

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume XV

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 1

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ANTINOMIANISM IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

DAVID BATEMAN

The germ of Gnosticism made its appearance in the church during the New Testament age. It was referred to by Paul in the Pastoral Epistles; John dealt with this heresy in his epistles as well as his gospel. Gnosticism developed into various forms. One of these became known as antinomianism.

Antinomianism (Gr. *anti* against, *nomos*, law) basically means **against law**. This doctrine taught that faith in Christ freed the Christian from the obligation to observe the moral law as set forth in the Bible. This philosophy came from the idea that all matter was sinful and that redemption was deliverance from the flesh. The body and soul were both regarded as separate entities having nothing in common. The way to achieve "redemption" was to let the soul go its way on the wings of spiritual thought while allowing the body to indulge in fleshly desires. Since the body and soul were completely distinct in their nature, they reasoned, the body could not defile the soul in anything it did, however depraved the act.

Those who held the antinomian view sought to explain away the need for obedience to divine law. Being Gnostics, they believed that they had access to a special knowledge others did not possess. They regarded themselves as being more intellectual and spiritual than their brethren who held to a more primitive form of Christianity. They strove to separate knowledge from action. They promised liberty to all--liberty from the necessity of keeping the precepts.

How such false doctrine could be both believed and embraced by Christians grounded in the truth is beyond our understanding. It is more difficult to believe that men who were once grounded in the truth are embracing a similar philosophy in our very age! Once again, liberty is being proclaimed through the land. We are now being told by some brethren that "the principle is broader than the commandment." These same brethren are claiming that since we are under grace, the Christian is "free from lawful requirements because he has the principle written on his heart." Once again, the church is being plagued by false teachers who promise to all liberty from the precept. Just as false teachers in early Christian centuries sought to separate knowledge from action, today, men once trusted so are seeking to separate the principle from the commandment.

The Bible teaches the responsibility of the Christian to render obedience to the law of Christ. Modern day antinomians refer to such obedience as "a trust in legal justification that causes a person to obey commands simply because they are commands." Jesus, though, referred to it as love (John 14:15). The writer of the book of Hebrews named obedience as essential to salvation in Christ when he wrote: "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation **unto all them that obey him**" (Heb. 5:8,9).

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FORUM IV: DEATH KNEEL FOR UNITY

MAX R. MILLER

Meetings between men of the church of Christ and the Independent Christian Church have been conducted at Joplin, Missouri, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Malibu, California. There have been the scenes of many efforts to establish Biblical fellowship between the two groups. Unity among believers in Christ is desirable, it should be sought after, and is commanded in Holy Scriptures. The efforts of Joplin-Tulsa-Malibu are only a page in the long chapter of discord, division, debate and unity efforts of the past hundred years of Restoration history. Every major effort for unity between these two bodies of people have failed. The failure is not caused by a lack of desire for unity, or lack of love and respect for those of a different mind. Failure to achieve unity is because we cannot come to the bedrock of Biblical truth and both together take their stand there.

Doctrinal Division

The division between the church of Christ and the Independent Christian Church is not one of regional differences, a sociological-economical-political division. It is a doctrinal division. The Civil War of 1861-65 divided the nation in many ways. However, the church of the New Testament was not divided and afterward had fellowship North and South as opportunity was presented. The major division of the church in the North and the church in the South came years after the close of the Civil War. The developing strength and structure of the American Missionary Society caused friction and discord in the church, but did not divide it. The introduction and use of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship did divide the church. Many could not and would not worship with the unauthorized organ or piano for to do so was a perversion of worship. Hence, the division. Every unity movement that followed failed because the doctrinal problem of worship could not be resolved. The Joplin-Tulsa-Malibu meetings have done nothing to resolve the problem of

mechanical instruments of music in worship. In fact, it has hardly dealt with the matter at all. The instrument was the cause of division, it continues to be the cause of division, the division will continue as long as the instrument stands between the two.

Restoration Forum IV

Another unity meeting is to be conducted at Milligan College, Johnson City, Tennessee, April 29,30, 1986. It is billed as **Restoration Forum IV**. The title assumes unity; the announced topics for discussion imply unity has been accomplished. Just how the two divided bodies may worship together is not slated for discussion. There can be no unity, no Biblical fellowship in any degree, until this chasm can be spanned. Ignoring the problem of worship, to talk of "The Restoration of Joy," or "The Reality of God," and other like topics is, in effect, to say that the subject of worship with the instrument, or without the instrument, is of little consequence. The attitude of Restoration Forum IV appears to be the same as that of the editor of **Gospel Advocate**, Furman Kearley; just a matter of conscience; conscience if one worships with the instrument, or conscience if one worships without the instrument. The problem of music in worship has not been dealt with sufficiently in all these meetings, and neither do we expect it to be dealt with in Forum IV. Why Forum IV if there is to be no effort to resolve the obstacle to unity--the music question.

Forum IV Marks The End

Restoration Forum IV will mark the end of any serious attempts to restore unity between the two. The men chosen for public discussion are a fair representation of the Independent Christian, but those men chosen to be representative of the church of Christ are not representatives of that body. Those chosen from the church of Christ are: Marvin

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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TEMPER, SATAN'S ADVANTAGE

L. E. WISHUM

"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:26,27). Though there may be occasions and circumstances which stir us, we must gain enough self-control to quickly free ourselves of anger, and to guard against sinning while angry. Jesus' anger (Mark 3:5) was not an anger produced by hurt pride, envy, or a lack of self-control, but, rather was a result of a hurt love—a grief over the fact souls were hurting themselves by refusing and resisting mercy and love offered so freely. Even if we should be thus irritated, we must not let it lead to sin by letting a correct attitude toward evil become evil in its expression or action. Let us

remember what manner of spirit we are of at all times.

An angry mind can become the devil's workshop. Someone said, "Anger is an acid that will do more damage to the vessel in which it is stored than on what it is poured!" A doctor said, "The verbal expression of animosity toward others calls forth certain hormones from the pituitary, adrenal, thyroid, and other glands, an excess of which can cause disease in any part of the body." Anger spoils good meals, a night's rest, gives headaches, contributes to physical exhaustion, is a factor in high blood pressure, stomach ulcers, can hasten

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FORUM IV (Continued from page 2)

Phillips of Tulsa; Rubel Shelly and Alan Cloyd of Nashville; Jon Jones of Fort Worth; and Calvin Warpula of Sugarland, Texas. Why these men! is a question posed in the mind of many faithful children of God. Shelly has said that it would be wrong for him to oppose the instrument if doing so would cause division. Phillips has said he could worship with the instrument. Why have these men been chosen--and who did the choosing? Is the Independent Christian Church ready to settle for the liberal fragment in the church of Christ that is represented by Phillips, Warpula, Shelly and Company? Shelly, Phillips, Warpula and Jones have already compromised the truth and themselves. Apparently, Dewelt and the Christian Church men are not aware there are a million and more members of the church of Christ who will never, never, be of the compromising spirit of these men. The inveiglement of cunning and crafty men will not be able to lead many from Zion to Joplin and the Independent Christian Church. Forum IV marks the death of the current movement to restore unity of major portions of the Independent Christian Church and the church of Christ.

