write today!

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PURPOSE: TO EXPOSE THE DOCTRINES AND PHILOSOPHIES OF MEN IN
THE LIGHT OF BIBLICAL TEACHING.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

9:00 - 10:00 "ARMSTRONGISM".....
William S. Cline

10:15 - 11:15 "KETCHERSIDE-ISM"...
Roger Jackson

1:00 - 2:00 "ANTI-ISM".....
Earl Arnold

2:15 - 3:15 "DISPENSATIONALISM".
Winston Temple

3:30 - 4:30 "EMOTIONALISM".....
Elmer Scott

7:00 - 8:00 "THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF
APOSTASY".....
Winfred Clark

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

9:00 - 10:00 "PENTECOSTALISM"....
Ray Hawk

10:15 - 11:15 "THEISTIC EVOLUTION"
Jackie Stearsman

1:00 - 2:00 "ORGANIZATION A N D
LEADERSHIP OF THE
CHURCH".....
Bill Mead

2:15 - 3:15 "INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC
AND HUMMING IN WOR-
SHIP".....
B.C. Carr

3:30 - 4:30 "SALVATION BY FAITH
ONLY".....
Harrell Davidson

7:00 - 8:00 "BASIS FOR RELIGIOUS
UNITY".....
Ray Peters

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Vol. 6, Number 4

April 1977

THE HERESY OF LIBERALISM (No. 4) THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM

TOM L. BRIGHT
McAllen, Texas

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is a continuation of THE HERESY OF LIBERALISM #4. The first half of the article appeared in last month's issue of the DEFENDER.)

In Matt. 26:28 Jesus uses the same term in reference to his blood "which is shed for many for the remission of sins." According to this passage, why was Christ's blood to be shed? "...for (in order that, for the purpose that) the remission of sins." Here in these two verses we have the same terminology and the same Greek preposition. Now if one does not need to know God's design or purpose for baptism in Acts 2:38, does he need to know the design or purpose of Christ's blood being shed? If one can have a "theological hangup" about baptism for the remission of sins, can he not also have a "theological hangup" about Christ's blood being shed for the remission of sins? If not, why not?

Another argument used which is really an enlargement of the one just considered, is that if one needs to know the purpose of baptism, then every time he learns some-

thing new about baptism, he would have to be re-baptized. If this be true, then he would have to repent all over again every time he learned of the deeper things of the subject of repentance. It is easy to see that this theory is just one more effort to becloud the issue and is nothing more than a verbal smoke-screen.

Why would not the same principle apply to every area of Christian growth? But will not all agree that the Christian life is one of constant growth? A Christian should always strive to grow towards a higher level of a maturity. If this is not done, then we "become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (Heb. 5:12).

Repentance and baptism are those things commanded to one who is what we commonly refer to as an "alien sinner." His sins have separated him from his God (Isa. 59:1-2). He hears the good news, the gospel. This creates faith in this individual and this faith leads him to repent of his sins, confess with the mouth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and then to be baptized into

(Continued on page 30)

"Flat Earth Theology"

WAYNE JACKSON
Stockton, California

In the October 1976 issue of the Does God Exist? bulletin, there appeared an article entitled, "'Flat Earth" Bible Study Techniques," authored by the editor John Clayton, of South Bend, Indiana. The thrust of the article is to emphasize that during the Dark Ages it was popular for "Christian scholars" to assert that the Bible teaches the earth is flat. Moreover, it is suggested, there are those of the brotherhood today who, in a similar vein, espouse the antiquated notion that the earth and all its inhabitants were created in a span of six literal days. These, he dubs "flat earth theologians."

In order to appreciate why such a charge is made by brother Clayton, one needs to understand something about his theological bias. John Clayton holds a B.S. degree and a M.S. degree from Indiana University, as well as a M.S. degree from Notre Dame University. He boasts of having some one hundred and sixty graduate hours in geology; in fact, he does not hesitate to say: "I am a specialist in this field." What he does neglect to emphasize is the fact that virtually all of his education was at the feet of evolutionists who ridicule the Bible as a patchwork of folklore. Those who have carefully studied brother Clayton's writings are well aware of the fact that one of his problems is his insatiable desire for forc-

ing the Bible into harmony with the current theories of geology. He employs the concepts of evolutionary geology as a strainer through which he presses the Word of God; and some of the distorted views resulting are outright amalgamations with unbelief!

Consistent with the notions of evolutionary geology, brother Clayton believes that the earth is some 4.5 billion years old and that man is "a very recent new-comer to this planet." He asserts that if one compared earth's entire history to a one year time scale, man "has only been here for one minute and two seconds compared to a year or roughly 1/450,000th of the history of the Earth" (Does God Exist? Course, 8). He thus flatly rejects the clear biblical statement that the earth and its creatures were created the same week. He therefore writes:

"The most commonly used Biblical text to prove the Earth is very young in age is Exodus 20: 11.

'For in six days the Lord made heaven and Earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested . . .'

"If this passage were all that existed in the Bible about the creation, certainly we could

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conclude that the entire creation took place within six days, including everything that has ever existed on the Earth being formed during that time. This is a very shallow conclusion, however, and in the view of the writer is inconsistent with the Genesis record as well as other parts of the Bible."

Clayton further alleges that the purpose of this passage was not to reveal the age of the earth, but to establish the Sabbath as a day of worship. He declares: "...the writer of Exodus avoids the creation question and concentrates his attention on his own purpose" (emp. WJ). Our brother is a woefully careless student. The purpose of Moses' statement was not merely to establish the Sabbath law; it was also an explanation as to the why of the Sabbath. Why observe one day in seven? Because in six days God created the earth and its creatures and on the seventh day He rested! The divine writer did not avoid a reference to the Creator, "Jehovah" is specified. He did not avoid referring to the Lord's action, God "made" these things. (Note: J. Clayton repeatedly attempts to distinguish between "creation" of some sort prior to the creative week of Genesis 1. It is a baseless argument; cf. Gen. 5:1; 6:7, etc.) Finally, Moses did not avoid the time element, for he declares the creation was accomplished "in six days". Why the attempt to explain away the obvious sense of the passage? Moses literally speaks of Jehovah who actually made a literal creation in literally six days. And if brother Clayton were not so captivated by the spirit of evolutionary geology he would have no difficulty in seeing the clear meaning of Exodus 20:11. The truth is, the reason Moses introduced the creation account at that point was the obvious connection between the "days" of the creation week and the Sabbath "day", which was assuredly a literal day.

It is significant also that the inspired Moses affirms that ALL created life - celestial, terrest-

ial, and aquatic - had its origin in that initial week. Brother Clayton begs to differ with Moses. On numerous occasions he has asserted that forms of life now exist which are not included in the biblical record. For instance he wrote: "I think a careful examination of Genesis 1, however, reveals that that account does not include every living thing on the Earth, unless one is willing to stretch the Hebrew beyond its normal usage. I do not believe you can find any Hebrew word in Genesis that includes amoeba, bacteria, virus, bats, worms, etc." (Letter, Sept. 9, 1975). The possible implications of this view are: (a) There was a creation of certain life forms prior to the week of Genesis 1; (b) New forms of life have evolved since the week of Genesis 1; or, (c) Genesis 1 is an incomplete record. Brother Clayton has hinted before that there may have been a creation prior to Genesis 1; for instance he opined that the "day-age theory" and the "gap theory" are "more consistent with the [Genesis] record" than other views. (Letter, Sept. 5, 1975). He seems to be unaware of the generic classifications of life in Genesis 1, but more seriously, he totally disregards Moses' complimentary account in Exodus 20:11, which states that ALL things were created in that original week!

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

Regarding Adam, the first man (1 Cor. 15:45), and Eve, Jesus said: "But from the beginning of the creation, Male and female made he them" (Mark 10:6). Now what is actually the truth on this matter? Let us consider several views. (a) The creation existed millions of years before man and Christ, accommodating Himself to the ignorances of that age, deliberately misrepresented the situation. (b) The Lord, living in pre-scientific times, did not know the real geological facts of the matter. (c) Christ did not really say this; Mark, an uninformed writer of the first century, merely attributes it to Him. Or, (d) Christ, the divine Son of God, who was there at the creation (John 1:1). (Continued on page 29)

THIRD ANNUAL BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

Lectureship

"Contend Earnestly For The Faith"

SUNDAY, MAY 8:

- 9:00 - "STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED". Kenneth L. Furlong
10:00 - THE CONVERSION OF THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER William A. Yuhas
6:00 - CHRISTIAN STEADFASTNESS W. Emery Hardin

MONDAY, MAY 9:

- 7:00 - "CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH" George E. Darling, Sr.
8:00 - IS THERE A CONTRADICTION BETWEEN CONTENDING EARNESTLY
FOR THE FAITH and PREACHING THE TRUTH IN LOVE? Winfred Clark

TUESDAY, MAY 10:

- 8:00 - THE FROST - MOYOR DEBATE. Ernest S. Underwood
9:00 - JEREMIAH, THE WEeping PROPHEt Lynwood Bishop
10:00 - PRINCIPLES OF DEBATE. Roy Deaver
11:00 - IS THE DEVIL A CONTROVERSIALIST?. Gerald Miles

1:30 - PAUL'S PREACHING vs. DISPENSATIONALISM. Clifford Dixon
2:30 - CONFRONTING THE UNITED PENTECOSTALS Henry McCaghren
3:30 - DEBATE ON ESCHATOLOGY Jack Hansen
Daniel Denham

7:00 - THE BOOK OF ACTS. Winfred Clark
8:00 - THE JERUSALEM CHURCH. Bill Coss

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11:

- 8:00 - THE HARDEMAN - BOGARD DEBATE. Ray Peters
9:00 - JESUS, THE GREAT CONTROVERSIALIST Albert Fleetwood
10:00 - PRINCIPLES OF DEBATE. Roy Deaver
11:00 - PAUL'S CHARGES TO TIMOTHY AND TITUS Rex A. Turner, Sr.

1:30 - PETER, THE PREACHING APOSTLE. Jim Sentell
2:30 - PAUL'S CHARGES TO TIMOTHY AND TITUS Rex A. Turner, Sr.
3:30 - OPEN FORUM. Roy Deaver

7:00 - THE BOOK OF ACTS. Winfred Clark
8:00 - ELIJAH'S GOD AND GOD'S ELIJAH Lynwood Bishop

THURSDAY, MAY 12:

8:00 - THE NEIL - WALLACE DEBATE. Roger Jackson
9:00 - IS IT WRONG TO DEBATE? George E. Darling, Sr.
10:00 - PRINCIPLES OF DEBATE Roy Deaver
11:00 - IS A CHRISTIAN A CONTROVERSIALIST? Charles Tharp

1:30 - WHAT ABOUT HARD PREACHING? Gerald Reynolds
2:30 - CONFRONTING THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH John Priola
3:30 - OPEN FORUM Roy Deaver

7:00 - THE BOOK OF ACTS Winfred Clark
8:00 - THE FAITH UNDER FIRE Franklin Camp

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"FLAT EARTH THEORY"

1), told the truth and thus man, along with the rest of God's handiwork, existed from the beginning of the creation. Brother Clayton thinks this last view is "flat earth theology"; it would be interesting to know how he feels about the others.

PAUL'S TESTIMONY

In Romans 1:20 Paul affirms the following: "For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse..." The apostle declares: From the creation of the world the invisible things of God have been: (a) clearly seen; (b) perceived (from noeo, used of rational intelligence); (c) that they may be without excuse. Now just WHO observed and perceived those things that were made from the creation of the world? If no man was there for millions of years, who was observing the created phenomena? An amoeba? Some dinosaur? Obviously Paul is contending that MAN has existed since the creation of the world; he has enjoyed the capacity to observe and comprehend the truth that a Creator stands behind the creation; accordingly, those who refuse to glorify him as Creator are without excuse. It might be further added that it is inexcusable that one who professes

to believe the Bible as God's inspired revelation should ignore such verses in deference to the theories of evolutionary geology.

CONCLUSION

A theory of creation (or any other theory) which reflects upon the integrity of Jesus Christ, or His inspired writers, is not an innocent opinion. It is a dangerous and destructive human philosophy. A number of prominent and unquestionably sound brethren have expressed amazement that John Clayton is so widely used in our brotherhood in view of the gross errors he teaches. Brother Clayton's popularity is probably due to the following: (a) He bills himself as a converted atheist, and many brethren are simply mesmerized by the glamor of that appellation. They think it will draw crowds and it does. (b) To be fair, some of the material that our brother presents is good and his presentation is declared by many to be excellent. Many brethren, though, are apparently oblivious to the fact that it only takes a little poison in a good meal to do you in! (c) Brother Clayton has had many personal tragedies and problems of great magnitude and has often shown real courage and spiritual stamina. Certainly such elicits our sympathy and admiration; this does not, however, permit us to ignore his dangerous false teaching. (d) It is claimed that he is winning numbers of atheists to the truth. What truth? Doubtless he has won

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ings? After all, it's merely a "theological hangup" isn't it? Yes indeed, that is correct. It is merely ERROR!!

Their contention is that one can be taught what the Baptist people teach with reference to baptism. The Baptist theology says, in essence, that one is baptized because one's sins have already been remitted, namely at the instant that this person accepted Christ into his heart as his personal Savior; and that baptism is that which brings one into the Baptist church, whereby one can have the full fellowship of all Baptists. Now, the liberal contention is that if one is baptized with this view of baptism, he has been baptized because of his faith in Christ and is to be accepted as a Christian. Thus, a person prompted by motive unknown to God, can be baptized and be acceptable to God. In other words, he can be baptized with the idea that baptism is not essential to one's salvation, that one has been saved at the point of faith. He can then submit to baptism merely as a church ordinance, the purpose being that he might be brought into full fellowship of the Baptist church, enjoying all of its privileges and still be acceptable to God. Can you believe it? Yet, that these liberals are contending this very thing can be proved from their writings and abundantly so!

My friends, does the Bible teach that one must be baptized with the right purpose in mind, based upon the "right doctrine?" Indeed it does!

For confirmation of this, let me again invite you to Acts 19:1-6. These men in Ephesus were re-baptized. Why? Because they were baptized for the wrong purpose, as the result of having been taught the wrong "doctrine". It will do no good for the liberals to say that these people were re-baptized because they were first baptized with an invalid baptism. This is the very thought that we present here and build our proposition upon that example, A MAN CAN BE BAPTIZED UPON THE BASIS

OF A WRONG DOCTRINE AND BE UNACCEPTABLE TO GOD.

They were re-baptized because their first baptism was unacceptable to God. Why was it unacceptable? Because they were baptized with John's baptism after it was ineffective. God's design for John's baptism was to point the people towards the promised Christ. That was the purpose of it; that was the design of it. They were baptized with a baptism that was designed to point them towards the Christ; but this baptism had already fulfilled its purpose, the Christ had already come. Thus they submitted themselves to a baptism that no longer was acceptable to God. It was designed for a specific purpose; and that specific purpose had been realized, thus it was no longer effective in its design. Thus, these men were baptized with a wrong purpose in their heart. They were baptized with a view to the coming Messiah, but the Messiah had already come. The purpose, the plan, the design of their baptism was not acceptable to the Heavenly Father. They had to be re-baptized. John's baptism of repentance for the remission of sins was with a view to the coming Messiah. But when this baptism had fulfilled its intended purpose, one submitting to that baptism of repentance for the remission of sins with a view to the promised Messiah submitted himself to an ineffectual baptism, one that merely resulted in one getting wet.

Beloved, John's baptism was much "closer" to accomplishing what God desired than that baptism which is practiced by the Baptist church. John's baptism was "for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4), but that which is practiced by the Baptist church today (according to their writings) is not "for" the remission of sins, but "because of" the remission of sins. Yet those who submitted to John's baptism were COMMANDED to be re-baptized!!! Should we then, accept one who desires to come from the Baptist church on his baptism "into the Baptist church?" NO MORE THAN WE COULD ACCEPT ONE WHO HAD SUBMITTED

TO JOHN'S BAPTISM! Today, both baptisms are ineffectual, they are invalid. And should one submit to either one, he has submitted to that which God does not recognize!

What baptism did they have to submit to have their sins removed? That same baptism that Peter preached in Acts 2. That "one baptism" that Paul preached in Eph. 4: 5.

In Acts 19:1-6 there were some who had been taught wrong concerning baptism, and they had accepted that false teaching, had been baptized upon the basis of that false teaching and WERE NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOD OF HEAVEN!!!! They

had been baptized with the wrong design in mind. Yet, some are contending that one cannot be baptized upon the basis of a wrong doctrine nor "upon the basis of a right doctrine either!!" I certainly do feel sorry for the apostle Paul for making such a mistake as believing that one COULD be baptized upon the basis of the wrong doctrine. But of course we must understand that Paul was not a Twentieth Century intellectual. He was just simply a POOR, MISGUIDED, CONFUSED, INSPIRED APOSTLE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!! Can you believe it? Will you believe it? I cannot, nor can any person that looks upon the scriptures as the Divinely inspired oracles of Jehovah God.