Allowable Suspicions

Restoration Forum IV casts dark and suspicious reflections on men of the Independent Christian Church who have been the instigators of the unity meetings. In the beginning, did they really want to some of the church of Christ? Were they

honest in their initial effort in calling the meeting at Joplin? Was the Alan Cloyd fiasco something unexpected and a disappointment to them? Did they learn from Joplin? Have they sought the wisdom, knowledge, and concern of the multitude of other men of reputation from the ranks of the church of Christ? Why have they not discussed the problem of music in Christian worship with those who seriously differ with them? Who will (and why should anyone) seriously consider the Independent Christian Church's plea for unity after Forum IV? They have shot down their own irenic dove.

Blessing of Autonomy

Time will pass on by, if God wills it to be so. A day will come when men will look back at these efforts to restore unity--and see the foolish failure. They then, as some do now, will wonder if the effort was genuine and sincere. They then, as we now are, will be thankful for God's order for church government--that is, the autonomous church. How grateful we are that Warpula, Phillips, Shelly, Jones and Cloyd do not represent the church of Christ and that their compromising actions, their unwillingness to "get to the bone of contention," have no binding effect on the body of Christ. We dare not say what the end-works of these men may be; we do say--the Lord's church will go on and on to its ultimate glory. These men are of small moment on the broad horizon of eternity. Truth will go marching on.

GOING ON WITH CHRIST

JIM HUFFMAN

We have now entered into the year 1986. All the "thrills of victory and the agony of defeat" for the year are looking us in the face. What does the future hold for us? As we reflect on the past year for a moment, we should think of two important things. First, in the church today, we need more unity in all that we do or say. Paul said, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). We all need more unity in the church, more unity in our homes, more unity in our schools, and more unity at our jobs. We need to learn to work together and not against one another. There are enough problems in this world today without members of the Lord's body going about stirring up problems and causing division in the world and the church. Mark said, "And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand" (Mark 3:25). A quarreling house or church will not stand or endure, but will split and fail. If a team of horses were hitched to a wagon and one horse decides to go to the right and the other decided to go to the left, how would the wagon be pulled? The wagon cannot be pulled forward without the horses being in unity and pulling together. They must all go forward. The same principal applies to the church, our work, and even in our school work. Christ prayed that we all might be one as Christ was one with God.

The second place, there is the need to love more. God manifested His greatest love when He sent His only Son to this world to

die for the sins of mankind. John said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). There are those who say they have love and talk about the wonderful deeds they have done, but seemingly there is no love in their hearts. We see this every day among Christians in our walk of life. We show love face to face, but turn hatred behind someone's back. God forbid!

We are all equal in the face of God. There are people in this world that are always in the limelight of the public's eye. One may wonder: Where do they stand in the sight of God? Just because we make it big in this world does not mean that we will be number one in the sight of God.

As we make our way through 1986, let us take with us more unity and more love. Let us strive toward more dedication to the Lord in this year than we have had in the past. We can take Christ to the world when we make up our minds that we want to save the world. Christ said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). There are other qualities of the Christian life we should also exemplify: that we can take as well, patience, gentleness, longsuffering, virtue, and self-control. As we again go our way, let us forget the things that are behind us and press toward the mark of the high calling of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let us strive toward a great year in 1986. God bless us all.

TEMPER (Continued from page 3)

heart trouble, and give skin disorders. Anger causes sins of improper language, attitude and action. Anger can wreck homes, lifetime friendships, and give all kinds of opportunities to Satan. Someone truthfully said, "When you give someone a piece of your mind, you lose your peace of mind." "Better is a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith. A wrathful man stirreth up contention; but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife" (Prov. 15:17,18).

We never weather the storm by storming at the weather! We cannot get things across by getting cross! Anything accomplished through

anger can surely be accomplished a better way. "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (Jas. 1:19,20). The conclusion is that the wrath of man worketh for the devil.

Attempting to do something while angry is like putting to sea in a storm. When one confesses, "I am so mad that I cannot see straight," that one had better stay in a safe, secluded harbor. For "he that is soon angry will deal foolishly" (Prov. 14:17). When the heat of anger effects reason, the thermostat of self-control needs attention. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he

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Paul stressed the importance of obedience when he wrote: "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17,18). Paul was saying that obedience made it possible to be freed from the bondage of sin to become enslaved to Christ! They were liberated from sin and death and not from the responsibility of keeping the commandment!

How else is this modern philosophy similar to the antinomianism of the first and second centuries A.D.—their common claim to special knowledge? It is alleged that no commandment need be kept that has no special divine principle behind it. These modern day antinomians claim that no Biblical command "binds a condition or restriction on us unless they foster some principle for the benefit of man which is expedited by the statement or instruction." A directive, they say, is not "imperative for us unless the teaching or command is directing the accomplishing of a practical purpose." It is further insinuated that we who keep Biblical commands simply because they are such are babes in Christ and have not grown to the great maturity and depth of knowledge they have obtained, for they are able to discern what directives we are amenable to because of their infinite understanding of divine principles. Is not such a claim absurd? Can we know and understand all reasons why God would have us to do certain things? What about the babe in Christ who doesn't quite understand why he must not forsake the assembling of the saints (Heb. 10:25). May he be submissive unto the will of God until he understands the principle better? Is this legalism or trust in God's wisdom?

Is there any other way that this new philosophy is similar to the old Gnostic heresy? Yes, in that both philosophies are independent of the need of the blood of Christ. Old Gnostic antinomianism regarded salvation as an intellectual triumph of mind over matter. As this heresy developed, the atoning blood of Christ on Calvary's cross became less important. The same is true with the modern antinomian philosophy. Without "law," there can be no sin (I John 3:4-8) and without sin there is no need for the atoning blood of Christ (Rom. 3:23-27; 6:23) nor for

its continual cleansing power (I John 1:7-9).

It is difficult to understand how anyone well grounded in the faith could turn back and pervert the gospel of Christ to this degree (Gal. 1:6-9). This philosophy is not only false, but antichrist as well, denying the authority of our heavenly King (Matt. 28:18). The apostle Peter dealt with false brethren who also promised to provide this same kind of liberty. He wrote, "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage (II Peter 2:19)." Peter regarded these men as "wells without water (v. 17)." These were men who had escaped the pollutions of the world, yet had become entangled therein again (vs. 20-23). To these brethren who offer this "liberty" throughout the land, let us ask the very question Paul put to the Galatians. "Ye did run well, who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth (Gal. 5:7)?" (*David Bateman is a student in the Bellview Preacher Training School*)

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that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32). "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools" (Ecc. 7:9).

Anger is only one letter short of danger! We must avoid giving place to satan through anger. Self-control is the answer! It is a fruit of the Spirit, listed as a virtue of the Christian, and commanded in all things (Gal. 5:23; II Pet. 1:6; I Cor. 9:25). In putting off the old man and putting on the new, anger must finally be replaced with self-control (Col. 3:8-10). Phillips version states: "If you are angry, be sure it is not out of wounded pride or bad temper. Never go to bed angry—don't give the devil that sort of foothold" (Eph. 4:26,27).

Anger not dealt with today grows into tomorrow's monster. Fretting, fuming, and stewing over anger only adds fuel to the fire. Settle the matter today and save the tragedy of tomorrow. "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself, it tendeth only to evil doing" (Psalm 37:8). "A man of great wrath shall bear the penalty" (Prov. 19:19). "Scoffers set a city aflame; but wise men turn away wrath" (Prov. 29:8).



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Thanking you in advance, I am

Joyce H. Pery - Caruthersville, Missouri

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Please accept this contribution as my part in helping to keep the **Defender** published. I appreciate your work and good articles.

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Dear brethren,

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Dear brethren,

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Alan D. Harris - Oak Ridge, Tennessee

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SCRIPTURES, OR ENTERTAINMENT

GARRY BRANTLEY

Recently my family and I moved to Fort Valley, Georgia, to work with the Lord's church. The local newspaper publishes a religious page each week and for the first three weeks our articles were printed. Upon receiving the information that a new religious page editor had been hired, we contacted him concerning our continuing to write weekly articles. He acknowledged that he had read the articles of the church and advised us that "people don't want to read scriptures, they want to be entertained." Our regret for this attitude was expressed. The local events, sports page and comic strips are no longer adequate for entertainment but in order for people to read a lesson from God's word it also must entertain. What a shame!

This type attitude which is prevalent in the world, and sadly to say among some brethren, is not a new one. The prophet Isaiah faced this attitude as his brethren proclaimed; "Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Isa. 30:10). These also didn't want the Scriptures--they wanted entertainment! The prophet Jeremiah, who lived many years after Isaiah, also observed, "The prophets prophecy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so" (Jer. 5:31). This attitude is again stressed in the New Testament as Paul wrote to Timothy that "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine . . . and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4). Throughout the ages, from Genesis to Revelation, this type attitude toward the word of God has been exhibited. However, lest we become discouraged, there are still those with an honest and good heart that will receive the love of the truth and obey it. Though the majority of this atheistic-humanistic world in which we live have stopped their ears, some will render obedience to the truth. Therefore, we as Christians have the duty to teach the word of God.

We must understand, however, that entertainment will not save one precious soul from the firey pits of hell--it takes the word. The word of God is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11) and it must be sown; it is God's

power to save (Rom. 1:16). Not only will it save from alien sins but it will also keep one saved, even as Peter declared that God "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through knowledge . . ." (II Pet. 1:3). Those who declare they want entertainment and not Scripture will be surprised to find they will be judged by the very Scriptures they reject (John 12:48).

Let us all have the attitude toward the Scriptures as stated in Psalm 1:2, to delight in the law of the Lord; and meditate upon it day and night. Let us cherish the Scriptures and store them up in our mind and be "workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

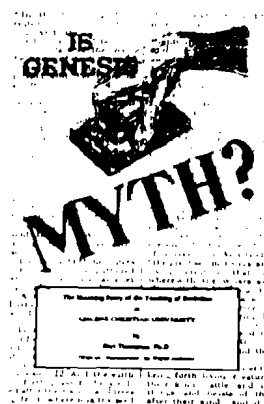
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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL"

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 1986

DOES EVERY MAN HAVE A PRICE?

BILL DILLON

One of the greatest things that could ever be said of a man is that he could not be bought; he did not have a price. Worldlings may mutter "anyone can be bought," but secular and religious history tell a different story.

At onetime in the development of the Roman Empire, Cineas, minion of Pyrrhus, attempted to buy the loyalty of Roman senators. Surprisingly, this brand of diplomacy failed and Cineas' gifts were spurned because of incorruptibility of the Roman Senate. Later, Pyrrhus again attempted to secure the allegiance of the noble Roman envoy Fabricius by offering abundant rewards and honors, but in vain.

Great Americans of the past like Teddy Roosevelt resolved to keep their record clean and the first ambition was to stand for something. Name, character and honor should be items we all possess that bribery cannot touch.

"Raccoon" John Smith resolved to adopt New Testament Christianity and set aside his human creeds over the cautions of his friends. With resolution that should be characteristic of every gospel preacher he replied, "Conscience is an article that I have not brought into the market; but if I should offer it for sale, Montgomery County with all its lands and houses would not be enough to buy it, much less that farm of one hundred acres."

The Scriptures speak also of men who were beyond being bought. Paul did not compromise conscience and offer a bribe to Felix in return for freedom although ample opportunities were extended (Acts 24:26). In like manner, Peter did not greedily stoop to comply with Simon's request to buy the power of God (Acts 8:18-21). The temptations of Matthew 4 were vigorous efforts on Satan's part to "buy off" the Saviour. Even the bid of the glory of all the kingdoms of the world were not enough to detract Christ from the

greater glory in the church that would be His.

Yet, some did have a price. Esau had his mess of pottage (Gen. 25:34). Balaam turned "professional" and became Balak's hireling (Jude 11). The false lover Delilah was easily reached with the promise of 1100 pieces of silver from each of the Philistine lords in exchange for the best kept secret in Israel (Judges 16:4,5). The rulers of Isaiah's day set poor examples as leaders as "...everyone loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards..." (Isa. 1:23). Samuel's sons were no better as they "...walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgments" (1 Sam. 8:3). Judas was not above being attracted by the glitter of thirty pieces of silver in exchange for a kiss (Matt. 26:14-16,49). Lastly, Roman sentries falsified an explanation of the empty tomb for "much money" (Matt. 28:12-13).

Today, the buying of men continues. How many gutters full of human dignity have been purchased by the liquor industry? Legion are the members of society who have willingly sold the favor of sons, daughters, husbands, wives, friends and their God for rank liquors.

How many parents have set aside their God given responsibilities and meekly pacified (bribed) rebellious offspring, trusting peace of mind to come by granting their every whim?

How many elders and preachers have winked at some prevalent sin in the assembly because of offender's threats to "leave the church" or "withhold contributions?" Those thus guilty are sowing seeds from which a harvest of tares will one day be gathered.

Satan's doctrine has long been that man's loyalty to God can be purchased, if the price is right (Job 2:4). This teaching has found a haven in the hearts of men. Let it not so be in the Israel of God.

IT'S STILL GOPHER WOOD

MAX R. MILLER

Efforts continue to find a common ground for unity for those of the church of Christ and the Independent Christian Church. Whereas some few may be content to find that common ground in compromise of truth, the many will accept Biblical truth as the only grounds of faith and unity. Unity must be on the basis of faith which comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). We shall accept no other ground; there only will we take our stand.