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

VOL. 6, NUMBER 5

MAY 1977

"The assemblies of the church of Christ salute you"

RAY HAWK

Pensacola, Florida

The Acme church of Christ has recently completed their building campaign and occupied their new facilities. This church is making news all over the United States! Its membership has outgrown their old facilities long ago and the new building is a welcomed sight.

Due to their evangelistic outreach, this congregation has grown by leaps and bounds over the past five years. They have 4,000 people in their membership with an average of 7,000 in services on Sunday morning. The growth rate has been so tremendous that their old auditorium was not sufficient to handle the crowds. They decided that since they had Children's Worship and Adult Worship, there would be nothing wrong with dividing the church into several simultaneous assemblies to handle the crowd.

Objections To Overcome

At first there were objections to the assembly arrangements made by the Acme church. No one had ever divided a congregation into 35

assemblies before. It was new, daring, and innovative! Many knew it must be unscriptural. The Acme preacher pointed out the scripturalness of the arrangement by directing the attention of all to the practice of dividing the church into two assemblies: the Children's Worship and Adult Worship. He gave Matt.28:19,20 and Mark 16:15,16 as his generic authority for such an arrangement. When asked if 1 Cor. 11:20 and 14:23 were violated by such an arrangement he replied that the expression "together" and "one place" has nothing to do with it. He stated that these passages only teach what is involved when there is an assembly, not a demand that we meet in one place together.

The Acme preacher reminded his opponents that the only real reason they objected to his arrangement was due to traditional, American customs that had become doctrine for those churches of Christ. He referred to it as the "modern oral law" of the churches of Christ. He accused them of thinking more of their opinions than they did of saving
(Continued on page 36)

It Isn't In The Bible

WILLIAM S. CLINE
Pensacola, Florida

In the August, 1976 issue of CATHOLIC DIGEST, in the regular feature, "What would you like to know about the church?" there appeared a most interesting question and answer concerning *Masses for the deceased and belief in Purgatory*. The question, which actually had four parts, was from a Catholic lady who believed in Masses for the deceased and Purgatory, yet she questioned such and wondered if it was "...a tradition that is fading away?" This Catholic lady also asked if "Protestants" "...escape Purgatory because they don't believe in it."

My purpose here is not to review the question submitted to the CATHOLIC DIGEST, nor the answer which was given by Mr. Kenneth Ryan. Rather, it was a short, simple statement which Mr. Ryan made concerning Purgatory which prompted my editorial pen to speak out. His answer covered nearly four pages, and in that space he did not refer to one passage of scripture. He "granted that there is a Purgatory" and assured his readers of such by appealing to Church tradition and reason. It was at the conclusion of his discussion of Purgatory, on page 109, that he made the *statement of statements*. He wrote, "One of the difficulties in getting this doctrine accepted, apart from the fact that the word Purgatory does not

occur in Scripture, is...". It is a fact that it is difficult to get the doctrine of Purgatory accepted in the religious world. As a matter of fact it is becoming increasingly harder to get Catholics to accept the doctrine. And here, in the CATHOLIC DIGEST, in an article by a CATHOLIC THEOLOGIAN is the reason why it is so difficult to get people to accept the doctrine of Purgatory -- **IT ISN'T IN THE BIBLE!!**

There are great numbers of people in this world with the "Missouri complex." The "show me before you expect me to believe it" philosophy is a marvelous attitude. The noble Bereans "searched the scriptures" to see if the things they were being taught were true (Acts 17:11). And may we ask, how can anyone interested in going to heaven do any less?

We read what the Catholic wrote with regard to Purgatory and we smile. We say that such is just like those Catholics. They expect people to follow the traditions of men and to follow them blindly. But in certain areas are some of us in the Lord's church really any different? Could it be that we have erred from the truth to such an extent that we expect people to do what we do, follow where we lead, accept what we practice simply and solely on the grounds that the

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church is doing it, or it serves a good purpose, and therefore it must be right? We must be careful lest we walk in the Catholics' footsteps.

WOMEN PRAYING IN THE PRESENCE OF MEN

There are those among us (I say among us. They wear the name of Christ and call themselves members of the church of Christ, but in all truth they have gone out from us.) who openly advocate the rightness of a woman leading a prayer (praying a portion or all of a prayer audibly) with men present. One such advocate said he would sell the orphan home which he heads to the Adventists before he would stop such. Another has written articles and now even a book in defense of such. Yet there are thousands that have not "bowed the knee to Baal" and refuse to accept such philosophies of men. As a matter of fact when it comes to multitudes in the church and their acceptance of "women leading prayers in the presence of men", it is, in the words of our Catholic author, difficult to get them to accept it, simply because it isn't in the Bible. Like Joshua of old, I speak for me and my house -- We will not accept women praying in the presence of men because it is not in the Bible.

WOMEN TEACHING MEN

We would be the first to grant that various *methods* can, and perhaps in some areas should, be used as aids in teaching the Bible. However, at no time would we ever endorse any method which employed unscriptural principles. We must be careful to state that there is nothing wrong with using puppets to help teach a Bible lesson. Chalk boards, flannelgraph, the overhead projector, etc. would fall into the same category. But the woman is not to usurp the authority over the man, nor to teach over the man (1 Tim. 2:12). Therefore, when the woman uses the puppets to teach a Bible lesson to an audience which has in it men, the method has employed an unscriptural principle

and thus the method becomes wrong. It is no more scriptural for a woman to teach a mixed (men and women) class or audience with puppets than it would be for her to teach the same audience or class using a flannelgraph or an overhead projector. Thus, there are those of us who will not endorse such and the reason is a simple one -- it is not found in the Bible.

HUMMING INSTEAD OF SINGING

In the last few years there have been instances in which some congregations have instituted the practice of *humming* instead of *singing*. Seemingly such is done because it is supposed to be more meaningful or more conducive to a certain mood. When confronted with the scripturalness of such a practice, two answers are usually heard. One, they claim that humming is vocal music and that vocal music is scriptural. Two, they say that humming is not condemned. With regard to the first answer, we will agree that humming is vocal music, however, *vocal music is not, repeat, is not authorized in the New Testament*. The only kind of music authorized in the New Testament is singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.) Therefore, when one hums, whistles, plays a piano or organ, or what-have-you and does not sing, and sing only, he has added to God's word and is not free from sin. Secondly, the argument of such not being condemned is rather insidious. I would guess that there are millions of things which are not specifically condemned in the Bible, yet they are not authorized. For example, Coke and Ritz Crackers are not condemned with regard to the Lord's Supper but we do not use such because *we have no authority* to do so. They may practice their humming and they may expect others to accept and believe it, but they will have their problems because *humming is not in the Bible*.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Another diversion from the sound doctrine of the New Testament is the old denominational Children's

Church. In this the worship assembly is divided and "worship" is conducted in a special area for those of a certain age group. When all of the rational and emotional reasons are given the New Testament still speaks of the assembly and it still speaks of the whole church coming together in one place. Those who advocate the Children's Church or Training for Service as some feel more comfortable in calling it, should have to debate the anti-Sunday School people. They would find themselves in a dilemma that a Philadelphia Lawyer couldn't get them out of. The only way truth prevailed over the above was to show that dividing the Bible classes was not unscriptural, and that those who did have individual Bible classes still had THE assembly. But these divided assembly people could not so reason, for in truth they do

not have the assembly where the whole church is come together in one place. They are going to have a lot of trouble getting some of us to believe that Children's Worship is right because *Children's Worship is not in the Bible.*

CONCLUSION

It is truly sad when men will teach that which is not found in the Bible. It is for certain a sad day in Israel when those in the church practice those things for which there is not one bit of New Testament authority. The situation becomes even worse when we realize that churches have already been split and brethren have been, and are divided over these things. When will we ever have enough love for the truth to follow God's word and be bound by it on every side?

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THE ASSEMBLIES OF THE CHURCH. . .

souls. He compared the growth the Acme church was having to that experienced in the churches of those who objected and inferred that if a church wanted to grow they must have multiple, simultaneous worship services. When the Acme preacher was asked to debate it, either privately or publicly, he stated that he didn't have time to fool with such trivia, that he was too busy saving souls. However, it seems he did have enough time to denounce his detractors whenever he spoke at workshops and lectureships around the country without the objectors having an opportunity to reply. He usually reminded his audiences that the best way to overcome criticism was by silence, a smile, and love. When someone spoke up from the audience and asked if he ever used the Bible to silence his critics as did Jesus in Matt.22, they loved the fellow all the way out the door!

MULTIPLE SIMULTANEOUS ASSEMBLIES

The Acme church has grown so fast

that the auditorium of their old building was not large enough to accomodate the crowd. The elders decided to allow everyone to remain in their classrooms and have worship there. They had thirty-five classes, so each class became a worship assembly at eleven o'clock. Soon these classes could not hold the numbers so a new building was needed with larger classrooms. Now that the Acme church is in its new building they have increased their assemblies to 40. A few people went to the elders and mentioned their specific needs so an assembly was formed for them too. Surely this must have been what the first century Jerusalem church was like! Weren't there twelve apostles? One apostle for each simultaneous assembly? The Acme church now has an assembly of your choice! Certainly, this must have been what Paul was saying when he wrote, "The assemblies of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16:16).

ONE ELDERSHIP - MANY ASSEMBLIES

The Acme church has been so successful and active in winning souls

that other churches of Christ in the area have decided to dissolve their elderships, and merge with the Acme church, under the oversight of its elders. They decided to do this after reading several articles in a brotherhood paper arguing for such an arrangement. Just because the members of the one congregation did not meet in the same building did not lessen the fact that they were the Acme church of Christ. So the Acme church of Christ soon had forty assemblies in their building and another one hundred assemblies within a fifty mile radius of that building. This is what Paul meant when he recorded, "ordain elders in every city" (Tit.1:5). One eldership in each city, but many assemblies! Just think, here in Pensacola we could have one eldership and one church with that church assembling in ten different areas in the city! The collection from each one of these assemblies would go into one common treasury overseen by the one eldership. In fact, if this is scrip-

tural, over a metropolitan area, why not over a county, state, or even the world! One eldership over the one church of Christ with 34,000+ assemblies!

Yes, the simple beginnings with the Children's Worship and Adult Worship have grown to gigantic proportions in the Acme church of Christ. But, the whole thing must be scriptural because there was a need, there was growth, Matt.28:19, 20 and Mark 16:15,16 were given as authority, objectors were called traditionalists, Pharisees, and followers of "oral law", and the Acme church was a success story.

CONCLUSION

The above is not a true story. But, give us five or ten years and everything I have described will be true among churches of Christ. The roots of such an effort will be traced back to the Children's Worship!

Freedom And Its Obligations

RAY HAWK

Pensacola, Florida

I suppose one of the several words misused today is the word "freedom". The Communist offers freedom; by that he means freedom to believe and accept communism. The disobedient, rebellious youth who occupies buildings and streets in the name of freedom means HIS freedom, but not YOURS. We hear freedom shouted by blacks who want to be free; whites, youth, women,

labor, and others who want their freedom. Yet, very few know what real freedom is, nor how to use it.

TRUE FREEDOM

Jesus said (in John 8:32): "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Again in John 8:36: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be

free indeed."

Freedom comes from one single source by means of one single agency. The source of true freedom is Jesus Christ. The agency it comes by is the truth, which is the word of God (John 17:17). Jesus makes us free from sin. Rom. 6:18 says, "Being then made FREE FROM SIN." We are made free from sin, and we are then free to become and be something else. Rom. 8:22 states, "But now being made free from sin, and BECOME SERVANTS TO GOD." Not only are we free from sin, we are free from the consequences of sin. "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Yet, with every opportunity comes a responsibility. Freedom carries with it a responsibility.

WHAT DOES FREEDOM IN CHRIST MEAN TO YOU?

Some become Christians without counting the cost. They think (for it is evidenced by their actions) that they are now free to worship one hour a week on Sunday morning. How sad that their freedom means no more to them than that! Some have the idea they are free to enjoy all the spiritual blessings in Christ, but they have no responsibility to share these blessings with anyone. We are engaged in a WAR! There is no place in the kingdom of God for soldiers who only sleep, only want to be soldiers part-time, or who want weekly passes. If we are not full-time fighters, we are full-time traitors. We cannot rest here. Our rest comes later (Rev. 14:14). If we rest, we may die spiritually. We are to put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17) and fight a good fight (1 Tim. 6:12). This freedom we enjoy must continually be fought for, and won, from the devil! Therefore, we must get involved in the cause and work of Christ!

I often hear people say, "I want to be more spiritual." I say, "Amen." Anyone who wants to be more spiritual should be encouraged and commended. Of course, by "spiritual" I do not mean to go the way of the Neo-pentecostal. I like

the comments of brother Bob Barnhill in an article he wrote entitled, "Being Spiritual". He said:

"Being spiritual" is not being more emotional in our prayers than the average person. 'Being spiritual' is not feeling ecstatically on Cloud 9 during the 11 o'clock worship hour. 'Being spiritual' is not radiating Jesus to people around you by silent inner glow, so that through a process of divine osmosis others 'absorb Jesus' too. By common usage, 'being spiritual' has, in the last few years, been re-defined to mean, having an emotional, radiant, inner glow.

"Such a narrow definition of spirituality stands out in sharp contrast with the view of New Testament writers. Paul felt being spiritual was to 'not fulfill the lust of the flesh' (Gal. 5:16) and live every day in away that pleases God (2 Cor. 2:13). Such statements from the Bible are strong inducements to follow God's specified will.

"Any product is best seen by its fruit. 'Being spiritual' is not shown by constant discontent, withdrawing from the (church) for being so emotionally involved as to ignore God's written way. 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, temperance, patience, (Gal. 5:22). Certainly, 'fruits' such as love and meekness (when Biblically defined), would be qualities of spirituality which demand exact obedience.

"Frankly, to conclude there is an absence of spirituality because 'most Sundays there is an absence of an emotional high peak at worship' is a plain misunderstanding of what true spirituality involves. A far more valid test of spirituality lies in attitudes toward regular, corporate worship and more especially, toward the routines of ordinary living. How a Christian housewife washes dishes, changes diapers, and keeps a tidy house; or how a husband conducts his business affairs, may be a greater test of their

spirituality - even greater than how emotional they become at worship services.

"Spiritual growth is not a magical process of instant osmosis. It comes gradually, through the years, by growth in Christian graces (2 Pet.3:18). . . Rather than equate 'spirituality' with a sense of inner-glow (which will be its by-product), let's recognize that spirituality is best seen in the way we walk when we are not on the mountain tops, but in the valleys."

THE COST OF SPIRITUALITY

If a person wants to be more spiritual he must be willing to pay the price of self-discipline and self-involvement. The individual who says he wants to be more spiritual but is not willing to give up bad companions (1 Cor.15:33), is not really sold on being spiritual. A person who says he wants to be more spiritual but is not willing to tell himself "no" to those things that will keep him from being spiritual, is not really interested in growing spiritually. The father who wants to be spiritual, but is unwilling to have prayer with his family at home, or read the Bible, or help his children with their Bible class lessons, is not really interested in spiritual growth - His or theirs. A man's family will rise no higher spiritually than he is, unless they go elsewhere to be taught!

Mid McKnight in his personal work course suggests that we develop courage to do personal work by using language that will show people where we stand such as, "I'll see you tomorrow, IF IT IS GOD'S WILL." This can be part of our course in growing spiritually. We talk about everything else, why not about the Lord and His church, the Bible, and other matters of eternal worth and interest? Do you want to grow more spiritual? Prove it. Get involved in the freedom you have gained in Christ.

I hear brethren talk about wanting to be soul winners. In the Old

Testament, Solomon said, "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov.11:30). I wonder how many UNWISE members of the Lord's body we have. If a person wants to do personal work, the best way to start is to do it. How many want to be soul winners, but "don't have time" to learn how? How many want to win souls but "don't have time" to get prospects? or, to teach them? When you find someone who says he wants to be involved in winning souls, but then gives you that "I-don't-have-time" bit, he doesn't really want to pay the price of being a soul winner. If a person is serious, he needs to set aside one or two nights a week, find someone else who is interested, and then go to it. May God give us more ACTION members, and fewer TALKERS!

How many times do we see and hear brethren who talk about their desire to go to heaven. DESIRE translated is ACTION! If a Christian desires to go to heaven, it will be seen in his development of character and conviction. He will find ways to put his abilities into work. He will grow and mature in Jesus Christ. Gerald Cowan wrote these definitions of maturity in a recent bulletin:

"Maturity is being able to see someone you know deliberately snub you, and still make allowance for his action, and love him anyway.