There may be a number of points of disagreement standing between the unity of the two groups. Some of those items may be very minor and would be reconciled in truth with little effort. However, there stands one monumental barrier between the two groups. It was the introduction of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship that caused the alienation and division a century past; the use of mechanical instruments in worship has continued to be the chief barrier to unity of the two groups for the one hundred years since. There can be no Scriptural unity, no unity acceptable to God, no fellowship of the two with God, until that barrier is removed. The use of the instrument is right--or it is wrong. Its being right or wrong is determined only by the Bible.

The music question has been argued and debated numberless times--until it seemed there was no longer a desire among those of the Christian Church to continue. Through the years confrontations with truth drove them from one false proposition to another until apparently they had exhausted all possible grounds for contending for their instrument. They could not make stand their arguments: God approved music in Old Testament time and so likewise New Testament times; the instrument is not and addition to worship, merely and aid to worship, as is the song book; the word psallo included the instrument, therefore authorizing both singing and playing. These have been their

best arguments. None of them have been able to make a stand in the face of truth. The only new proposition in all these years, that of Don DeWelt and Lynn Hieronymus, is that the New Testament church did not worship in music, neither by singing or playing, therefore the music question is not relevant to the discussion of unity.

We take our stand and the rock of truth. Our hermeneutics are unchanged. God's will for man is expressed in the sacred Word. His commands may be either generic or specific. Jesus told His apostles to "go and teach all nations." This being a generic command they could go by any means at their disposal; walk, ride, sail. He further told them, as they go, to "teach all nations--preach the gospel." They were told specifically what to teach--"all things whatsoever I have commanded you," that is, the gospel of Christ (Matt. 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16). The command to go was generic; the way they would travel was left to their judgment and means. The command to teach and the subject matter taught were specifically commanded and not left to their judgment, wishes or desires.

God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth (John 8:24). One of the five avenues of Scriptural worship is in song, by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Singing is specifically named in every passage of the New Testament; playing with an instrument is never mentioned (Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; I Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; James 5:13). There is no Biblical authority for the use of mechanical instruments in Christian worship. The use of such is an addition to that which God commands, and as such adulterates and defiles the worship making it sinful and unacceptable to God.

Noah's building the ark of gopher wood has long been used to illustrate the principle of specific commands. God specified Noah would use gopher wood in the construction of the

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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ONO, OR O'NO?

GOEBEL MUSIC

The rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem was accomplished in three successive efforts, beginning in the first year of the reign of Cyrus: (1) Zerubbabel and Jeshua led a group of Jews to Jerusalem, and began work on rebuilding the temple (Ezra 2:1-3, 13). (2) Ezra went up to Jerusalem and restored the law by reading it to and explaining it to the people in the seventh year of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:1-10). (3) Nehemiah went up to Jerusalem to begin work on rebuilding the wall in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1ff).

In less than two months, fifty-two days to be exact (Neh. 6:15), the wall was completed! This left the nations "cast down in their own eyes" (Neh. 6:16), that is, they lost their self-confidence, and they knew "the work was wrought of God" (Neh. 6:16b). Does not God also today reveal Himself through the work of His people?

The building of the wall was not without tests and trials! Indeed, these were both internal and external.

Internal Trouble

Indifference. "Their nobles put not their necks to the work of the Lord" (Neh. 3:5).

Worldliness. "The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall" (Neh. 4:10).

Cowardice. "When the Jews that dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times from all places, Ye must return unto us" (Neh. 4:12).

"The worst evil from which the church of Christ can suffer.... An internal evil, always more dangerous and deadly than an external one. Better a hundred carping or even conspiring Samaritans than ten Jews inside the walls carrying a curse within their breast. Better an army of Canaanites in battle array than one Achan in the camp" (Pulpit Commentary, Nehemiah, Vol. 7, p. 55).

External Trouble

Ridicule. "They laughed us to scorn--They

mocked the Jews--What are these feeble Jews doing?--Even that which they are building, if a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall" (Neh. 2:19-20; 4:1-3).

Confusion. "...and to cause confusion therein" (Neh. 4:7-8).

Compromise. "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono" (Neh. 6:1-3).

False Accusations. "...you think to rebel...thou wouldest be their king..." (Neh. 6:5-7).

It is not mine in this article to discuss and make application to any of the internal hindrances. In fact, I only want to use one of the external hindrances, that of **compromise!** In the case of Nehemiah, Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian led the enemy opposition to prevent the work from being completed. The last drastic attempt was very involved in what can be seen as a three-fold plan (Neh. 6:2-4, 5-9, 10-14). It is to the first of these, "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono" (Neh. 6:2), that I desire to focus our attention. This will not altogether be an external hindrance for God's children today, I am sorry to say!

Ono is near Lydda in the plain country bordering on Philistia, about twenty-five or so miles from Jerusalem. It seemed the plan was given to lure Nehemiah to neutral territory and make him think that it was a visit to settle "our" differences (note: ... let us meet together). Kinda reminds me of a summit meeting for the plain of Ono! However, Nehemiah was too wise for this (Neh. 6:3), and he stayed with the task refusing to be side-tracked!

Many, today, have come down to the plain of Ono, and this is so easily seen by any astute individual who believes in the authority of the Scriptures. Notice how some have "come down" from the lofty height of Jerusalem to the "plain of Ono." We see this today in the following publicly printed items:

1. "No examples are binding!...If (context being the Supper of the Lord) its purpose is to make us think on the atonement, then what difference does it make at what hour or on what day we do it, or if we do it twice a day or several times weekly?...whether the bread be leavened or unleavened?--If a person derives the benefit of this remembrance on Wednesday instead of Sunday, does it suddenly become a curse instead of a blessing?" (Cecil Hook, *Free In Christ*, pp. 14-15).

2. "To ask if he has been a member of the Church of Christ elsewhere, or to write to his previous congregation to get the low-down on him, is both judgmental and sectarian.

"How would we know the applicant was not formerly associated with the Christian Church or the Assembly of God?--Would it contaminate us to serve with someone in Christ who wore some sectarian name other than ours?--And why can't I accept him as a brother while he is still serving in the Christian Church or the Assembly of God with no thought of joining our congregation?" (*Ibid.*, p. 63).

3. "We (he previously named Gary Beauchamp, Art McNeese, Jon Jones and Aubrey Anderson, Larry James writing) met on the campus of Dallas Christian College, the local independent Christian Church school. As I listened to Jon speak, and as I visited with the fine fellows present, I realized our history of division over the issue of instrumental music (emp., L.J.), is truly ridiculous--Implicit in our dialogue was the realization that our division in the past has been over an issue of opinion not revelation" (*Care*, Vol. V, April 24, 1985).

4. "I Mildred Norman would like to thank the following people for their support in donations for the addition to Steven Chapel Methodist Church:...Ray Marcrom and Methodist women." (*Manchester Times*, August, 1985. Ray Marcrom is a member of the Lord's church).

5. "If I were in a congregation where the will of that congregation, the decision of the elders was that the instrument was going to be used next week, I wouldn't mount the pulpit and condemn them and divide the church" (Transcribed From The "Unity Forum" At Hillsboro, Ohio, Rubel Shelly, August, 1985).

6. "Richland Hills Church of Christ seventh through 12th graders will meet to visit a neighboring Christian Church at 8:15 a.m. Dec. 8 at the church. Students should

bring breakfast money and a permission slip for the trip" "Northeast extra-e," Dec. 4-5, 1985, p. 12, *Fort Worth Star Telegram*).

7. "Haltom City Christian Church will conduct a congregational meeting Jan. 12. ...The church will conduct a quarterly rally Jan. 12 at Southwest Christian Church. Jon Jones, of Richland Hills Church of Christ, will be the speaker..." (*Ibid.*, p. 13, Jan. 1, 1986).

8. "To grow is to change. We must change translations. We must change approaches. We must change strategies. We must be willing to accept, even encourage change. If we do not, then we will be forever doomed to be yesterday's church in today's world. And the people of today will pass us by.

The tragedy of not changing is that the changing world needs us. There will never be a generation that does not need the church. But the current and future generations need a church for that generation. We must be that church!" (Randy Mayeux in *Midtown Bulletin*, Feb. 10, 1985, p.2).

9. "Tonight is the annual Community Thanksgiving Service...how excited I am that our congregation will be the host this year--In addition, there will be other singing groups from the various churches. A community choir will also sing a song..."

"The annual Thanksgiving service provides an opportunity for all of the local churches to join together for a special period of thanksgiving and fellowship--Patrick Pfrimmer of Gribble Springs Baptist Church will present the Thanksgiving message--Other local ministers will participate in various ways...a special Thanksgiving contribution will be collected--A unique feature of this year's program, according to Bob Glover, minister of the church of Christ, is that all of the singing will be a cappella--This year's Thanksgiving service will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Church of Christ at 101 Fourth Street." (*Bulletin*, The Church of Christ in Sanger, Texas, front page and Annual Community Thanksgiving Services).

10. "The Northside Church of Christ, 1375 Old Hickory Blvd., made four major announcements on the occasion of its fifth anniversary Sunday.

"The special day included the announcement of a search for a new minister for the newly created post of minister of family involvement, said minister Jim Brown...the construction of a family involvement center
(Continued on page 13)

THE PENDULUM SWINGS....AGAIN

LYNN PARKER

For ages the religious world has ridden the swinging pendulum of extremes. For example, men so drastically recoiled from the Catholic doctrines of salvation by meritorious works that they went hook, line and sinker for a doctrine of salvation by faith only. As any Bible student knows, both extremes are inconsistent with God's Word.

The pendulum has been swinging for some years within the Lord's body, apparently it is close to reaching its apex--again. A new extreme is snowballing. We call it liberalism. Not content to "speak as the oracles of God" and preach "the whole counsel of God," some among us have decided to emphasize the positive themes of God's grace, love, and the need for unity to the exclusion of Bible themes concerning the defense of the gospel, the "old paths" of strict adherence to God's will, the judgement and wrath of God, the silence of the Scriptures, the distinctiveness of the Lord's church, the error of denominationalism, and the commands (law, if you will) of God.

Now in vogue is a philosophy of pleasant sermons that neither condemn sin nor rebuke the sinner; that tickle ears, but do not challenge Christians to be separate from the world; that encourage unity with those in error, instead of urging the sinner to repent. Now to go along with this extreme of liberalism, no doubt we will see certain parts of the Bible shelved as being too blunt, caustic, narrow and confining, intimidating, inappropriate (maybe even

ONO (Continued from page 12)

to complement the new ministry at the church. The center will be built in 1985, will contain a gymnasium and a recreation center,...and the church's "mothers" day-out program, Brown said" (Nashville Banner, Tuesday, August 14, 1984, p. C-4).

In the case of Nehemiah, he had the ability to look ahead and to make right decisions (real discernment). Also, he was not intimidated by any amount of pressure. This is what we need today! Just here I am reminded of what Bert Thompson wrote on page 144 of his book, *Is Genesis Myth?* "...the entire tragic series of events would have been simply papered over and covered up had it not been for the dauntless faith of a few who would not--despite the pleas of some--come down to the plain of Ono" (Neh. 6:2) to

"knuckle-headed"), or irrelevant.

For example, the new trend must somehow get rid of II John 9-11 because it would not be irenic to read, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God..." And it would certainly not be conciliatory to talk about II Thessalonians 3:6,14. While at it, these free-spirited brethren should remove from their Bibles Matthew 7:20-23 and Matthew 15:13 and Acts 2:47 and Romans 16:16 and certainly Romans 16:17-18, and Ephesians 4:4 (one body sounds too definite) and Matthew 16:18 and Colossians 3:16 along with Ephesians 5:11,19 and Hebrews 10:26-31 and Hebrews 2:12 and I John 1:3-7 and Jude 3 and Revelation 22:18-19 and I John 2:19 and John 8:32 and Philippians 1:16. From Old Testament, you certainly would not expect these brethren to glean much from the account of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10), Noah's obedience in building the ark (Gen. 6), Samuel's rebuke of Saul (I Sam. 15:22) or the timeless question of Amos 3:3. After putting these Scriptures in mothballs, the liberal extremists will still not be satisfied with The Words of Inspiration.

Our plea is simple and certainly not new: Come back to the Bible! Forsake the extremes of the religious pendulum--whether it be the extreme of liberalism or that of legalism, and return to a "thus saith the Lord" in all that you do and say. Isn't that simple? And you don't even have to do any editing when you preach "the whole counsel of God!"

compromise the inspired, inerrant, authoritative word of God." (If you have not read this book about the massive denial and cover-up relative to evolution, no refutation, being taught at ACU, then you must read this book!).

Brethren, with just the little that I have written, and I have only touched, if that much, the hem of the garment, I simply, but most forthrightly ask, **what will it be? Ono, or O-no!** When are we going to have the spine and stamina, character and courage, firmness and fortitude, integrity and inflexibility and realize we **must do God's work in God's way** (by His authority, Col. 3:17)? May God help us, when a "togetherness visit" is suggested on the plain of Ono, to shout, **O-no!**

ENRICHED OR IMPROVERISHED

RON BRYANT

A serious mistake is made when sharp distinction is drawn between sacred and secular truth, for every aspect of life is finally sacred. For the follower of Christ, there is no boundary line between religion and life. All of life is sacred, and the will of Christ is to be applied to every aspect of life. The follower of Christ is a living demonstration of "the faith." His business, his recreation, all of his friendships, every aspect of his life is under the sway of his religion; his relationship with Christ.