"Maturity is being able to listen to someone criticize you, even unkindly, and receive instruction from it, without hard feelings.

"Maturity is being able to see someone doing something which is against your Christian standards, without reacting self-righteously.

"Maturity is being able to see a work which you have begun, taken away from you and given to another, without feeling bitterness.

"Maturity is being humble enough to admit being wrong when you are wrong, and being big enough to avoid saying 'I told you so' when you are right."

The freedom we enjoy in Jesus Christ does NOT free us to DO NOTHING. It does not free us from responsibility, but makes us responsible. We may not shirk our obli-

gations. Let us get busy and defend this freedom by fighting and resisting the devil! Let all get involved with the cause of Christ!

** **
** **

WE THANK YOU!

It was with regret that I read in the February 1977 issue of FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIAN that the April 1977 issue would be the last of this fine publication. We are indebted to Franklin Camp, Roy Hearn, Max R. Miller and others associated with FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIAN through the years for a job well done. A grateful brotherhood thanks you.

We thank you for having vision in an age when so many seemed to not have it. The paper would not have influenced as many as it did were it not for your vision.

We thank you for being brave in a time when compromise seemed to be the thing to do for so many. You did not and would not compromise the truth for anyone or anything.

We thank you for having convictions and the courage to stand up for them. Many today profess strong convictions but lack the courage to defend and stand up for them.

We thank you for setting an example before those of us who are younger of just what it takes and how much to defend the faith.

We are grateful and again we thank you!

MICHAEL D. STONE

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VOL. 6, NUMBER 6

JUNE 1977

CHALLENGING DANGERS OF MODERN VERSIONS NO.1

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.
Ripley, Tennessee

EDITOR'S COMMENT:

With this issue of *THE DEFENDER* begins a series of articles written by brother Robert R. Taylor, Jr. This series will deal with the dangers of the modern versions of the Bible. Most of us recognize that the modern versions are creating problems. Perhaps most of us recognize that problems are even being created within the body of Christ. We want to be guided by sound judgment and true scholarship when it comes to the "version problem." The last thing in the world we would want to see happen would be to brand some brother or congregation "liberal" because they did not use the King James Version. On the other hand we would literally run from any position that left the impression that we endorsed the modern versions that are creating the problems. Brethren, we must be careful that we do not, in our stand for the truth, create a "Version Church". It is this writer's belief that the most accurate translation which is available to us today is the American Standard Version. Next to the ASV is the King James Version. Both are excellent translations, though both have their minor problems. Beyond the ASV and the KJV the translations begin to have serious problems. Only a few are really worthy of the description "translation", for many are nothing more than paraphrases and proliferations. But after all has been said and done we must remember that all are translations--that is, they are the work of men. The text in the original language was word for word inspired of God. We must strive for the purity of translation that most accurately carries over those words into our present language.

It is in this light that we proudly present the following series entitled, *CHALLENGING DANGERS OF MODERN VERSIONS*. Robert Taylor is a faithful gospel preacher, sound in judgment and true to the Book. It is an honor to have him writing for *THE DEFENDER*. We present his work knowing it will be of great value to those who read it now, and to those who shall have access to it in the years to come.

--W. S. Cline

(Continued on page 43)

EDITORIAL . . .

The Third Annual Bellview Preacher Training School Lectureship was a most excellent program of Bible Study. Nineteen men from all over the country spoke on subjects which were directly related to the theme, "Contend Earnestly for the Faith." We deeply appreciate the speakers and the congregations which had a part in our lectureship. Next year's theme has already been selected and all of the speakers are scheduled. The 1978 lectureship will be May 7 - 11. You need to now make plans to attend.

We have received numerous letters from those who attended the lectureship. We appreciate them and the fine words of encouragement. We have also noted some articles in bulletins which spoke of the lectureship. One such editorial appeared in the bulletin from the Central Church of Christ in Andalusia, Alabama. Brother Albert Fleetwood, evangelist for that congregation and editor of the bulletin had the following editorial in the May 15, 1977 issue.

The Bellview Preacher Training School Lectureship

The third annual lectureship held last week, May 8-12, in the auditorium of the Bellview Church of Christ in Pensacola, Florida was unusually fine! Surely it was among the very best! The theme, "Contending Earnestly For The Faith," was presented in the speakers and their assigned subjects in an unusual, forceful and clear manner. All speakers were well qualified and prepared, thus making it one of the very finest lectureship programs that I have ever attended!

The good ladies of that church prepared and served excellent noon meals each day, and many of the men, including elders, deacons, teachers and members, used their vacation to attend and assist in the lectureship. Also, many from distant places used their vacation time to attend this lecture series...St. Louis, Mo., Ohio, Texas, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, etc. People came from several states. I can truthfully say the future looks bright for this school as it shows an increase in attendance, interest, enthusiasm and support each year at the lectureship!

The lectures may be obtained on Cassette tape or book from: Bellview Preacher Training School, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506.

DEFENDER

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CHALLENGING DANGERS. . .

Sometime ago the good editor of this fine journal, William S. Cline, and I were on a lectureship together in Kentucky. At that time he invited me to do some writing for THE DEFENDER on some of the dangers we face from the modern versions of the Bible. I appreciate that request and begin to honor it with this article. If the editor is willing, I propose to write a dozen or more articles dealing with this topic. In my judgment it is one of the most crucial issues facing the Lord's people today. Some do not believe we have a version problem; some recognize its existence but say nothing and write nothing in its regard. Some who helped us in the version fight years ago have now joined forces with the promoters of the new versions yet claiming to be just as sound as ever. Some are trying to make it appear that any person who opposes the modern versions is out to split the church. It strongly appears that they want a few of us to shut our lips and retire our pens from any further opposition to the modern versions in order that they may take the church for the new versions without anybody's raising a protest. But sealed lips and retired pens is not the answer or the solution to a growing and grievous problem. For those who introduce the new versions and promote them with fervency and then accuse those of us who oppose what they are doing as church splitters is just more than some of us can buy. Some are rather dense about where the real blame lies and just who is responsible for the existence of the problem.

In his classic book, A REVIEW OF THE NEW VERSIONS, brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr. states in his preface remarks, "It is my firm conviction that the greatest immediate danger confronting the churches of Christ is the general acceptance of the pseudo-versions of the Bible." (Page xxxv.) With the brilliant and scholarly Wallace I fully concur. It is a problem which faces religious people in every part of our country and even of the English

speaking world. Some introductory Scriptures and practical questions are appropriate as we begin our study on this vastly important topic.

SCRIPTURAL WARNINGS AGAINST TAMPERING WITH GOD'S WORD

Near the beginning of the Bible, in the middle of the Bible and right at the end of the Bible the God of heaven solemnly warned humanity not to tamper with the words of Deity. In the first five books of the Old Testament, commonly called the Pentateuch, the Sinaitic lawgiver declared, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:2). In the middle of Jehovah's inspired volume the Infallible Spirit of truth said, "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." (Prov. 30:6). Almost at the very conclusion of the Sacred Volume the saintly Seer of Patmos strongly warned, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Rev. 22:18-19).

Standing by the side of these three stately sentinels guarding the divine deposit of saving truth are other great Scriptures which warn man to respect God's Word and not to tamper with the same. In a strongly worded and greatly deserved rebuke to the Jewish leadership of the first century Jesus said, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition... Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye." (Mark 7:9,13). Paul wrote cogently along these same crucial lines. To the Christians at Corinth he wrote,

"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. 4:2). To the fickle Galatians Paul wrote, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:6-9).

The apostle Peter was not a whit behind these others as he sought to guard the future integrity of the truth and to warn brethren against those who would tamper with its basic nature. Among the final words which flowed from Peter's inspired pen are the sacred sentiments located in 2 Peter 3:16. Therein the former fisherman and now the ardent apostle of Christ stated with earnest emphasis, "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

SOME POINTED QUESTIONS ABOUT TAMPERING WITH GOD'S WORD

Are the foregoing Scriptures addressed to preachers and Bible teachers? Indeed they are! Are they addressed to those who write articles, produce commentaries and pen other books relative to the Scriptures? Indeed they are! Are these verses addressed to those who seek a scholarly grasp of the Scriptures in the original Hebrew and Greek in order that they might translate them into another tongue such as the English language? Most assuredly! These Scriptures are

designed for all who study, who teach and who practice the holy religion of Jehovah God.

Have preachers and Bible teachers added to, subtracted from and modified God's Word? In too many instances the answer has been a painful yes. Have these who picked up a pen to write in regard to religious matters been prone to substitute human traditions for divine decrees as set forth within Sacred Scripture? The whole history of religious journalism testifies in the affirmative. And when something in writing teaches an error it will be a permanent error as long as that writing lasts. It will have an influence for evil as long as it is read and relished by the unsuspecting. Have those who acted in the all important capacity of Biblical translators frequently handled the Word of God deceitfully, been prone to follow Satanic devices, perverted the gospel of Christ by substituting their theology for what the original text demanded and wrested the Scriptures by the touch of torturing their very obvious meanings? In many, many instances they must plead guilty to these serious charges. And whether they admit such or not the charge can be sustained against them by overwhelming evidence, by abundant proof.

It is tragic when the teachers, the preachers and the religious journalists of the day tamper with Jehovah's Word. It is of far greater consequence when the translators do so. The works of the translators form the very foundation of what will influence so tremendously the preachers, the teachers and the writers in their respective messages they will convey to the multiplied millions of people in the pews and readers of their works at home who look to them for religious and spiritual guidance in determining God's will for their lives and labors. In addition the translators influence the multiplied masses of Bible readers who buy what are called Bibles and read them with full confidence that they are God's Word. There is no greater literary

crime committed in our era than to put Bible on the front cover of a book that is not the Bible from the opening declaration of Genesis 1:1 to the concluding syllables of Revelation 22:21. Yet that is done time and time again in our age. It is done on a mass scale as this study will prove time and time again before we conclude with the same. Reader friend, are you reading with care and profit at this crucial point?

There is just no conceivable way that the power of Biblical translators can be overdrawn. Not many can go to the original Hebrew and Greek texts of God's Word and do their own study. Hence, there is an almost universal reliance upon Biblical translations or versions. And this has been true throughout the history of twenty centuries of Christianity. Very early in the Christian Age the Scriptures began to be translated from the Greek tongue into other languages such as the Syrian, the Latin, the Coptic, etc. The need for translations has long existed; it still exists; it will continue on into the future. It is our deep-seated conviction that God gave His Word with the view that it could and would be translated into other tongues. We are in total disagreement with the modernistic sentiment of C. H. Dodd, Chairman of the Committee who translated the NEW ENGLISH BIBLE, that the Bible translator faces an impossible, impossible mind you, task!! Thank God the 148 translators of the beloved King James and the accurate American Standard Version did not feel likeminded. Thank God for these two highly reliable translations. They constitute the two we will be holding high in this series of lessons. We will do so because we believe them to be reliable, accurate in setting forth vital truth and not tinctured

with fatal error. This cannot be said of the modern versions including the RSV, the NEB, the TEV, THE LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED, THE AMPLIFIED BIBLE, the NIV and others of similar sentiment, many of our college professors to the contrary notwithstanding!! Those who translate the Sacred Scriptures have such an awesome responsibility. Their power for weal or woe defies apt description.

CONCLUSION

In a northern city where I was scheduled to preach on a Sunday morning a number of years ago there was an elder in the Lord's church there who also was a very successful attorney. He led the prayer just before my sermon that morning. I remember but one specific sentiment that he uttered but I remember it as though he had just prayed it while I was writing and typing this article. The priceless and precious precept was, "Lord, help us not to tamper with thy word." He often dealt with wills in his profession both in the writing of them and the probating of them in the representation of his clients. He knew that the wills of men were to be respected and carried out to the letter of their every mandate; their wills were not to be tampered with. Even more importantly he was cognizant of the fact that Heaven's will was not to be tampered with by the hands of men and lips of church leaders. Had you heard him pray this prayer, would you not have remembered this petition also? Surely such should be a part of the prayers and practices of everyone of us without exception. This is especially true relative to our attitude and action toward the modern versions and their work of perverting the truth of God Almighty.

* * * * *

AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU - NOT SUCH ARE SOME OF YOU!

QUENTIN DUNN
Sabinal, Texas

Those for and against Gay rights caused much excitement and attracted much attention in San Antonio, Texas May 28 and 29. Each group had a big rally and each group had a speaker. A Baptist preacher spoke against homosexuality. A man wearing his collar backwards spoke in favor of Gay rights. Each speaker spoke on TV. The religious leader favoring Gay rights in essence said this, "We are all sinners and need salvation. Homosexuals need salvation as much as anyone. Those denying them salvation are restricting God's love and forgiveness. The Bible does not say if you are heterosexual you can come to the Lord, if you are a homosexual you cannot come to the Lord. The invitation is to whosoever will. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." He said nothing about a homosexual needing to make a change of any kind.

Those advocating Gay rights need to be taught that homosexuality (unnatural sex acts) are sinful. To do otherwise is to open the flood gate for all kinds of sins and crimes. If a homosexual can be saved without repenting, why can't a murderer keep on killing? Why can't a prostitute keep on practicing prostitution? Why can't a thief keep on stealing? Any serious minded Christian knows that those guilty of murder, prostitution and stealing must quit their sinful deeds. A homosexual must quit committing unnatural sex acts.

Many people in denominationalism have permissive attitudes toward homosexuality. Some in the church have permissive attitudes toward homosexuality. Some professing to be gospel preachers say that homosexuality is a sickness, not a sin! Some of these preachers are quite popular with some brethren and

especially with some young people. The influence of these preachers is disastrous!

Paul said, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor.6:9-11). Effeminate includes many unnatural sex acts; abusers of themselves with mankind includes the sin of sodomy. Paul said and such were some of you, not such are some of you! They had quit committing unnatural sex acts; they were no longer homosexuals. They had complied with all God's conditions of pardon. Therefore, they were cleansed by the blood of Christ and God had forgiven them. Whosoever will includes those who meet all God's conditions of pardon. Homosexuals can be saved today if they meet all of God's conditions for salvation.

Let us not have it said among us, and such are some of you! We need to speak boldly against homosexuality from the pulpit! We need to speak against it in the class rooms. As individuals, we need to write to our Senators and Representatives and let them know of our opposition to unnatural sex acts! A house cleaning is surely needed! It is so easy to remain silent! Please remember that all that is necessary for evil to prevail is for enough good men and good women to say and do nothing!

The New vs. The Old

GEORGE E. DARLING, SR.
Fort Deposit, Alabama

MODERN CONGREGATION OF THE 20TH CENTURY

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF THE FIRST CENTURY

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Ignorant of the Word of God. | 1. Taught in the Scriptures. |
| 2. Divided. | 2. United. |
| 3. Prayerless. | 3. Prayed without ceasing. |
| 4. Unqualified and ungodly elders. | 4. Scripturally qualified elders. |
| 5. Spiritually dead. | 5. Spiritually alive. |
| 6. Haters of each other. | 6. Lovers of each other. |
| 7. Undisciplined. | 7. Disciplined. |
| 8. Unrebuked. | 8. Rebuked sharply. |
| 9. Unprofitable servants. | 9. Profitable servants. |
| 10. Emphasis on baptism. | 10. Emphasis on faith. |
| 11. Selfish. | 11. Unselfish. |
| 12. Inhospitable. | 12. Houses open to others. |
| 13. Singing that is dead. | 13. Singing from the heart. |
| 14. No love for lost souls. | 14. Love for lost souls. |
| 15. Unconverted. | 15. Converted. |

You can go on from here. There are many more comparisons that can be made. This is just a small list of things the average preacher must face in the average congregation of the church today. Look over the congregation where you attend services and see how many you can find that are deeply SPIRITUAL. How many are really interested in a good old down to earth and up to heaven prayer meeting when compared with those who are interested in a "chili bean feed" with some brilliant after dinner speaker to entertain them. Note how many are late to the services they attend. How many attend only the Sunday morning services; how many do a naked nothing in the way of trying to win souls to the Lord; how many of them who will not stand for sound doctrine to be preached and will fight the preacher who tries to get them to walk closer to God and love Him more. Note also the ones who actually love sin, serve sin and put themselves out more for sin than they will for the Lord. Just try it and see if I have exaggerated and have not drawn a correct picture of the AVERAGE congregation. I hope your congregation is ABOVE THE AVERAGE - if it is let me know when you need a new preacher.