Some see Christianity as reserved for Sundays and emergencies. Others see it as a

network of moral principles to be variously applied. It is these and more. It is a life to be lived.

We must divest ourselves of the idea that God is concerned mainly with our being good. Yes, God is concerned with our deeds as His children, to be upright, decent and moral, but He is also concerned that our lives be rich and full. He desires that we be blessed and that we be a blessing. His desire involves the refining of life, the filling of life with joy and peace and love, and not just the defining of doctrine. He gives doctrine to enrich and not to impoverish.

GOPHER (Continued from page 10)

ark. In specifying gopher wood God excluded all other kinds of wood regardless of their merits as well and any notions Noah may have had to use some other wood. God specified. The only way Noah could have obeyed God and do His will was to use gopher wood and only gopher wood.

In a discussion on this topic with an Independent Christian Church preacher the gopher wood illustration was introduced. He with disdain and disgust responded, "Gopher wood, do we have to talk about gopher wood? I'm sick of hearing about gopher wood." He considered the Biblical illustration as unworthy, not deserving of one's notice; he was scornful of it having a feeling of contempt and aversion for that which he regarded as a nuisance to the discussion. And no wonder! He and others of the Christian Church, those who contend for the use of mechanical instrument of music in Christian worship, have been hearing about gopher wood for the past hundred years. It has been a painful thorn in their side. It has been brought up in nearly every discussion of the subject and in almost every debate. Christian Church men are tired of hearing about gopher wood because they can't

deal with gopher wood. Here is an argument for specific commands they can't get around, over, under, by or across. It's **still gopher wood**. We still argue gopher wood. Some may tire of it--even those who use it--but it remains--**gopher wood**.

And what about the current unity movement? When the thing about **gopher wood** is met and finally settled--then and only then will there be Biblical unity of the church of Christ and the Christian Church. Really, the greatest obstacle to unity today is an attitude toward gopher wood. With us, it's **still gopher wood**.

The recent Unity Forums have gingerly dealt with this important subject. Just a little lip service from both sides. Unity Forum IV, next scheduled, apparently does not plan to come to grips with this subject. Are those who direct the forums naive, thinking it is of little consequence? Do they think we are ready to accept the instrument? No, we, a multitude of faithful Christians who still call for "book, chapter, and verse" teaching and preaching demand a "thus saith the Lord." We will not swap gopher wood for a baby grand.

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ACCEPTING ABSURDITY

JIM FAUGHN

I used to think, if the absurdity of a position could be shown most people would reject it. That must not be the case anymore.

This morning I heard a famous television evangelist discussing with his panel of "experts" whether or not there would be lightning in the Millennial age. The discussion then proceeded to the point where they were trying to determine how much it would rain during this period of time. After all, it was reasoned, we would need rain to sustain life but there could not be any floods in a perfect environment like the one they mistakenly suppose will exist when Christ would rule the earth.

We would expect some sort of appeal to the Scriptures for any position taken. Upon what Scriptures was their discussion based? First, they cited Genesis 3:18. The mention of thorns and thistles was seen by them as proof that the whole environment of our earth was corrupted by the fall of man.

The second text used was Genesis 8:22. Herein God says, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Their reasoning was that, since the earth would remain during the thousand year reign of Christ on the earth and since those things mentioned in Genesis 8:22 were to remain, then there would be seasons and days during this period, but that something would have to happen to take away the curse God placed on the environment.

The final Scripture cited was II Peter 3:10-12. Their explanation of the elements being dissolved was that the curse on the environment would be lifted. Thus, the path would be cleared for the perfect environment where there would be rain, but not too much; the sun would shine, but it wouldn't get too hot; there would be winter, but it would be pleasant; and so on, rot!

Picture in your mind a debate some years ago on the subject of premillennialism. Imagine the reaction of the premillennialist if the absurdity of his doctrine was demonstrated by his being asked how much it would rain or if there would be lightning during his presumed thousand year reign of Christ. He would probably have tried to

laugh off such questions.

Now, instead of laughing them off, they are making such absurd statements! Men of some intelligence, men who claim to be ministers of the gospel, are sitting on a nationally syndicated television program and seriously discussing the environment during a period of time that will not exist (Christ's thousand year reign on earth) and are using as one of their "proofs" a passage that clearly teaches that it will not exist (II Pet. 3:10-12).

Sadly, it is not true that absurdity will repel people. Millions of dollars are being poured into this "ministry" by countless numbers of people. Surely it was about them and many others that Paul wrote when he penned "...they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:4).

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Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The second edition of Robert R. Taylor's **Challenging Dangers of Modern Versions** is once again in publication. Everyone who realized the threats of textual perversions as exemplified in modern versions of the Bible should have a copy of Taylor's book. The second edition contains new material: examination of the New King Version and "The Taylor-Louis Exchange On Version Matters." The latter is an exchange of Robert Taylor and Jack P. Lewis of Harding Graduate School. Lewis defends modern versions, Taylor refuting the alleged scholarship of such. The price is \$9.95. Hardback \$14.95. Order from:

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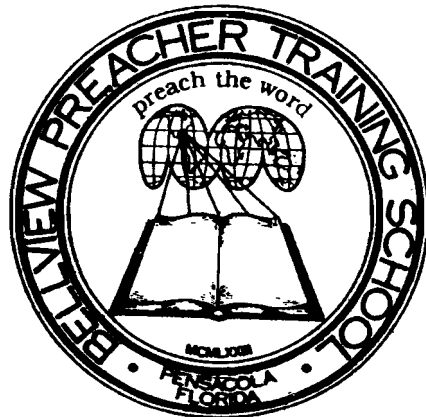
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WRITE FOR CATALOGUE AND APPLICATION



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL" Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 3

MARCH 1986

RESURRECTION OF A DEAD ARGUMENT

"All references to singing in the New Testament refer to individual singing and not to corporate worship! This does not mean that congregational singing is wrong--please let us explain..." This quote is the leading two sentences of an article written by Don DeWalt and Lynn Hieronymus, preachers in the Independent Christian Church, entitled, "Have We Cut The Gordian Knot of Instrumental Music In Congregational Singing?" It appeared in the publication *One Body*, edited by Don DeWalt, (Vol. 2 No.1, July 1985). It is further stated, "When we gather as a group to sing we do so without a New Testament command, example or necessary inference!" Again, "It will be most difficult for us to admit we have argued and split for more than 100 years over a practice not even mentioned in the New Covenant Scriptures! But this is exactly what we have done! We want to be the first to ask God's forgiveness and also yours!" "Congregational singing is in the realm of choice or expedience!"

DeWalt and Hieronymus write as if they have discovered "some new thing." Their argument that congregational singing is neither Scriptural or unscriptural is not new. We are reminded of Solomon's statement, "there is nothing new under the sun." This certainly is true in the matter of religious errors.

Fred G. Allen, editor of *Old Path Guide*, and his contemporaries were hearing the same argument more than one hundred years ago. The men of the Christian Church, advocates of mechanical instrument of music in Christian worship, could not make the argument stand then--and they can do no better today. The following article is by Fred G. Allen and appeared in *Old Path Guide*, Volume 3, 1881, page 22. Read it. --Editor

IS SINGING IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD OF DIVINE APPOINTMENT?

F. G. ALLEN

It seems strange to us that this question should ever be raised by those who hold that the Christian religion is wholly a divine thing. With rationalist, who hold that men may elect their own religion, it would be different.

It cannot be denied by those who are willing to receive the teaching of the Spirit, that the New Testament churches worshiped God in song. This mentioned in I

Corinthians 15:14; Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, besides other places. "To the saints at Ephesus" Paul says:

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord

(Continued on page 19)

REWARD OR CONTEMPT

MAX R. MILLER

The world never misses an opportunity to show its hostile contempt for the church. It delights in the failures of those who endeavor to live the Christian life. A Christian sins and the world cries, "hypocrite, hypocrite!" When Christians take their stand against sin as it rears its head in abortion, legalized local sales of liquor, social drinking, the state lottery, pornography, or in any other form, the taunting accusations of "Sunday Christian, goody--goody do-gooders" are hurled against them. Satan and his world is delighted, they celebrate a victory, when a Christian falls from his steadfastness and once again is brought to shame and despair of sin. They depict the Christian as weak and contemptible, and the church a nuisance in the world. The church is a beggar, a free-loader on society, so it is said. These accusations are only natural, the world of evil and the righteousness of God and His people do not harmonize, they are not compatible. Evil is the enemy of all righteousness.

However, the world is the real hypocrite. Who is it who continually direct their steps to the church house, or to the home of the Christian, when hard time press upon them? Traveling bums and free-loaders spiel their tale of woe, not to an indifferent world, but to the church and its members. They come to the righteous with hands outstretched.

How many times have those in the world sought the intercessory prayers of the church? Those who know they have no prayer communication with God wish for others to do their praying for them. When the home is breaking up, who often is turned to for comfort and counsel--the Christian, a member of the church. When death visits the home of those in the world--they come to the preacher

asking that a few words be said over a dead body that had lived in sin; one who was ever disrespectful of Christianity.

If there were no Christians in the world the world would be much worse than it is now. The Christian, said Jesus, is the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13). He has a saving influence in the world. He is a light in the world of darkness and sin (Matt. 5:14). Where there is no light of the Christian and the sacred Word, indeed the darkness is great. Sodom and Gomorrah were cities bereft of the light and glory of righteous people. Had there been no more than ten righteous souls in those cities they would have been saved from destruction. There weren't; they weren't!

Holiness and righteousness will prevail. The world may despise it, taunt it, and hate it, yet it will prevail. Men turn to it in their hours of hopeless desperation. Some embrace the righteousness of God as a last resort. Some adamantly reject it, willing to endure, they think, fires of hell rather than bend the knee to God. Yet, of that great day of judgment Christ has said, "every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God" (Rom. 14:11). "Too late, too late," will be their cry at the judgment when all sinners acknowledge the righteousness of God, the holiness of the Christ, and the glory of His church. Too many love things that are evil, and hate the things that are good. That is why those of the world crucified Christ at Calvary.

The church of the living God will survive the contempt of the world, for at the end of time the Christ will deliver up that kingdom to God, that He may crown it with glory throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

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SINGING (Continued from page 17)

Jesus Christ.

"To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse," the same Apostle wrote:

Let the word of God dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

From these passages it will be seen that the brethren in both these churches were exhorted to sing in the worship of God, and what they were thus exhorted to do they were admonished to do in the name of Jesus Christ. It is simply certain that they worshiped God in song, and this worship was in the name of Jesus Christ, as every act of acceptable worship must be. It is equally certain that no act of worship can be performed in the name of Jesus Christ by apostolic injunction, that was not authorized by Jesus Christ.

In every age of the world, from the Garden of Eden down, every act of divine worship had to be appointed of God. There never was a time when man was left to elect his own acts of acceptable worship--to make his own religion. God has decreed that all acts of acceptable worship shall be by faith. Nothing can be done by faith that God has not directed. The limit of God's revelation is the limit of man's faith. When God ceases to direct, man ceases to act by faith. Whatever may be true about "aids to the worship," the act of worship itself has of necessity to be of divine appointment; otherwise it cannot be by faith.

When the question is raised as to whether or not uninspired man did a certain thing, it is legitimate to ask, Would he do it? If a charge of ungodly conduct is alleged against a good and true brother, the truth of which is yet in doubt, we naturally ask, Would he do it? And, until the fact is established that he did it, the question, which turns upon the man's character, would have very great weight in forming our judgment of his guilt or innocence. This question is legitimate before the fact of his guilt or innocence is established. It has no bearing in the case afterward.

When, therefore, it is alleged that the disciples may have introduced singing into the worship of God as a free-will offering, without a divine appointment to that end, such are our modes of thought in reference to such things, that we almost involuntarily raise the question, What right had they to do it?

We must remember that these churches were under the superintendency of the Apostles and other men guided into infallible truth by the Holy Spirit. If we are told that it is out of order, illogical, to ask what right the Apostles had to do a thing till the fact is established to whether or not they did it, we are simply told in other words that the divine principles underlying all acts and institutions of worship from the establishment of God's religion down through all the ages are to be deliberately thrown out of court, as having no bearing in the case, till the "facts" are established. Then, we ask: If these divine principles which have remained unchanged through all the ages are not to be considered in the investigation of facts, on what principles are you going to establish facts? We hold, therefore, that question: What right had the Apostles to introduce singing into the worship of God, or suffer it to be done, if it was not of divine appointment? is not only legitimate, but demanded.

Singing, as an act of worship in the religion of Christ, is of either human or divine origin. If it is of human origin, and became a recognized act of acceptable worship, then it is true that man is the author of a part of his own worship. Then if he can be the author of one part, why not of another part? If of a part, why not of the whole? If all or any of this be true, then on what ground could Paul condemn "will-worship," or self-chosen worship?

God does not allow men to choose what they will worship, nor how they will worship, nor what they will dedicate to Him in worship. If we may bring our songs and offer them to God in worship, in the name of Jesus Christ, when Christ never appointed a worship of that kind, then we may bring our play and our dance and everything else that we may choose, and offer them to God in worship in the name of Christ. Hence, if we accept the position that singing is an acceptable act of worship, and is of human origin, we simply cut loose

from divine legislation in matters of worship, and delight our souls in a religion of our own formation.

We are compelled, therefore, to conclude that singing in the worship is of divine origin. We have found Paul recognizing it as an act of worship, and exhorting his brethren to engage in it heartily, in the name of Christ. Just when the Apostles appointed it, the history does not inform us. Whatever they did, they did as the Spirit directed them. Hence all that they introduced into the worship, was appointed of God. The very fact of their introduction of anything, establishes its divine appointment. They simply did as the Spirit directed them, and the Spirit directed them as God willed. Hence, it matters not when nor where they introduced singing into the worship, they did it by divine direction; and what they did by divine direction was of divine appointment.