When a young preacher completes his preparation to "enter the ministry" it usually comes as a great shock to him when he undertakes his first "PASTORATE". The hardest task any man can undertake is to try to lead a

large group of ungodly and unconverted church members into the deep things of God. An appeal to them to "Spiritual things" is as useless as preaching to a grave yard, because they are spiritually dead. The difference being that the physical dead will do you no harm, but the spiritual dead will do everything that is humanly possible to halt any spiritual progress you try to make. I feel sorry for the young and inexperienced preacher who is filled with the love of God and enthusiasm, but does not realize what he is getting into when he "HIRES OUT" to the average congregation today.

Now don't say I'm an old "fuddy duddy" for I'm not. I'm just being practical. I do not believe that we are even going to lead our people into the deeper things of the spiritual life until we face up to the real issue and that is when we have cleaned out the unregenerated sinners who have gotten into high places of leadership; and until they can be either converted or disfellowshipped, the work of New Testament Christianity is going to be stymied and delayed.

Brethren, it is high time we began to make some kind of effort to convert the membership. They have been ducked in water but that is all that has ever happened. The average membership in the average church needs to be CONVERTED. There is more to restoring the church for which Jesus died than just getting people to believe in baptism and keeping a "FORM" of Christ's memorial on the first day of the week. There are far too many members who are REGULARLY eating and drinking damnation to themselves, not discerning the body. I am not minimizing baptism nor the Lord's Supper, but a mere dipping in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is not all there is to baptism. Christians are to DIE TO SIN and SIN IS TO HAVE NO MORE DOMINION OVER THEM. The Lord's Supper is MORE than just sitting down and partaking of the bread and the cup. Those who go through the form on Sunday morning, and then do not love the Lord and His body enough to attend on Sunday night and all other services possible, in my way of thinking might just as well stay home on Sunday morning. We do not serve just from the sense of DUTY - our service must be motivated by our love. Too many of us are trying to do just enough to keep our names on the church rolls and are not the least concerned with the second mile service for our Lord and Master.

We need to go deeper into our study of the church that Jesus purchased with His blood.

PREACH THE WORD, BROTHER!

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VOL. 6, NUMBER 7

JULY 1977

CHALLENGING DANGERS OF MODERN VERSIONS NO. 2

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.
Ripley, Tennessee

In the initial article for this series we laid the groundwork as to the why of these articles and then supplied several Scriptures that warn man most solemnly that it is a grievous and glaring sin to tamper with the word of the Lord. Yet preachers, teachers, religious journalists and especially so-called modern Bible translators have frequently done this. Beginning in this article we propose to become rather specific in delineating some of these challenging dangers we face from the modern versions.

THE CHALLENGING DANGER OF THEIR MOUNTING MULTIPLICITY, THEIR PERSISTENT PROLIFERATION

The number of them mounts, multiplies or proliferates every decade. In all seriousness we ask, what about all the multiple versions of the Bible now available? Do they augur well or bad for the Lord's people and those who are interested in becoming the people of Jehovah God? A number of people say that their mounting multiplicity, their persistent proliferation is good. They feel that such is healthy. Reader friend, you may be among the

number who possess similar sentiments but I am not of that number at all. I have never been of that number nor do I expect to be in the future. It is not accidental upon my part but purely deliberate that in a preaching ministry that reaches nearly thirty years and a writing ministry that reaches about half that number of years that I have stayed with the King James and the American Standard Versions of the Bible. They are reliable Bibles; they can be quoted without running the danger of setting forth fatal error which abounds in many of the modern speech versions available in our day. Contrary to what some among us are now writing and saying, these two versions are readable; they are understandable.

THE EXTENT OF THIS PERSISTENT PROLIFERATION

We definitely face the clear challenge of their mounting multiplicity, their persistent proliferation. In the book of Ecclesiastes 12:12 Solomon, the Wisest of the Ages, sagely observed, "...of making many books there is no end;..." Were the Hebrew monarch of that

(Continued on page 51)

Get On Or Get Off

GEORGE E. DARLING, SR.
Fort Deposit, Alabama

For the past thirty six years I have tried to preach the gospel without fear or favor. Many times, I must admit, I was tempted to compromise on some issues that have disturbed the "brotherhood". God being my witness, I have tried to "stay with the book". As I look back over these years I am made to wonder just what might have happened had I gone along with the popular groups. I have seen many preachers who said, "I won't take sides", or, "I'm on the fence in this matter." This has been especially true in matters that concerned their standing in the "brotherhood" or that might effect their jobs and incomes. They had to keep in mind their popular standing among the "better known preachers" and the community, so they set their sails to catch the popular wind while their "theology" became as flexible as "Silly Putty".

On Sunday morning they preach to a large audience. It matters not to these preachers that the audience is made up of liquor dealers, libertines or "Black Jack dealers". He does not care for these are the ones who have the dough and who wield the influence in the town. If faithful and honest men and women in the congregation call for discipline, they are laughed off and quietly subdued by being told that "There is a difference of opinion in 'the brotherhood' concerning sin

nowdays and that discipline in the 20th Century church is a thing of the past." (Ain't that the truth!) Or to bring it up to the present, "It's a matter of judgment."

While the "better known" and popular Pussy Footer preacher speaks so sweetly on love, and deals so gently with sin, the spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places moves in and he sits there, straddling the fence, while the church is polluted and corrupted. The Devil moves in, the church blows up, and God's people finally get their eyes open enough to move out. THAT IS JUST WHAT THE DEVIL WANTS!

This is the picture of the "popular" church. The Devil laughs on one side of the fence as he steals God's sheep and the Lord stands on the other side saying, "Cry aloud, and spare not." The preacher looks to his "Tub of Butter" and his "community popularity" and sits on the fence. The press lauds him, "Man of the Year"--"Best Dressed Man", etc. The Chamber of Commerce praises him for his freedom from bigotry and his "Broad Views". He speaks learnedly on the aesthetics of Christianity. He dabbles and babbles in the ethical field, and on occasion, (when no dissenters are present) he touches lightly upon some phase of the Gospel... with a four foot feather... Never mentions hell...the doctrine of

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The eldership, in general, in the "popular church" is in hearty agreement with the "popular preacher" and just as long as the church flourishes, the preacher stays on good terms without any friction from the Devil, all is well and good. But that preacher MUST stay

Now don't you young preachers try to preach any of this. If you do you will probably get FIRED...I did, and I was...If any of you preachers, referred to in this article, want to contact me, the address is Box 128, Fort Deposit, Alabama. Population--about 1700--give or take a few.

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Bibles-47; Old Testaments-10; New Testaments-85; Portions-198. As you will note there have been increases and decreases in the number of Bibles and New Testaments. In 1976 two Bibles were completed, therefore, the New Testaments will no longer be considered separately. These new texts are the Today's English Version and William Beck's translation." This adds up to at least three hundred and forty English translations either in part or in whole. Even these statistics will not be up-to-date long for the number is being added to all along. During the late 1940's or some thirty years ago the brilliant Princeton professor, Oswald T. Allis, wrote a very fine review of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament and called attention to many of its self-evident weaknesses. In that valiant volume Mr. Allis referred to the fact that we have now a superabundance of versions available. Look at all the ones which have been added since he

penned that statement three decades ago.

THE BIBLE OF ONE'S OWN CHOICE

We are now in a position that a person not only may have the church of his own choice, which many have delighted in through the years, but also now he may have the Bible of his own choice. He can have one that endorses faith only. In fact, he may just about have his choice of the faith only Bibles for a number of them are easily available. This number includes the RSV, the TEV, The Living Bible Paraphrased, etc. If one wants a Bible that will get him into Christ even before faith let him obtain the New International Version. It will allow a man to be saved at the point of hearing. (See its rendering of Ephesians 1:13.) He can have a number that endorse original sin or Total Hereditary Depravity which is accepted Calvinism in action. He can have a number that endorse the theory of premillennialism. He can have a number that favor certain fundamental errors of the Roman Catholic church such as that the church is built upon Peter the Rock in Matthew 16:18. He can have at least two of the better known modern day speech versions, the RSV and the NEB, that maliciously mutilate the great virgin prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. These and a number of other modern speech versions have lifted virgin right out of the text of Isaiah 7:14 and in its place have inserted "young woman." There is a vast difference between a young woman's being with child and a virgin's being with child. The "young woman" rendering does not inform us whether she is married or unmarried for young women can be both married and be unmarried. The "young woman" rendering does not tell us whether the person is pure or impure; a virgin or a non-virgin. A young woman may be pure or impure; she may be a virgin or a non-virgin. But the virginal aspects of the correct rendering as found in both the King James and the American Standard Versions tell us that she is pure and not impure; that she is with child and yet has never been known by a man. The

passage demands that she be a virgin at the time of conception; that she be a virgin at the time of the child's birth. Its virginal aspects should never be dimmed by an erroneous rendering such as we have in the RSV and the NEB. Yet the RSV is held up as reliable Bible by some from whom we expected better things!!

If one happens to dislike the doctrinal tone of Mark 16:16, and many do, he can have a popular Bible, the RSV, which, in its initial edition of 1946, made a footnote of the last dozen verses of Mark's gospel record. Though the RSV later restored these verses to the text, with the observation that a textual problem exists, yet the initial damage was already done as they reflected on the genuineness of that inestimable portion of Sacred Scripture. Yet we are assured that the RSV is in the Tyndale tradition of Biblical translations!! Did not Tyndale claim that he had never deliberately tampered with God's word? The RSV can lay no claim to such as this for they tampered with God's word in Mark 16 and many other places as well. Yet some from whom we expected better things are now singing its praises as a reliable Bible. It will be a cold day in August before some of us forget what the RSV did initially to Mark 16:9-20.

Those desiring such can now have Bibles that favor the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit for people today. They can have more than one Bible greatly favorable to modern day claims of the older forms of Pentecostalism and Neo-Pentecostalism. And if there is not now one available teaching as much of the Pentecostal doctrine as he wishes one would, let him be patient for one will soon be available to meet his fondest wishes. If one is favorable to the various and sundry theories of modernism and liberalism, then he can have a modern speech version that will abet his modernistic leanings and liberalistic inclinations. If one is interested in having modern slang terms and the very language of the

streets appear in the Bible of his choice, then he can have such in any number of them. If they want a shorter Bible, then they too are available. If they desire variation, let them buy about three to five of the modern speech versions and read one the first day, the second one the next day and the third one the third day. Even if they read the same passages all three of the days of the experiment, they will frequently find wide variations and on occasion contradictions. Yet they all claim to be reliable Bibles; they all claim to be the word of God. Yet the claim is made again and again that the translators now know so much about the ancient languages and now possess a far superior manuscript base for their translational work than did former translators. If there is validity to all this, why do the versions get worse and worse? Why do they become more removed all the time from the truth that saves? Why is more and more error or falsehood creeping into the modern speech versions of the Bible? Perhaps creeping is the wrong word. Galloping into the text is more apt in

explaining what is happening currently.

If there is not now one available to suit the likes and preferences of an individual, then he may not have to wait too long before one or more is available that will fully fit his personal brand of theological thinking and religious bias. So-called Bibles now come in all sizes, in all shapes and with an INFAMOUS variety of conflicting sentiments and outright perversions. This is NOW true and WE ARE ONLY AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS MOUNTING MULTIPLICITY, THIS PERSISTENT PROLIFERATION!!! It is fearful and frightening to appraise what the future holds within this very vital realm of religious thought and activity. Without successful gain-saying from any it augers no good for those who are set for the defense of the gracious gospel of God's Son and love with dedication the old paths-paths that are rapidly disappearing in the overwhelming rash of perverted Bibles-books that have Bible written on the front cover but are not true to the Hebrew and Greek texts on the inside.

He Is A RADICAL

GEORGE E. DARLING, SR.

Fort Deposit, Alabama

Who is a Radical? What is a Radical? This epithet is supposed to be just about the "end of the

line" when a preacher has run out of descriptive terms to apply to his brother who is preaching what

he knows in his heart he ought to be preaching too, and there is some more venom in his system that he wants to spit out, he invariably applies the term "Radical" to the "Dear Old Brother". Usually the "beloved friend(?) says, "Well, _____ is just a little bit "radical." But the inference is there that _____ is not at all to be desired.

WHAT IS A "RADICAL"? He is one who takes the Word of God, and to the best of his ability, goes by it, in spite of all the opinions of the more "intelligent ones" who shave the truth to make it less offensive to the sinners he is supposed to warn. IT IS ONLY SO IN RELIGION; never so in anything else.

If an Engineer goes by his "orders" he is a good engineer. He would be untrustworthy if he did not do so. IF THE PREACHER GOES BY HIS "ORDERS" HE IS A RADICAL. If a Lawyer pleads for justice and appeals to the "LAW" and demands that his client receive exactly what the Law demands, and is clever enough to get it, he soon becomes a "Famous Mouthpiece" and his reputation for honesty and fairness spreads. IF THE PREACHER GOES BY THE LAW OF GOD, HE IS A "RADICAL"...No Teacher would be considered honest or reputable in the realm of mathematics if he decided to be loose in the application of the multiplication tables...BUT THE PREACHER IN ORDER TO BE ACCEPTABLE AMONG HIS "BROAD MINDED" BRETHREN, MUST DO JUST THAT.

If a soldier obeys orders he is a good soldier, but if he refuses

to obey those orders he is court martialed and executed by a firing squad, and his name goes down in history as a disgrace to his country...But unless the preacher does just that, changing his "Orders", placing others opinions above the authority of his "General", he cannot be accepted among his preacher brothers because the whole gang of them have conspired to break the "General's orders." The preacher that refuses to join with them in the conspiracy becomes a "Radical". So you see, a Radical, in the realm of preaching, is a good engineer, a shrewd lawyer, a dependable teacher, and an obedient soldier. NO MATTER HOW MUCH STIGMA IS PLACED UPON HIS NAME BY HIS "BELOVED BROTHERS" HE IS THE ONE THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO HIS GOD!

As for me, I would rather be called "A LITTLE BIT RADICAL" by my broad minded preaching brethren, than to be called a "F O O L" forever by my God!

I want to go on record right here to this end; I believe in the Lord's church as it is revealed in the scriptures; the Lord's plan of salvation as given in the scriptures; the Lord's government for His church and the Lord's financial system are right and if anybody, I care not who or how many, disagrees with the Word of God, He or they are as wrong as hell can make them! I WANT TO BE RIGHT! Brethren, it is no sin to appeal to God's revelation to prove one is right. The Bible is the only source that is infallible. If we go by the Word of God WE KNOW WE ARE RIGHT.

"PREACH THE WORD, BROTHER."

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

LEONARD PETERS

Richland, Washington

The question of evolution and the age of the earth has troubled mankind for many centuries. It is not a mere recent idea initiated by Charles Darwin (slightly more than a century ago), rather it has perplexed men since before Christ. The question can be traced back to at least 700 B.C. in Ionia, Greece. Since that time every age has had its learned men who ask and try to answer the questions of how, when, and where life and this earth began.

It has only been since Darwin and his successors - e.g., Huxley, Spencer, Haeckel, and others -, however, that the theory of evolution has become so wide spread. And one of the really disturbing things about this is, many of our elders, preachers, and teachers do not know how to combat the error of evolutionary ideas. Worse yet, many of our teachers and leaders believe in evolution and teach this false doctrine in our pulpits throughout the country. Occasionally, we invite men to come in to teach against evolution and they wind up advocating a form of theistic evolution! The so-called "Christian" world of today, and particularly the church, has been taken in by the sacred cow of science. If evolution is false and anti-scriptural (and it is), putting God's name before it and calling it "theistic" evolution, makes it neither scriptural nor true. I am greatly concerned that many of our elders, preachers, and teachers have never taken the time to study these questions in depth. So, when some Ph.D. comes out with "scientific facts" which claim, for example, that the earth is billions of years old, many will bow to that sacred cow without question! If someone dares to question such, he is marked as a "nut" of some kind.

Let us briefly note a few facts (not theories) which stand opposed to the concept of a very ancient earth (billions of years).

COAL DEPOSITS - Evolutionists contend that coal was being formed some 500 million years ago over a vast period of time. We will not go into the origin of coal but simply show at this point that the formation of coal does not require millions of years. Note these facts.

(1) Near Freiburg, Germany, a certain wooden railroad bridge was being replaced with steel. In the rebuilding process it was discovered that the wooden piles which had supported the weight of the bridge had turned to coal! Coal had formed within the short span of the railroad era. (Reginald Daly, Earth's Most Challenging Mysteries, p. 138.) And this involved only a span of about 100 years!

(2) In his book Geology of Coal, Otto Stutzer tells of some success scientists have had in making coal in the laboratory. Men have actually been able to produce a coal like substance by applying heat and pressure to vegetation. For these and other reasons, Moore, an American coal geologist, says: "From all available evidence it would appear that coal may form in a very short time, geologically speaking, if conditions are favorable." (Whitcomb & Morris, The Genesis Flood, p. 279.) And conditions for the formation of coal have never been so favorable, before or since, as during the flood period described in Genesis.

(3) According to evolutionists, man came on the scene some 400-500 million years after coal was formed. Now here is a fact that few scientists will attempt to explain (so, like many others, it has been swept under the rug), some years ago a fossilized human skull was found in a coal measure. Whitcomb and Morris observe: "The outstanding authority on coal geology, Otto Stutzer, says concerning this mysterious fossil: 'In the coal collection in the Mining Academy in Freiberg, there is a puzzling human skull composed of brown coal and manganiferous and phosphatic limonite, but its source is not known. This skull was described by Karsten and Dechen in

1842.' The coal was presumably Tertiary in age but at any rate is supposed to have far antedated the first appearance of man. The evidence again seems mostly to have been ignored, although it has been suggested that someone must have carved the skull." (The Genesis Flood, pp. 175,176.)

The lengths at which some go to avoid the truth is truly amazing. It is my prayer and hope that more will begin to seriously study these issues in depth. Let us not be intimidated by the theories of science, but let us believe everything the Bible says (Exodus 20:11).

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

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CHALLENGING DANGERS OF MODERN VERSIONS NO. 3

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.
Ripley, Tennessee

We now have more Bibles and various versions of the Bible than at any time in human history. Yet at the same time there is less respect for the Grand Old Book and the supreme authority that inheres therein than at any time in our remembrance. Is there a correlation here? Realistic facts constrain us to answer in the affirmative. How can there be an ascending Bible respect when millions are reading the translational works of men who were characterized by a descending respect for the sacred text themselves?

THE CHALLENGING DANGER OF A LESSENING OF RESPECT FOR BIBLE AUTHORITY

The new Bibles have been turned out by men who do not even believe the Bible to be the word of the living God. Modernism reeks in the writings of Moffatt, Goodspeed, Weigole, Bowie, Orlinsky (a Jew who does not even believe Jesus is the Christ), Sperry, Cadbury, James, Burrows, Wentz, Schroyer and Craig. Who were these men? They were among the number of the twenty-two men who produced the Revised Standard Version, one of the many unreliable Bibles of our day. The sacred text

was not safe in their hands as a full examination of their unreliable product reveals. Isaiah 7:14 was not at all safe in their hands. If you doubt this, turn to their rendering and then contrast it with how the Bible in this verse should read as found in the reliable Bibles such as the King James and the American Standard Versions. Initially, Mark 16:9-20 was not safe in their hands. They reduced it to footnote status and denied its historically important place in the sacred text. It was not till a later edition that they restored it back to the text and then they still left a question mark over its genuineness. Luke 1:1-4 was not safe in their hands. When they finished this passage they had taken a mighty slap at Luke's claim to inspiration for this gospel record. It is reported that when Professor John Scott of the Northwestern University theological department observed what the RSV had done to the opening verses of Luke 1 that he charged in his CLASSICAL WEEKLY that the RSV translators were "GUILTY OF DELIBERATE DISHONESTY in this unwarranted charge in the wording of this text." (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., A REVIEW OF THE NEW VERSIONS, pp. 362-363.) Matthew
(Continued on page 60)

Discerning The Signs

LEON COLE
Florence, Alabama

"The Pharisees also with the Saducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, when it is evening, ye say, it will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" (Matthew 16:1-3).

It is so easy to look back and see where we made a mistake. As the old proverb states, "Hindsight is always better than foresight." Often though the mistakes of the past were made in spite of warnings. It isn't often that one can excuse himself for ignorance because usually at best it is willful ignorance. Human nature hasn't changed much and it appears that the same mistakes of the past are yet being made. We fail to discern the signs.

The Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist and Christ had shown many signs but those contemporary with Christ could not (more likely would not) discern these signs. When Jesus inquired, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am"? - Some thought he was John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremiah or one of the prophets. They too failed to dis-

cern the signs.

Strangely enough the failure to discern the signs is now being committed by the people of God. The apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 14:37, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." The preaching of Paul was "Christ crucified". Today from many pulpits we hear, Trueblood, Tillich, Barth or some other theologian. On other occasions we hear "pep rally type" exhortations filled with "hair raising" tales that would be more in place at a Holy Roller "campmeetin". If the plan of salvation is mentioned it is done so rapidly that it does not register with the audience. Brethren, is this not a sign? A sign of apostasy and failure to preach the gospel?

Further, the Bible teaches that "the church is the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15). But in recent months it would appear that some think that the church is incapable of accomplishing this task. We have been blessed with A.I.M. (Adventures in Missions) and A. M. E. N. (American Military Evangelizing Nations). Too bad Paul didn't know about such when he went on his evangelistic tours supported by Antioch and how sad that all the

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men in the military in past years didn't know they should have had some sort of an organization before they could evangelize some nation.

Another organization of brethren, this one with tax exempt status declares in its charter that its purpose is "to produce non-denominational seminars for training members of the body of Christ". One wonders if those brethren ever stopped to consider that God set up the church for such a purpose. Another of the stated purposes is "to solicit money of any nature to finance the above goal". There you have it brethren! Another boondoggle organized to "make merchandise" of the brethren. Another sign: a movement away from the all sufficiency of the church. Some people need to wake up instead of allowing themselves to be carried away by some "wind jammer" shedding "alligator tears" and promoting their latest fad or gimmick.

Paul also said that the church is the body and that there is one body but now there are those who declare, "the church of Christ is a big sick denomination". In Hebrews 6 it is declared that God did swear by an oath so our faith could rest in absolute truth but there are preachers in the church of Christ who are saying, "In these situations, then, where it is not possible to discover complete, total evidence in support of a proposition - in those situations which involved faith - it is better to take the path of hope than the path of fear." For what greater sign could we ask?

Then Paul said, "Buried with him

in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him--" (Col. 2:12). Yet I hear preachers saying, "And the reality of our death to self is symbolized as we are buried physically in a tomb carved out of a rock in a Palestinian garden." (*Herald Of Truth Sermon #306*). There are other preachers who say that conversion is a miracle. (*Herald Of Truth Sermon #957*). Are these not signs?

Then those who oppose such trends and contend for obedience to the commands of God are charged with "legalism", "hair splitting", "Phariseism" and "making creeds". As brother J. D. Tant said, "Brethren we're drifting.

It is time to discern the signs, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:30). There is a need for elders to see these signs for though preachers are largely the bearers of perverted teaching, elders can stop it cold. "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped: who subvert whole houses, teaching things they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." (Titus 1:9-11).

Will we discern the signs and defend the truth or will we weep when we remember the Old Jerusalem gospel from the Babylon of denominationalism where these deceivers are taking us?

CHALLENGING DANGERS. . .

5:17 was not safe in their hands. When they finished its rendering it contradicted Ephesians 2:15. Many others could be listed but these are sufficient. Yet religious people by the masses have thrown away their reliable Bibles such as the King James and the American Standard Versions and adopted some modern speech version such as the RSV, the REV, the NEB, the LBP, the NIV, etc. I say shame, Shame, SHAME!!

C. H. Dodd was the Chairman of the translational committee that produced the New English Bible. His writings read more like those of Paine, Voltaire, Hume, Ingersoll or a modern day Professor Flew of Reading University in England than they do of what we would expect from a Bible translator and the Chairman of the entire group at that!! The first eleven chapters of Genesis have never been safe in the hands of modernists. These historically important chapters were not safe in the hands of Dodd and his demolition crew. Dodd does not believe Moses was a real person or that he wrote anything. Jesus declared in John 5:45-47 that Moses did live and wrote of the Christ. He declared in John 3:14-17 that Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. It would be rather interesting to observe a non-entity lift high the brazen serpent in the wilderness. Moses wrote about 25 per cent of the Old Testament and about 20 per cent of the entire Bible. Yet the NEB translator Dodd does not believe that he wrote any of it. Now who is really naive to the extend that he believes that a man with that background is going to give the religious world a reliable translation to say nothing of a superior translation? No wonder the virgin birth of Isaiah 7:14 was not safe when they arrived at it. No wonder Matthew 16:18 was left in shambles of Roman Catholic error when they finished it. No wonder the doctrine of the Lord's Supper was irreverently tampered with in Acts 20:7. No wonder Genesis 11:1 in the NEB reads just like the beginning of a fairy story. That is

what Dod and his group thought they were translating - myths and legends from the ancient and uncertain past!!! No wonder Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15 were clear out of harmony with each other when the two passages stood completed (perverted is a more apt term though). Other modern speech versions make the same mistake.

How can there be anything in the religious world short of a greatly lessening respect for Biblical authority in view of these contradictions, these points of irreverence, these appeals to vulgar and slang terms and an outright repudiation of the Bible's supreme authority? For those who look with fond favor upon the multiple rash of new versions we have a challenging question - WHY WITH THEIR INCREASE HAS THERE BEEN A NOTICEABLE DECREASE IN RESPECT FOR BIBLICAL AUTHORITY? Respect for the Bible is at a low ebb indeed within religious circles! Why should this be in view of all the fine benefits that the new Bibles provide us according to their ardent advocates and staunch supporters? Some praise God for the rapid multiplication, the persistent proliferation of the new versions. This writer is not of that number, never has been, is not now and never expects to be in the future unless the new Bibles of the future become reliable Bibles. And NOTHING appears on the current scene to make us think the Bibles of the future will aim at Scriptural accuracy. Accuracy, to the world of Bible purchasers, is of but little concern at the present. That fact is underscored with validity by the multiplied millions of people who have purchased perverted Bibles in our day.

THE CHALLENGING DANGER OF THEIR DEEPENING DEPARTURES AND INCREASING INACCURACIES

When the RSV Bible first appeared in the early fifties of this century a teacher in one of our Christian colleges projected the prediction that if the religious public gave this new Bible a vote of approval and bought it, the subse-

quent versions and translations would indulge even more freely in deviations from truth. More than a quarter of a century has passed since this prediction and it has witnessed an accurate fulfillment. Look at the downhill slide in translational accuracy through the New English, Today's English Version, Living Bible Paraphrased, Phillips' Version, the Amplified Bible, the very far out Cotton Patch Version, etc. Though the New International Version is not as bad as some of these it is no where in the class of the King James and the American Standard Versions as touching reliability and accuracy. I refuse to recommend it as a reliable Bible regardless of what some of our brethren say in its praise. As far as these various versions have gone within the last quarter of a century, what will the last few years of this current century bring about or unfold in the realm of new Bibles? Their anticipated deviations make all lovers of sound doctrine shudder.

By close and diligent research one can go through these modern speech versions and mark place after place where deviations have occurred. Seemingly, the departures grow deeper and their inaccuracies steadfastly increase with the coming forth of nearly every one of them with but few exceptions. The new Bibles are majoring in the manufacture of mistakes - mistakes that are grievous and glaring, mistakes that are deadly and destructive, mistakes that are reckless and rebellious. Multitudes of religious leaders stand ready to give full endorsement to nearly everything that comes out with the word Bible on the front cover and some of our brethren are not a whit behind in such quick endorsements. They stand ready to do it almost before its ink is dry or the new Bible hits the book market. Read it beloved and weep!!

One of the new Bibles came out some years back. A preacher in the southwest became almost immediately one of its avid admirers. He told this writer that it was a word-for-

word translation of the original. Yet when one takes that new Bible and turns to Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15 he observes a flat contradiction between what it has the Lord to say and what it has Paul to write. And the fault IS in the new Bible; the fault does not lie with the Lord; it does not lie with Paul. The mistake was not the Lord's; the slip was not Paul's; it was the NIV that erred; that did the slipping. Like many of its translational predecessors it was simply a case of where the translators did not understand the difference between the Mosaic and Christian covenants. I firmly believe that is one of the major causes why so many of the modern speech versions miss the real truth as set forth in Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15 or Hebrews 10:9. They are totally in error in their understanding of the Bible's two major covenants.

For years I have stood amazed at the defenders the TEV has had within our brotherhood. It and these other dangerous versions have been passed out as though they were candy. To engage in such is like giving a stone for bread, a serpent for a fish or a scorpion for an egg. (Luke 11:11-12.) Jesus declared that loving fathers do not give children evil gifts when the request has been made for the good gifts. Then why should perverted Bibles be given to impressionable people when we can give them reliable translations? Judgment, without doubt or debate, will be severe for those who have done this and thus destroyed the faith of millions in the precious integrity of God's Book. It is highly dangerous to give people a polluted Bible. Polluted air, polluted food and polluted water are bad but polluted Bibles are far worse for they touch the souls of men. People can still go to heaven who have breathed polluted air, who have drunk polluted water or have eaten polluted food. But souls are not safe for that first moment that feed upon and are governed by polluted Bibles. How exceedingly dangerous they are!!

ALL WORDS AND NO ACTIONS?

RAY HAWK

Pensacola, Florida

Have you ever worked with a congregation that seldom, if ever, practiced discipline? Many elderships feel that all the discipline needed is a sermon from the pulpit on any problem arising in the congregation. If the preacher gets into trouble for speaking on the problem, they can always escape the heat by terminating that preacher's tenure and hiring another.

Any eldership that wants their evangelist to speak out against forsaking the assembly but refuses to withdraw from those who have quit attending are inconsistent! It is like sending a man into battle with a rifle without bullets.

An eldership that refuses to get involved in the work of overseeing the flock needs to resign from a work they are not performing. Sheep which stray need to be sought and brought back. If they refuse, they need to be withdrawn from. Any elder or group of elders who refuse to take this part of his responsibility serious does not actually "desire" the work of a bishop and is not thereby qualified to serve!

There is adequate information in the book of Proverbs to show what happens when parents will not correctly discipline their children. Cf. Prov.13:24; 19:18; 22:6; 15; 23:13, 14; 29:15, 17. If a child's soul is delivered from hell with discipline, why isn't the same true

in the case of the church member? Isn't this what Paul is saying in 1 Cor.5:5? Why do so many elderships refuse to practice what the New Testament teaches on this subject?

In October, 1976, I was appointed an elder to serve with three other men who were already bishops in the Bellview church. These men knew and practiced their responsibility in this matter. I wish each elder would review the qualifications of a bishop and see whether he is doing what God states he must do in this area!

- (1) *Take care of the church as he rules his own house, 1 Tim.3:4, 5.*
- (2) *Exhort and 'convince (convict) the gainsayers (opposers of the word), Tit.1:9.*
- (3) *Watch for the souls of the flock, Heb.13:17.*
- (4) *Take the oversight, 1 Pet. 5:2.*
- (5) *Leading the church in withdrawing from the disorderly, Heb. 13:7; 2 Thess.3:6, 14, 15; Rom. 16:17, 18.*

If a man is not willing to get involved in withdrawing from those who walk in sin, he is puffed up like the Corinthians and needs to either repent or get out of the eldership, 1 Cor.5:2. Brethren, fellow elders, let us be honest and get serious about this great work over which the Holy Ghost has made us overseers, Acts 20:28!

Sometimes

QUENTIN DUNN
Sabinal, Texas

An elder's daughter recently said during a Bible class, "I think pre-marital sex is all right." The teacher asked, "Don't you believe the Bible?" She replied, "*Sometimes*."

This kind of thinking is getting more common among brethren. This attitude encourages many sins to reach epidemic proportions in some congregations. In some congregations some of the married brethren tell about single brethren having intimate relations and having babies out of wedlock, and some of the single brethren tell about some of the married brethren committing fornication and other brethren tell about some brethren having intimate relations with each others companions. While some brethren tell these things on other brethren some tell it on themselves! Some brethren that tell it on themselves tell it on other brethren. Dancing, drinking and loose talk also reach epidemic proportions in some congregations.

In the minds of some brethren the sinfulness of sin depends upon many factors. If they like someone, sin is not really sin; if they don't like someone it is a big sin! Do they believe the Bible? Yes, *sometimes*! Some elders greatly minimize the sin of fornication if a brother or sister attends regularly and contributes well. Do they believe the Bible? Oh yes, when it doesn't interfere with the contribution! They believe the Bible *sometimes*. Other brethren justify or minimize sins if they are committed by their kin folks. Do they believe the Bible? They do *sometimes*.

God is impartial and sin is no less sin if it is committed by our

friends. Sin is no less sin because a brother or sister is wealthy. Contributing well and attending faithfully does not give one the right to gossip or be immoral. It is very important that all brethren understand the sinfulness of sin. It is very important that all recognize the importance of repentance.

Repentance must be full and genuine. Not all coming before the assembly are evidence of full repentance. Some brethren come before the assembly and ask for prayers but confess no sins and quit no sins at the time. They continue to drink, dance, fornicate or whatever they have been doing. Some confess unfaithfulness in attendance but continue to be unfaithful in attendance. When one confesses unfaithfulness in attendance he should put forth every effort to be faithful in attendance. One should repent of every sin of commission, that involves quitting every sin of commission. He should pray to God for strength to overcome temptation. "My little children these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (I Jno. 2:1).

None of us should be self-righteous, but none of us should encourage *sin*. We should try to keep it out of our lives. We should ask God's guidance in all things. We should believe the Bible all the time and not just *sometimes*! We should not only believe everything in the Bible but make the proper application of it. Preachers and elders have the great responsibility of teaching the brethren to believe all the Bible all the time, not some of the Bible *sometimes*!

IF UNDELIVERED DO NOT RETURN

Answering The Reassessment Call

MICHAEL D. STONE

An editorial (January 25, 1977) in the *Firm Foundation* entitled, "A Call For Reassessment" disturbed me

no small amount. The third paragraph of the editorial reads as follows:

"We have already reached the point in our progress in that direction where we have a number of groups who hold that any links or even contacts with even their own brethren who are not of the peculiar persuasion they hold is an unholy alliance. The disfellowshipping mania that has dealt the body of Christ such grief since 1900 shows no signs of abating. More effort has been spent in making and keeping the church "pure" than in saving souls. Most of the efforts to purify the church have been efforts to make it conform, worldwide, with some brother's hobby."

First of all, it seems to me that brother Lemmons thinks that there has been too much disfellowshipping since 1900. This is not the case at all. Actually, there has not been enough. We would not have many of the problems we face in the church today if these problems had been nipped in the bud early even by disfellowshipping, if necessary.

Secondly, the reason we have spent so much time in trying to keep the church pure is because so many times in so many places, the church has not been pure. And, a church that is not pure is not going to save any souls. Only a pure church can influence a lost world.

We in the church are to be a people unspotted from the world. If the blind lead the blind, they both will fall into the ditch. Actually, is not keeping the church pure one effort in saving souls? I think that it is.

Thirdly, our efforts to purify the church are not efforts to conform it to some brother's hobby. We want the church to conform to the teachings of the New Testament, not to some brother's hobby. Brother Lemmons makes a declarative statement of fact which he fails to prove. Will he be more specific and name the "hobby" and the brother or brothers to which he makes reference?

the DEFENDER

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

VOL. 6, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 1977

CHALLENGING DANGERS OF MODERN VERSIONS NO. 4

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.
Ripley, Tennessee

Numerous times within Holy Writ Jehovah God has warned man not to tamper with His divine will. Man is not to add to the word of the Lord; he is not to subtract from that will; he is not to alter, modify or substitute in regard to God's will. Unfortunately, many have engaged in the tampering of God's will. It is doubtful if any people have done it with more dire consequences resting upon what they have done than in the works known as modern versions of the Bible. In this lengthy series for THE DEFENDER we are calling attention to some of these challenging dangers. They are real and they are critical. In fact they constitute the most crucial danger confronting God's people today. They form the very ruinous taproot from which will come more and more in the way of grievous and glaring departures from saving truth - the truth that is absolutely vital to man's redemption from sin and damnation. To date in our consideration we have noted many Scriptures which touch this basic issue. We have noted the challenging danger of their mounting multiplication, their persistent pro-

liferation. We have noted the challenging danger we face of a lessening of respect for Bible authority to which they have certainly been a strong part and parcel. We now present a third straightforward and stinging indictment, yet a very truthful one, against the modern versions of the Bible.

CHALLENGING DANGERS OF THEIR HIGHLY DANGEROUS GUIDELINES AND TRANSLATIONAL PROCEDURES

The careful and cautious selection of correct and accurate guidelines is absolutely imperative if a superior translation is to be produced. When the guidelines are perverted the finished product can hardly be expected to be of any higher quality than the guidelines that directed its literary production. I want to share with you what some of the new translations have followed by way of accepted guidelines. I will be giving actual quotations and any reader can check for accuracy. It is never my pur-

(Continued on page 67)

Withdrawal On A "Low Key"

WILLIAM S. CLINE

Pensacola, Florida

Even a casual study of the New Testament on the subject of "withdrawal of fellowship" or "church discipline" will lead one to the conclusion that such discipline is to be done openly, and that one of the purposes of such is to mark the sinner in the eyes of all so that he may be ashamed and repent. Paul taught in Romans 16:17-18 that the sinner is to be "marked" or literally "fix the eye on the sinner" so that others may know he is a sinner and needs to repent. Elders that sinned were to be reproved "...in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear" (I Tim. 5:20). Withdrawal of fellowship is to be done for the same purpose, and where is the passage that would allow us to conclude that something as serious as discipline should be practiced "quietly" where at the same time we know that an elder who is persistent in sin is to be reproved before all?

When Peter sinned, Paul rebuked him to his face and recorded it for all mankind to read for as long as this world stands. Granted this was not withdrawal of fellowship--it did not go that far. If Peter would have ignored the rebuke and

instruction from Paul then the time would have come when he would have had to have been marked as a false brother. In short his sin was recorded, as public as any sin of any one ever was, and he was not withdrawn from.

In I Timothy Paul stated that some had made shipwreck of the faith. He then plainly named Hymenaeus and Alexander and said he had delivered them unto Satan that they might be taught not to blaspheme (I Tim. 1:19-20). In 2 Timothy 1:15, Paul stated that Phygelus and Hermogenes had turned away from him. In chapter 4, verse 9 of that same letter he said that Demas forsook him because of his love for the world.

More examples could be cited, but the above are enough. The Scriptures have never been silent concerning those who have sinned. Even if such were some of the giants of the Bible such as Moses, David, Solomon, or Peter. In order for withdrawal of fellowship to have its desired effect, each member of the church must *individually* practice it. It is true that such may

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be led by the elders, but it is the church that withdraws fellowship. Question: How can each member of a congregation, or each member of each congregation within a certain area, withdraw fellowship from a brother if they do not know that the brother is to not be fellowshiped? Yet there are brethren that have been known to "withdraw fellowship" from someone and then refuse to even announce it to the congregation (can you believe it) or print it in the local bulletin. Such is in no way a withdrawal of fellowship as taught in the New Testament!

Just recently we learned of an eldership that withdrew from a man for living in adultery. They read the announcement (actually the intent of withdrawal) on a Wednesday evening. The father of the man questioned the elders as to why they had "picked" on his boy. In their answer to the father they suggested that he should be happy

that they had decided to only announce it on Wednesday and not on Sunday for it was such a problem that they had decided to keep the withdrawal "ON A LOW KEY." If it were not so serious, such would be humorous to say the least. Where did anyone ever read of "withdrawal on a low key?" How can withdrawal of fellowship be practiced by that congregation if at least half of the congregation doesn't know about it? (You understand that many congregations only have about 50% of their membership present on Wednesday.) Further more, how can other congregations in the area uphold the discipline(?) of that congregation if they do not even know about it?

Brethren, isn't it about time that we practice what the New Testament teaches without any reservation or expression of timidity and ashamedness!

Brethren, we've drifted!

CHALLENGING DANGERS . . .

pose to exaggerate what is wrong with the modern speech versions of our day. Telling the matter just like it is will get the job done of what is wrong with them.

The New English Bible New Testament says in the Introduction, "But if paraphrase means taking the liberty of introducing into a passage something which is not there, to elucidate the meaning which is there, it can be said that we have taken this liberty only with extreme caution, and in a very few passages, where without it we could see no way to attain our aim of

making the meaning as clear as it could be made. Taken as a whole, our version claims to be a translation, so far as we could compass it." Paraphrasing, introducing something not in the text to elucidate its meaning and free rather than literal or word for word translation were some of the guidelines followed by C. H. Dodd and his translational committee as they produced the NEB. Be it kept in mind also that C. H. Dodd is on public record as saying that the task of the Bible translator is an impossible one. If he is right, why did he and his group even agree to come out with the NEB? This question needs an answer from the proponents of the new Bibles and

(Continued on page 70)

The Second Annual

















“SPIRITUAL SWORD” LECTURESHIP

Getwell Church of Christ
1551 Getwell Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38111

NOON
BREAK
11:30-1:30

DINNER
BREAK
4:30-7:00





ATTENDED
NURSERY

























	8:00 a.m.	9:15 a.m.	10:00 a.m.	10:45 a.m.
Mon. Oct. 24				
	J. D. Bates Genesis	James Meadows Ezekiel	W. N. Jackson Leviticus	Gary Ealy Joshua
Tues. Oct. 25				
	David Lips I Kings	Goebel Music II Kings	Lindsay Branch Malachi	Tom Eddins I Chronicles
Wed. Oct. 26				
	Carroll Ellis Proverbs	Billy Smith Ecclesiastes	Jim Lewis Song of Solomon	Guy H. Woods Isaiah
Thurs. Oct. 27				
	Frank Young Obadiah	Paul Kiseell Jonah	Hugo McCord Psalms	Chas. A. Williams Micah

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Sun. Oct. 23	9:30 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	7:30 p.m.	7:45 p.m.
				
	Roy Deaver Introduction to Old Testament	E. R. Harper The Church The Prophets Saw	Roy Deaver Grace, Law Love, Salvation	Thomas Warren Job

1:30 p.m.	2:15 p.m.	3:00 p.m.	3:45 p.m.	7:00 p.m.	7:45 p.m.
					
Ira Rice Judges	Neal Pryor Ruth	Terry Hightower I Samuel	E. R. Brannon II Samuel	Noel Meredith Deuteronomy	Andrew Connally Hosea
					
Wm. S. Cline II Chronicles	Ray Hawk Ezekiel	Garland Elkins Nehemiah	Clifford Peol Esther	Alan E. Highers Amos	Johnny Ramsey Jeremiah
					
W. D. Jeffcoat Social Drinking	Wm. Wilder Lamentations	Robert Taylor Ezekiel	Pat McGee Job	Rex Turner Daniel	V. E. Howard Zechariah
					
Max Miller Nahum	Maurice Lusk Rebekah	James McGill Zephaniah	Mac Deaver Psalms	Robert Camp Theology Evolution	Wendell Winfield Numbers

all the good they supposedly have brought the religious world of our day. Who will arise to the challenging task and defend Dodd's blasphemous charge? Will any reverent Bible believer and lover of God's Book suggest that such guidelines as the above constitute the very essence of innocency? If so, ON WHAT GROUNDS AND WITH WHAT SUSTAINING PROOF??

In his Translator's Foreward Mr. J. B. Phillips said, "I doubt very much whether the New Testament writers were as subtle or as self-conscious as some commentators would make them appear. For the most part I am convinced that they had no idea they were writing Holy Scripture...Paul, for instance, writing in haste and urgency to some of his wayward and difficult Christians was not tremendously concerned about dotting the i's and crossing the t's of his message. I doubt very much whether he was even concerned about being completely consistent with what he had already written." Thus wrote the translator of THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MODERN ENGLISH. Mr. Phillips certainly possessed exceptionally low regard for the character of the sacred scribes of the New Testament and the powerful productions that flowed from their prolific pens. Such an irreverent attitude not only reflects on Paul and the others but look at what it does with the Holy Spirit. Mr. Phillips was speaking about more than just the works of first century men. He was speaking about what Deity was doing through the inspired agency of first century penmen such as Paul and his apostolic colleagues. Mr. Phillips allows NO ROOM AT ALL for the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit. How many religious people in our country through the years who have used Phillips' work as a dependable Bible will agree with his blasphemous attitude toward the selected scribes of the New Covenant? Mr. Phillips says that for the most part he was convinced that the New Testament writers had no idea of what they were doing,

i.e., writing Scriptures. Now it seems beyond successful debate that Mr. Phillips did not realize that he was translating Holy Scriptures but he is way off the base of truth and accuracy when he accuses the Biblical penmen of naiveness in these noble endeavors. It is highly interesting to observe that in I Timothy 5:18 Paul quotes a passage from the gospel of Luke and he called it SCRIPTURE!! It looks like such a striking statement and insight as that would have entered the dense and darkened counsels of a certain translator's mind!! The Biblical penmen were not nearly so naive and ignorant as Mr. Phillips has imagined them to have been. If the Biblical penmen of the New Testament could come back, it would be interesting to hear their appraisal of a certain Mr. Phillips. It would be far more interesting to see what they thought of his tampering with their divine productions - the SACRED SCRIPTURES.

Anyone who thinks that the New Testament penmen did not know what they were doing is in the wrong business when it comes to being a New Testament translator. This is a work for competent believers and not for daring doubters. Again, anyone who thinks Paul was hasty in his writings, unconcerned about accuracy and without regard for a career of literary consistency in apostolic penmanship has NO BUSINESS seeking to translate the Bible. Mr. Phillips should have worked on secular interests of literary pursuits and left the Bible translating to Bible believers. No wonder Mr. Phillips dealt with I Corinthians 14:22 as he did and suggested in his modernistic and liberalistic footnote that he changed the text because he thought Paul's pen had slipped or a copyist had made an error. When he finished with the mutilation he had tongues for a sign to believers and not to unbelievers as the Greek text demands and as our reliable English versions convey.

The Preface of THE LIVING BIBLE

PARAPHRASED contains the following paragraph which is rather revealing, "There are dangers in paraphrases, as well as values for whenever the author's exact words are not translated from the original languages, there is a possibility that the translator, however honest, may be giving the English reader something that the original writer did not mean to say. This is because a paraphrase is guided not only by the translator's skill in simplifying but also by the clarity of his understanding of what the author meant and by his theology. For when the Greek or Hebrew is not clear, then the theology of the translator is his guide, along with his sense of logic, unless perchance the translation is allowed to stand without any clear meaning at all. The theological lodestar in this book has been a rigid evangelical position." The easily apparent danger here lies in the fact that the reader of these modern speech versions who knows little or no truth and even less Hebrew and Greek cannot always tell whether the message is a faithful and reliable translation of the original languages or simply constitutes the theology of the translators skillfully woven therein. Translators pursuing such pernicious guidelines will not preface a verse or set of verses with the announcement that the following is not a reliable rendering but our theological thinking regarding what the original text either states or does not state. In all candor and kindness I ask if the foregoing declarations are safe and reliable guidelines for launching out into the great and far-reaching work of Biblical translations?

The PREFACE of the RSV for the year of 1946 contains this paragraph on pages v and vi, "Let it be said here simply that all of the reasons which led to the demand for revision of the King James Version one hundred years ago are still valid, and are even more cogent now than then. And we cannot be content with the Versions of 1881 and

1901 for two main reasons. One is that these are mechanically exact, word-for-word translations, which follow the order of the Greek words, so far as this is possible, rather than the order which is natural to English; they are more accurate than the King James Version, but have lost some of its beauty and power as English literature. The second reason is that the discovery of a few more ancient manuscripts of the New Testament and of a great body of Greek papyri dealing with the everyday affairs of life in the early centuries of the Christian era, has furnished scholars with new resources, both for seeking to recover the original text of the Greek New Testament and for understanding its language." This spells out in loud terms the RSV's attitude and action relative to "mechanically exact, literal, word-for-word translations" of the Bible. They did not intend for their RSV to be so characterized. And for a surety they succeeded marvelously well in this negative intent!!!

IN CONCLUSION

Self-accepted guidelines, whether wise and accurate or foolish and inaccurate, cannot help but powerfully influence the finished product. How could it be otherwise?

In this current article for THE DEFENDER we have examined only four of the available versions among the modern crop of them. Many of the others are no better in the formation of beginning guidelines. If you are prone to use one or more of the modern speech versions of the Bible instead of remaining with the time tested and deeply reliable King James and the American Standard Versions, I urge you to read with care and scrutiny the FOREWARD or the Translator's PREFACE of the one or ones you use. It might well be an eye opening experience for you. It has been for many other people who have bought one or more of the modern speech versions of the Bible.

IF UNDELIVERED DO NOT RETURN

AN OPEN LETTER TO FELLOW GOSPEL PREACHERS

For more than two years the Bellview Preacher Training School has been planning to have brother Roy Deaver teach a course on LOGIC. We have finally been able to arrive at a date that fits both brother Deaver's schedule and ours -- December 10 - 16, 1977. Brother Deaver will begin the classes Saturday morning on December 10 and conclude on Friday evening December 16. It is planned that by Friday night approximately 90 hours of lectures will have been given on the subject.

There is no brother more qualified academically to teach LOGIC than Roy Deaver; there is no brother more skilled in the use of LOGIC than Roy Deaver; and there is no one in the brotherhood who needs such material more than preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Of all people who should be able to reason correctly and logically it is gospel preachers.

There will be no tuition charge and the only expenses will be travel and living expenses incurred for the week. Perhaps some can find lodging among the members of the Bellview church of Christ. However, such will be at a premium for several have already committed themselves to attend these lectures.

For those who are interested in credit toward a graduate degree, such can be obtained through the Alabama Christian School of Religion. Dr. Rex A. Turner, Sr., President of the School of Religion has informed me that 9 quarter hours credit can be given to those who successfully complete the course in LOGIC. It might also be of interest to note that since the Bellview Preacher Training School is underwriting the cost of the course in LOGIC, the School of Religion will not charge the standard \$19.00 per quarter hour but will grant a sizeable reduction in tuition cost. Further information regarding the above can be acquired by writing the Bellview Preacher Training School.

Those planning to attend should contact us immediately so that proper preparation can be made.

the DEFENDER

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

OL. 6, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 1977

CHALLENGING DANGERS OF MODERN VERSIONS NO. 5

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

Ripley, Tennessee

In previous installments of our study on this critical and exceedingly crucial issue we have called attention to such apparent dangers as their mounting multiplicity or persistent proliferation, the lessening of Bible influence which they have surely encouraged and engendered, their increasing inaccuracies and the highly dangerous guidelines to which they have subscribed. In this and a subsequent article we shall take note of how we face THE CHALLENGING DANGER OF THEIR MOVING THE CREEDS OF MEN INTO THE VERY TEXTS OF THE BIBLE. I fully recognize the weight and gravity of this indictment but firmly and surely believe that I can sustain it in argument or logical form.

THE CASE AGAINST CREEDS

Human creeds were exceedingly dangerous when they were placed in separate works and set by the side of the Bible, or, as in most instances, were placed over the Bible both in attitude and action. A great preacher of the past once presented four Herculean objections

to the religious creeds concocted by men which were designed to bind the hearts of humanity and control the minds of men. They were: (1) If a creed contains more than the Bible, it should be rejected because it contains too much. (2) If it contains less than the Bible, it should be rejected because it contains too little. (3) If it contains something different than the Bible, it should be rejected because it is different. (4) If it contains just the Bible, no more, no less, it should be rejected because it is a superfluous document and is not really needed at all. We already have the Bible and we do not need something just like the Bible. These oft repeated objections against human creeds in religion have not been successful in their total extermination. The Roman Catholic practice of moving their creedal points into Biblical footnotes managed to get the creed closer than ever to the actual Bible text. Now the creeds of men are being injected into the very text of the Bible itself. They are not creeping into the texts of the so-called new Bibles; they are

(Continued on page 75)

The Bible

DALTON KEY

Douglas, Kansas

The Bible is by far the best book in all the world. It merits our reverence, our respect, our love, our belief, our trust, our subjection, and our complete obedience. Without the Bible we would be as helpless, hopeless nomads travelling the road to eternity with no purpose, no map, and no guide. If it were not for God's book, the Bible, we would know nothing of God's law, will, love, and eternal purpose; we would be ignorant of Christ's sacrifice, blood, intercession, and advocacy; we would be without knowledge of our sin, our need for salvation, and our eternal nature and destiny.

The word "Bible" is not found within the pages of God's eternal revelation to mankind. God's book refers to itself as the law (Ps. 119:97; James 1:25), the word (Ps. 119:11), the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15), the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11), scripture (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:16; Acts 17:11), doctrine (2 Jn. 9; 2 Tim. 4:2,3), and truth (Jn. 8:32; 17:17). It describes itself as a sword (Eph. 6:17), a fire (Jer. 23:29), a hammer (Jer. 23:29), a seed (Lk. 8:11), a lamp (Ps. 119:105), and a light (Ps. 19:105).

The Bible is not a "dead letter". According to the Hebrew writer, God's word is both quick and powerful. (Heb. 4:12). It was by the

word of God that the worlds were framed and the heavens were made (Heb. 11:3; Ps. 33:6). The Bible quickens (Ps. 119:50), begets (James 1:18), cleanses (Jn. 15:3), purifies (1 Pet. 1:22), converts (Ps. 19:7), saves (Acts 11:14; Jms. 1:21), pricks (Acts 2:36-38), cuts (Heb. 4:12), and will judge us in the day of judgment (Jn. 12:48).

The Bible is unlike any man-made book or creed in that it is perfect (Ps. 19:7), verbally inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16,17; 1 Cor. 2:10-13), and eternal in nature (Matt. 24:35; 1 Pet. 1:24,25). While the books of men rise and fall in terms of public acceptance and popularity, the Bible has throughout the years sustained a "best seller" status. Other volumes are constantly undergoing revision, yet the Bible is every bit as relevant - up to date - today as it was in the ancient days of its inspiration.

There are various attitudes in regard to the Bible. Some are apathetic towards it, some reject it, some wage war against it, and some love, cherish, and respect it. Many, like Jehoiakim, would like to burn it, while others, like David, love it to the point of making it their constant meditation (Jer. 36:23; Ps. 119:97). What is your attitude towards the Bible? Is your daily manner of life an apt delineation of that attitude?

- DEFENDER

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CHALLENGING DANGERS. . .

GALLOPING into these perverted products that some see nothing wrong with and will praise them to the high heavens.

"FAITH ONLY" HAS GALLOPED IN

For thirty years now the RSV has been teaching faith only in Romans 11:20. Yet we hear again and again many of our preachers, each one of whom should know better, affirm that the RSV is a reliable Bible. It is strange that we can see what is wrong with a "faith only" affirmation in the Methodist or Baptist creed books but can pass over the same UNBIBLICAL doctrine in the RSV with next to nothing in the way of doctrinal concern. Brethren, WHY??

Mr. Bratcher in his TEV, one of the most contemptible and perverted of all modern speech versions, moved the "faith only" creed into his work that is sometimes styled GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN. However, the wrong adjective appears before news in that grievously misleading appellation. Here are the ways TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION renders Romans 1:17; 3:28 and Galatians 2:16 respectively, "For the gospel reveals how God puts men right with himself: it is through FAITH ALONE, from beginning to end. As the scriptures say, 'He who is put right with God through faith shall live.'" "For we conclude that a man is put right with God ONLY THROUGH FAITH, AND NOT BY DOING WHAT THE LAW commands." "Yet we know that a man is put right with God ONLY THROUGH FAITH in Jesus Christ, never by doing what the law requires." (All emphases mine-RRT.) Mr. Bratcher contradicted his own theology before he finished this perverted product. This is the way he translates James 2:24, "So you see that a man is put right with God by what he does, and not because of his faith alone." Mr. Bratcher is wrong in James 2:24 if he is right in the Galatian and Roman passages. He is wrong in the Galatian and Roman passages if he is right in James 2:24. So he is right

if he is wrong and wrong if he is right!! What a position for a Bible translator to be in!! The Bible is not at fault; an inept translator and a perverted version are at fault!!

ERRORS RELATIVE TO LORD'S SUPPER GALLOPED IN

Mr. Bratcher had little or no trouble at all in removing both the Lord's Day and the Lord's Supper from Acts 20:7. According to him the passage by Luke reads, "On Saturday evening we gathered together for the fellowship meal. Paul spoke to the people, and kept on until midnight, since he was going to leave the next day." Did you notice any mention of breaking bread - a New Testament designation for the Lord's Supper - in this highly erroneous rendering? Did you notice any mention of the first day of the week? Mr. Bratcher took the Lord's Supper right out of Acts 20:7. There is not one English reader in a thousand, or in a million for that matter, who would associate a fellowship meal as the equivalent of the Lord's Supper. Perhaps even those odds would be too conservative!! Would you, if the TEV is the ONLY rendering you ever had read on Acts 20:7? If the English reader of the Bible only had Mr. Bratcher's version, and it is Bratcher's book all the way and not Jehovah's any of the way, he would never come to the conclusion that Saturday evening meant the first day of the week would he? If so, HOW?? To the English minds of the twentieth century, the very ones for whom Bratcher translated or attempted to do so, Saturday evening means anytime from about sundown on Saturday afternoon till the midnight hour when the time becomes Sunday or the first day of the week. But Saturday evening and the first day of the week are not the same to the English reader of the twentieth century. Was not Mr. Bratcher verily guilty of moving into the text of his so-called Bible what he favors? Was he not equally guilty of removing from the text what he dislikes? If not, WHY NOT? Reader

friend, moving in the *unwarranted* and moving out the *unwanted* that is definitely in the Greek text are not within the authority of so-called Biblical translators such as Robert Bratcher of the American Bible Society. Only Deity can do this; Mr. Bratcher and the ABS ARE NOT DEITY.

NEO-PENTECOSTALISM HAS GALLOPED IN

Mr. J. B. Phillips changed the whole complexion of 1 Corinthians 14:22 by making tongues into signs for those who already are believers. He said, "That means that 'tongues' are a sign of God's power, not for those who are unbelievers but to those who already believe." At the bottom of this page he says the reason for this change is to be traced to his, that is, Phillips', persuasion that we have either here a slip of Paul's pen or else a copyist's error. Read it and weep! This is from a so-called Bible translator! I readily grant that there has been a slip of the pen in this matter of moving gravity! But it was not the apostle Paul's pen that slipped; it was Phillips' pen that did the irreverent slipping, the blasphemous deviating, the sinful substituting. I readily grant that there is an error here. But the error is not to be attributed to one made by some ancient or more modern copyist. The error was injected into his so-called Bible text by one J. B. Phillips of the twentieth century. The error is not an apostolic one; it is not an ancient one; it is a modern one!! No wonder we are having so much trouble with Neo-Pentecostal doctrine in our time. The new Bibles, such as Phillips' work, have injected Pentecostal error into the very text of what they erroneously call the Bible. In a reliable Bible, the King James Version, 1 Corinthians 14:22 reads, "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe." The reliable American Standard reads practically the same way. Between

these two renderings and the one given by Mr. Phillips there is as much difference as exists between daylight and darkness, as between truth and falsehood, as between right and wrong. And I do not have to draw a picture as to the realm where Mr. Phillips and his perverted Bible belong do I?

The New English Bible moved the ecstatic language right into 1 Corinthians 14. This highly perverted product does this in at least a dozen places in this one chapter alone!! Here are a few instances where this is done. "When a man is using the language of ecstasy he is talking with God, not with men, for no man understands him; he is no doubt inspired, but he speaks mysteries." (1 Cor. 14:2). "The language of ecstasy is good for the speaker himself, but it is prophecy that builds up a Christian community. I should be pleased for you all to use the tongues of ecstasy, but better pleased for you to prophesy. The prophet is worth more than the man of ecstatic speech - unless indeed he can explain its meaning, and so help to build up the community. Suppose, my friends, that when I come to you I use ecstatic language: what good shall I do you, unless what I say contains something by way of revelation, or enlightenment, or prophecy, or instruction?" (1 Cor. 14:4-6.) The NEB does this consistently throughout this entire chapter. The creedal points of modern day Pentecostals find much help from just such renderings as these.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM GALLOPED IN

The NEB moved the Roman Catholic creed into the rendering of Matthew 16:18 which says, "And I say this to you: You are Peter, the Rock; and on this rock I will build my church, and the forces of death shall never overpower it." A copy of an approved Roman Catholic Bible now lies before me. Its translators dared not put Peter as the Rock or foundational stone of the church into Matthew 16:18. Now they injected it into the footnote that deals with this passage all

right but they left it out of the text of this Catholic Bible. But Dodd and his mutilation crew allowed it to gallop in!! The NEB did for Roman Catholicism what that movement dared not do within its own

version - that is make Peter the rock of the church. The NEB here out "ROMED" Rome and out "POPED" the Pope!! Peter's primacy received a tremendous thrust here.

THE AUTHENTICITY AND GENUINNESS OF MARK 16:9-20

WILLIAM S. CLINE
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In the ancient church the gospel according to Mark did not command the attention given to Matthew and Luke, but in the modern period it has forged ahead of its companions and now occupies the place of chief consideration among what is known as the Synoptics.¹

The genuineness of Mark's gospel was never doubted before Schleiermacher broached the view that the Gospel in its present form was not the work of Mark the companion of Peter. This led to the notion, which was met with much acceptance among German critics such as Baur, Hilgenfeld, Kostlin, etc., that the original manuscript was written in Aramaic and formed the basis for some later writer to form the existing Gospel.² Then Greisbach became the first to deny the genuineness of verses 9-20 of chapter 16. Others followed suit and a continued attack on Mark was launched.

Since it is not our purpose to argue the genuineness of Mark's gospel we simply point out that the evidence, both external and internal, for the genuineness of the gospel according to Mark is strong and was never really questioned until approximately two hundred years ago.³ However, with regard to the integrity of the gospel there has been much objection raised to the last twelve verses of the narrative.

Some authors make a blanket statement that Mark 16:9-20 is spurious and leave the reader to accept their assertion without any statements of proof.

McClintock and Strong state that both external and internal evidence are strong against the authenticity of the longer ending. However, they do offer minimum evidence to sup-

port their claim.⁴

In 1849 Henry Alford wrote, "The supplementary passage appears to have been added by another hand in very early times."⁵ Mr. Alford offered some evidence of both internal and external consideration. He argued strongly that the internal evidence would "...be found to preponderate vastly against the authorship of Mark."

Alexander Bruce, professor of Apologetics at Free Church College, Glasgow, Scotland wrote at the end of his commentary on Mark 16:8, "So ends the authentic Gospel of Mark, without any account of appearances of the risen Jesus in Galilee or anywhere else." He then speculates as to why such an abrupt ending and offers the fact that verses 9-20 are missing in the two older manuscripts.⁶

The liberal commentary, *The Interpreter's Bible*, states that Mark ends with 16:8 and offers less than five lines of proof for the assertion.

It is consented that there are three possibilities to the ending of Mark's gospel. One would be the short ending terminating with verse eight. Another would be the long ending concluding with verse twenty. A third possibility is an ending longer than verse eight but quite shorter than verse twenty. Hort points out that the latter is so vague that it finds no parallel in the Gospel narratives. It is widely accepted among scholars that either the short ending of verse eight or the long ending of verse twenty is to be accepted as genuine.⁷

Most scholars who reject the long ending of Mark are quick to point out that this ending does not appear in either ALEPH or B, and since these are our two oldest manuscripts such has importance to say

the least. Burgeon, Milter, Scrivener, Salmon and a few others accept the long ending as genuine.⁸ But the majority of New Testament scholars including Warfield, Zahn and A. T. Robertson, who were conservatives, reject it. Yet few, if any, scholars hold that Mark originally ended with verse eight. Instead all hold that there was a longer ending, but that it was lost at an early date.⁹

The evidence for the genuineness of Mark 16:9-20 is herewith given noticing, The Evidence of Manuscripts, The Evidence of Ancient Versions, The Evidence of the Early Fathers, and The Internal Evidence.

I. The Evidence of Manuscripts

Mark 16:9-20 is contained in every manuscript in the world except two. The two being the *Sinaitic Manuscript* and the *Vatican Manuscript*. Both of these codices are shown to be full of gross omissions, interpolations and corruptions of the text.¹⁰ These two uncial manuscripts omit the whole passage, but under different conditions. The *Vatican* omits the passage, but with a space left between the eighth verse of Mark 16 and the beginning of the gospel according to Luke. Just sufficient space is left for the insertion of the passage showing that such passage did exist and that the copier of the manuscript, hesitating whether to insert or omit the verses, thought it safest to leave space for them.¹¹

There is another, later *Uncial Manuscript*, L, of about the eighth century. Though this manuscript is four centuries later, it bears a strong family resemblance to the *Sinaitic* and the *Vatican*. The manuscript does not omit the passage.

It should be added that there is such strong resemblance between the *Sinaitic* and *Vatican Manuscripts*

and the *L Manuscript*, that the evidential value of these three manuscripts amounts to little more than one authority. And since one contains the verses, one leaves space for them and the other has problems with omissions, the evidence of the three is not overwhelming. This coupled with the fact that all other *Uncial Manuscripts* contain the verses leads to the conclusion of an acceptance of Mark 16:9-20 as genuine.

The evidence of the *Cursive Manuscripts* is unanimous in favor of the disputed verses.¹² When the passage in question is regarded as not being genuine there must be considered the fact that the verses are retained in all *Uncial* and *Cursive Manuscripts* with the exception of two old manuscripts and those two in all probability are not independent.

II. Evidence of Ancient Versions

The most ancient versions, both of the Eastern and Western Churches, without single exception, recognize this passage.¹³ Of the Eastern versions the evidence is remarkable. The *Peshito Syriac*, which dates from the second century bears witness to its genuineness.¹⁴ Other Eastern versions, far earlier than the *Vatican* or the *Sinaitic Manuscripts* bear testimony to the genuineness of Mark 16:9-20.

The same can be said of the versions of the Western Church. The earlier version of the *Vulgate* contains the disputed passage. Jerome, who used the best manuscript available when he prepared the *Vulgate*, felt obligated to admit the passage.

III. Evidence of the Early Fathers

There are some expressions in the "Shepherd of Hermas" written no later than 150 A.D. which were evidentially taken from Mark 16:16.

Justin Martyr, writing about 160 A.D. quotes Mark 16:19-20.

The evidence of Irenaeus (A.D.

170) is even more striking. In one of his writings he quotes both the beginning and end of Mark's Gospel and attributes it to Mark. This evidence of Irenaeus is conclusive as to the fact that in his time there was no doubt as to the genuineness and authenticity of the passage.¹⁵

IV. The Internal Evidence

Since this author does not have the ability to examine the Greek text and thereby note the evidence either for or against the Mark authorship of 16:9-20, he has to leave such judgments up to those who are truly scholars in the Greek language.

The style and phraseology of the verses in question have been declared by the most able critics and scholars to be the same as the style of chapter 1:9-20. The phraseology has been examined in twenty-seven particulars and shown to be suspicious in none.¹⁶

R.C.H. Lenski, after arguing at length for the genuineness of the passage, from external evidence and logic, states, "Turning now to the internal evidence, the question is this: 'Do these last verses betray the fact that Mark did not write them, or are their language and their character such as show that Mark could not have written them?' We unhesitatingly answer in the negative. Already the general admission of the critics is significant that the conclusion of the Gospel shows careful consideration and harmonizes well with its beginning!..."¹⁷

Conclusion

When the Greek text in *Novum Testamentum Graece* came to Mark 16:9-20 it set the passage off in brackets. The footnotes give the evidence both for and against the inclusion of the text. Such evidence weighs heavily in favor of the verses and consequently they are included.¹⁸

Simon Greenleaf wrote, "A propo-

IF UNDELIVERED DO NOT RETURN

sition of fact is proved, when its truth is established by competent and satisfactory evidence." By "competent" he referred to the nature of the evidence. By "satisfactory" he meant that amount of proof, which ordinarily satisfies

an unprejudiced mind beyond any reasonable doubt.¹⁹ Surely the evidence for the authenticity and genuineness of Mark 16:9-20 is both competent and satisfactory; therefore, it is our conviction that the passage belongs to the text.

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the DEFENDER

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

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CHALLENGING DANGERS OF MODERN VERSIONS NO. 6

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.
Ripley, Tennessee

In the previous article I pointed out how that modern speech versions of the Bible have allowed a full entrance of denominational creedal points into the very text of the Bible, or at least what they call the Bible. We dealt with "faith only," errors relative to the Lord's Supper, the injection of Neo-Pentecostalism and the galloping in of Roman Catholicism into the NEB rendering of Matthew 16:18.

MODERNISM HAS GALLOPED IN

Both the RSV and the NEB took virgin out of Isaiah 7:14 and injected the wholly unauthorized rendering of "young woman" as their corrupt expression for the Hebrew term ALMAH. By so doing they removed the truth and injected error into the very text of the Bible. Mr. Bratcher had Mary a virgin in Luke 1 in his first edition of TEV but changed her to just a girl in the very same passage when he came out with the second and third editions. The creedal philosophies of infidels have never had room for the Bible Doctrine of the Virgin Birth of our blessed Saviour. They have always looked upon Mary as a woman who actually knew a man prior

to Jesus' birth and hence was not a virgin at the time of his conception nor at the time of his birth. Thus their creed of infidelity toward the distasteful doctrine of a virgin's being with child and bringing forth a son without man's aid has now been tampered with by the unholy hands of these Bible mutilators. And yet these modern speech versions have a multitude of defenders singing their praises. Some high names even among us are assuring us that the RSV is a reliable Bible. This writer, for one, is not about to buy their recommendation!! No wonder Professor Oswald T. Allis said that the favorable sales of the RSV would be a triumphant and signal success for modernism. It has been!

MECHANICAL MUSIC HAS GALLOPED IN

The Amplified New Testament has moved mechanical music into the very text of Ephesians 5:19. The passage in the Amplified Bible reads, "Speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices [and instruments], and making melody with all your heart to the Lord." It is true that the instru-

(Continued on page 83)

POTPOURRI

THANK YOU READERS

With this issue we conclude Volume VI of *The Defender*. We are truly thankful for the way the paper has been received for the past six years. It has not been a small undertaking, and from the first edition which came off on a hand operated mimeograph we have now printed nearly one - half - million copies of *The Defender*. From the mimeograph we graduated to a table-top off-set press, and just this year we have been able to purchase a large, commercial press along with a camera and a plate burner. We have not charged a subscription for the paper and with the exception of the last equipment (which cost several thousands of dollars) practically every dollar has been supplied by contributions which came from our readers. Without YOU, your dollars and your support we could not have done what has been done, therefore, we are careful to give God the glory and the credit for what has been done to teach and defend the gospel of Jesus Christ.

NEW FRONT COMING

Now that we have a press that can print 11 x 17 paper, the 1978 *Defender* will be the standard 8½ x 11 instead of the odd size that it has been. The change will give us more space, less waste with regard to paper and for the same amount of money spent we will have more paper to print on, however, our paper

will increase because we intend to enlarge *The Defender*. Perhaps we can even enlarge the size of the print. I know this is something that many of our readers would appreciate, but to do so and still include the same material it will take extra paper and extra money. WE CAN USE YOUR HELP ALONG THIS LINE!

BOUND VOLUMES AVAILABLE

Within a short time we will have Bound Volumes of the 1977 *Defender*. The cost will be \$1.50. If you would like to have a hard back, bound volume the cost will be \$6.00 and we must have your order by January 1. There will be a limited number of these made on special order only.

NO DEFENDER IN DECEMBER

Every year we receive several letters telling us that you have not received your December issue. We appreciate the fact that you miss *The Defender*. The truth of the matter is that there never has been a December issue of the paper. We print eleven issues (January - November) but we take the month of December off. So there will not be a December issue. We will see you again through these pages in January!

THE DEFENDER

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32506

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ments are set off in brackets in this passage but we hasten to inform our readers that in their preface or introductory matters at the very beginning of this work they say that brackets "contain JUSTIFIED CLARIFYING words or comments not actually expressed in the immediate original text." But here is a clearcut case of where they have added something totally unwarranted and absolutely without any sort of clarification. The two words in the brackets are not justified; they are TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED. The two words in brackets are not points of clarification; they are words designed to create confusion and misunderstanding in the minds of readers. How long will it be before some so-called Bible comes along and drops the brackets and leaves the instruments right in the text of Ephesians 5:19? At the rate perversions are multiplying it will not be long until such is attempted. And when it is done it will have supporters from those who know down deep in their hearts that the New Testament Scriptures do not sanction, do not command, do not authorize and do not permit mechanical instruments in Christian worship. And some of those supporters will come from among us! Mark it down and see if it does not develop just that way. It requires neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet to be able to predict this with a reasonable degree of anticipated success. Will any reader deny such?

JUDAISM HAS GALLOPED IN

Practically all the new Bibles or modern speech versions have moved their creedal points relative to the law of Moses into the text of Matthew 5:17. The RSV and nearly all its translational cousins have grievously erred at this very vital point. The RSV said, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them." They have Christ's taking the position that he will not be abolishing the law or the prophets. In their words Judaism was to continue on and on and with Christ's ardent approval and absolute approbation.

Yet in Ephesians 2:15 they have Paul's saying, "...by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,..." By such careless renderings as these they left themselves in helpless, hopeless and hapless conflict when the passages are both considered. They have Paul's affirming that Jesus did the very thing they have the Lord's stout denial that he would do in the Sermon on the Mount. They erred because they placed their own theological creed into the rendering of Matthew 5:17. Then this placed them into difficulties of insurmountable barriers when they arrived at Ephesians 2:15. This very contradiction is magnified all the more when we note what the RSV says in Hebrews 10:9: "He abolishes the first in order to establish the second." These are flat contradictions! A reliable Bible would not contain such!! There never has been a human creed maker smart enough to keep from contradicting himself sooner or later. The creed makers for the new Bibles are faring no better than the older creed makers did.

PREMILLENNIALISM HAS GALLOPED IN

Perhaps the most popular of the current crop of new Bibles is THE LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED by Kenneth Taylor. (My, but what he has done to dishonor the Taylor name!!) He moves the premillennial creed into his perverted product. He says in Isaiah 2:1-4, "This is another message to Isaiah from the Lord concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In the last days Jerusalem and the Temple of the Lord will become the world's greatest attraction, and people from many lands will flow there to worship the Lord. 'Come,' everyone will say, 'let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the Temple of the God of Israel; there he will teach us his laws, and we will obey them.' For in those days the world will be ruled from Jerusalem. The Lord will settle international disputes; all the nations will convert their weapons of war into implements of peace. Then

at the last all wars will stop and all military training will end. O Israel, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord, and be obedient to his laws!" In 2 Timothy 4:1 he says, "And so I solemnly urge you before God and before Christ Jesus who will some day judge the living and the dead when he appears to set up his kingdom." These renderings are rank premillennialism. If the subject were ever taught with pointed plainness, it is taught in this new Bible that has been bought and relished by literally millions and millions of people. During a recent year it was the best selling book in our land and brought in four million dollars in royalties.

ORIGINAL SIN HAS GALLOPED IN

Mr. Kenneth Taylor moved original sin into his renderings of Psalm 51:5 and Ephesians 2:3. Respectively, the passages read, "But I was born a sinner, yes, from the moment my mother conceived me." "All of us used to be just as they are, our lives expressing the evil within us, doing every wicked thing that our passions of our evil thoughts might lead us into. We started out bad, being born with evil natures, and were under God's anger just like everyone else." It would be of interest to have Mr. Taylor inform us of what sins David was guilty the moment he was conceived or at the moment of his birth. It will not do to say that David inherited Adam's sin for that is reading into the text something that is not there nor is it found any other place in God's word. To assume its presence in Psalm 51:5 is to beg the question or to assume the very thing that has not been proved. It would also be of special interest to have Mr. Taylor tell us what bad things we started out with at birth by doing and who bequeathed to us our evil natures. Mr. Taylor simply moved his creed of original sin or Adamic sin into the text of the Bible. Such was unwarranted and unjustified on his part. But he is not alone in this. The highly praised NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION has done the same thing by rendering sarx as sinful nature time and time again

in the Roman epistle. Yet a preaching brother in Texas assures me that the NIV is a WORD-FOR-WORD translation. Again I am not buying his recommendation! I do not believe it (the NIV) is a reliable Bible and plan to spend at least two articles later in this series explaining why I reject it as a reliable Bible.

BAPTISMAL ERROR HAS GALLOPED IN

The religious world at large never has been content to leave the Scriptural design of baptism as the Holy Spirit set it forth within Holy Scripture. Now the new Bibles are moving their creedal points relative to the baptism into the very texts of the Bible. One of the worst of Taylor's multitude of perversions in THE LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED is Romans 6:4 which says, "Your old sin-loving nature was buried with him by baptism when he died, and when God the Father, with glorious power, brought him back to life again, you were given his wonderful new life to enjoy." Both the action and design of baptism are perverted in this rendering. Yet millions still buy and read this product as their one and only Bible. IT IS NOT THE BIBLE; IT IS NOT EVEN A CLOSE IMITATION OF THE BIBLE! In 1 Peter 3:21 Taylor says, "In baptism we show that we have been saved from death and doom by the resurrection of Christ; not because our bodies are washed clean by water; but because in being baptized we are turning to God and asking him to cleanse our hearts from sin." The passage is not only a perversion of what Peter really taught but contradicts itself within its own rendering.

Clarence Jordan in the COTTON PATCH VERSION, the worst translation or version of them all, renders Acts 2:38 the following way, "Rock said to them, 'reshape your lives, and let each of you be initiated into the family of Jesus Christ so your sins can be dealt with; and you will receive the free gift of the Holy Spirit.'" How is that for a "dry cleaning" version of conversion? Not a drop of water in the

process! Such is removing truth from the Bible and injecting creedal or sectarian error into Holy Writ. IF NOT, WHY NOT? He has done with Acts 2:38 what Baptists long have taught - removed the water from the plan of God that saves sinful man.

Reader friend, if you are not

NOW a Christian, will you not hear the gospel, believe in Christ, repent of your sins, confess faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son and be immersed in water for the remission of your sins? Then the Lord will add you to his church. Be faithful till your dying breath and heaven will be your eternal abode.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"Let The Bed Be Undeiled"

ROD RUTHERFORD

Bellerive, Tasmania
Australia

Marriage is nearly as old as the human race. It was ordained by the Creator Himself. It was God's will in instituting marriage that a man and a woman become one. No provision was made for either polygamy or divorce. Marriage was intended by God to be for life. (Read Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25; Romans 7:1-4).

It was not long, however, before men departed from God's original plan. Polygamy began to be practiced. (Gen. 4:19). When the Law of Moses was given to Israel, the people had become so hard-hearted that God permitted divorce, but only under certain conditions. (Deut. 24:1-4; Matt. 19:7-8). Even then God was not pleased with divorce. He said, "For I hate putting away." (Malachi 2:13-16).

When Jesus came into the world and gave His law for all mankind, He did not institute a new law of marriage but rather called mankind back to God's original law of marriage given in the beginning. (Matthew 19:3-12). His commandment,

"What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" is God's will today! The Lord allowed *only one* reason for divorce and that was sexual unfaithfulness on the part of one's marriage partner. Fornication on the part of one's marriage partner gives the innocent party the right to divorce and remarry. To divorce and remarry for any other cause is to commit fornication! To marry one who has been divorced for some reason other than the one Scriptural reason is to commit adultery! (Read carefully Matthew 19:9; 5:31-32). Adulterers and fornicators will not go to Heaven! (1 Cor. 6:9-10). They will spend eternity in Hell! (Revelation 21:8). Those who are living in adulterous marriage relationships must repent and come out of them and seek the Lord's forgiveness in His appointed way if they are to be saved eternally.

The home is the basic unit of society. It is the function of the home to provide companionship, the satisfaction of sexual desires, and to provide the rearing and training

Florida School of Preaching

THEME: "THE ANCIENT CHURCH IN A MODERN AGE"

MONDAY, JANUARY 23

- 9:00 "Does the Ancient Church Exist?"
Charles Wright
- 10:00 "No Respector of Persons"
Maurice Davis
- 10:45 "Establishing New Churches"
Fred Baker
- 1:30 "New Methods of Evangelism"
Ron McIndoo
- 2:30 The Relevance of Example
Jackie Stearsman
- 3:30 Open Forum
B.C. Carr, Chairman
- 7:00 "Church Music"
L. O. Sanderson
- 7:30 "Can the Church Face the Future
With Confidence?"
Robert McAnally

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

- 9:00 "I'm Not Ashamed"
Wallace Maxwell
- 10:00 "Seeking the Lost"
Charles McClendon
- 10:45 "Ancient Morality"
(Alcohol-Tobacco)
Ken Willis
- 1:30 "Premillennialism"
Hugh Fulford
- 2:30 Elder-Preacher Relations
Cleon Lyles
- 3:30 Open Forum
B.C. Carr, Chairman
- 7:00 "Church Music"
L. O. Sanderson
- 7:30 "That Old Time Religion"
Billy Washington

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25

- 9:00 "The Doctrine of Baptism"
Blain Cook
- 10:00 "Our Plea For Unity"
Archie W. Luper
- 10:45 "Is the Concept of Sin Relevant
in our Age?"
Robert McAnally
- 1:30 "Some Old Fashioned Things of
Current Value"
Hugh Fulford
- 2:30 Elder-Preacher Relations
Cleon Lyles
- 3:30 Open Forum
B.C. Carr, Chairman
- 7:00 "Church Music"
L. O. Sanderson
- 7:30 "Keeping the Church Non-Denomi-
national"
Charles Chumley

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26

- 9:00 "Worship of the Early Church"
John Franklin
- 10:00 "Abounding in Liberality"
V. P. Black
- 10:45 "If I Were A Woman"
Paul D. Murphy
- 1:30 "Prepared for Leadership"
Charles Chumley
- 2:30 Elder-Preacher Relations
Cleon Lyles
- 3:30 Open Forum
B.C. Carr, Chairman
- 7:00 "Church Music"
L. O. Sanderson
- 7:30 "The Nature of the Church"
V. P. Black

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IF UNDELIVERED DO NOT RETURN

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"LET THE BED BE UNDEFILED"

of children. The community, the church, and the nation can be strong only when the home is strong. Many evil forces seek to destroy the home today. Among these evil forces are: lax divorce laws, sexual permissiveness, false views of woman's role in society, but most of all, ignorance of and a failure

to comply with God's laws of marriage and the home which are given in the Bible.

Let us never forget or forsake the Divine admonition: "Let marriage be had in honour among all, and let the bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge." (Hebrews 13:4).