It has been claimed that singing constituted no part of the worship of the church at Jerusalem, because it is not mentioned in the other acts of worship, in which it is said they continued. But this conclusion is reached by a very fallacious mode of reasoning.

When we find singing in other churches, we have no right to conclude that it was not in the Jerusalem church simply because it is not mentioned. On precisely this ground do our religious opponents cut baptism off from every passage in which justification by faith is mentioned, and baptism is not. We find in other places that baptism is necessary to justification by faith, and hence the faith implies it when the baptism is not mentioned. So in other places we find singing in the worship, and we conclude that it was in the worship here, unless we find something forbidding it, which is not the case. We are not told that they assembled in Jerusalem on the first day of the week to break bread, but we learn that they did this elsewhere, and we infer that they did it here. On the above mode of reasoning, we should conclude that they did not partake of the Lord's Supper on the Lord's day, except at Troas, because it is not so stated in the accounts of their worship. So of many other things pertaining to the worship and order of the primitive churches, until the "unity of the faith" is broken into a hundred fragments, and its beauty and power forever destroyed.

In the position that there was no singing in the early Jerusalem church, because it is not mentioned among the items of worship, a very important fact is overlooked. This statement is not confined to the early history of the church in Jerusalem, nor indeed, to that church at all. The statement was made by Luke in about the year A.D. 63. This was thirty years after the conversion of the people to whom the language refers. They were, as a rule, not even residents of Jerusalem at the time, but were there from various countries, attending the feast of Pentecost. We infer, therefore, that eventually they returned to their homes. We also learn that when the persecution arose, they were all scattered everywhere, except the Apostles. It follows, therefore, that at the time Luke wrote the Acts of Apostles, the first converts to Christianity, who were yet living, were scattered over the whole Jewish world. Most of them had run their race and been gathered to their fathers. It is the remembrance of these facts that gives significance to the statement, that they continued "steadfast" in the divine appointments. They were not "steadfast" for a few months, but for life. Luke had thirty years of their history before him when he made that statement.

At the time this statement was made, we find singing a recognized act of worship in other congregations. If, therefore, the first converts did not sing in worship, they refused to join in this part of the worship in the churches over the country through which they lived and died. Just remember that the people to whom Luke referred when he said they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching, etc., never lived in Jerusalem, at least but few of them; that they spent their lives in other churches, and you will see that his language is not confined to the church in Jerusalem, but is as comprehensive as the scattered lives of those disciples through a period of thirty years. What these disciples continued in, they continued in wherever they were during that thirty years, and this was not in Jerusalem. The same is true of what they did not do. Consequently, for one to conclude that the above statement of Luke is limited to the church in Jerusalem, and that, therefore, they did not sing, because the fact that they did is not mentioned, reaches a conclusion that a knowledge of facts will not warrant.

BILL BANOWSKY'S SERMON IN THE METHODIST CHURCH

GARLAND ELKINS

When the Lord's work was hindered and souls were endangered, Paul was always saddened, often to the point of weeping. In warning the elders from Ephesus regarding the impending apostasy, he reminded them, "Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31). When writing to the church at Corinth in reference to the adulterous brother, he said, "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears..." (II Cor. 2:4). To the church in Philippi he wrote: "For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:18-19).

There is no doubt in my mind that faithful members of the church have either cried or have basically had that type sorrow due to the fact that brother Bill Banowsky has compromised with the Methodists. On January 6, 1986, he preached for the First United Methodist Church in downtown Fort Worth, Texas, and the entire service was televised. Due to lack of space and the fact that in the actual sermon he talked on "resolutions," much of which was true, we will not discuss the body of his sermon in detail. However, I do want to call attention to one particular point that he made in which he taught a most serious error. He related that he had accompanied his daughter-in-law to a Catholic mass. He commented on what they proposed to be doing in the mass and then uttered what I consider to be a blasphemous statement. The definition of blasphemy is "to speak of (sacred things) in terms of irreverence; to revile or speak reproachfully of (God or anything sacred)."

The first thing you've got to do is to forgive God. That's why people damn God. You know why? Who wants to live in the kind of world where twenty-five million children are going to starve to death every year--this year--1986? Who wants to live in a kind of world with nuclear bomb--with this kind of pain and injustice? I wouldn't check into a hotel run like this place. Damn this management. You need to forgive God, and then you need to forgive your parents, and then you need to forgive most critically yourself. It's okay. You're a great person. You're a wonderful person. It's okay. Forgive yourself, and then forgive everybody else. Forgiveness is a terrific relief.

Brother Banowsky accused God as being responsible for the sad condition of the world which has been brought about by sin and

the free will of man. Read his statements again in which he accused God and says we need to "forgive God." In the remainder of this article we will pay our respects to some things which the Methodist preacher said in introducing him and to what brother Banowsky said in the introduction to his sermon. First we quote what the announcer, the Methodist preacher, and brother Banowsky said in the aforementioned settings, and then we shall make comments regarding some of those statements.

The Announcer

Good morning. We invite you to participate in the morning worship service of the First United Methodist Church in downtown Fort Worth, Barry Bailey, pastor. We now join our worship service in progress.

Barry Bailey, Pastor—First United Methodist Church, Fort Worth

Now this morning it's a joy for me to introduce Dr. William Banowsky. There are so many interesting and marvelous things that I could say about him. He is an ordained minister in the church of Christ. He grew up in Fort Worth, so he's come back home, and he's had such an outstanding career in the church, in education, and in business. He is the former president of Pepperdine University in California, the former president of Oklahoma University, and I heard him say some time ago that when he was the president at Oklahoma he wanted to develop a university of which the football team could be proud. A little over a year ago he accepted the position as president of the Gaylord Corporation which is the parent company of KTVT, channel 11, the station which we are on and have been on for over ten years. It's the largest privately owned broadcasting company in America. So, for so many reasons it's such a joy for us to welcome him here this morning to come and preach and to be with us. I was thinking a little while ago, when I run over in time when I'm preaching, I know what they do to me. I get cut off. I wonder this morning if Dr. Banowsky were to go over a few moments, at least I think the television station would be nervous about what to do. You will enjoy him so very much. I've heard him speak. Someone told me some time ago I was foolish to invite him to this pulpit simply because he's so good. I realize that, but it's such a unique thing to have a person who's the president of this company who is also an ordained minister who loves the church, who has come back home now to Texas. He lives in Dallas with his family, so it's a joy to welcome Dr. William Banowsky here to this pulpit this morning. Following the offering

and following the singing of America Dr. William Banowsky will preach.

Bill Banowsky's Introductory Remarks

I appreciate the gracious introduction by my friend Barry Bailey and the chance to be here today, this first Lord's day of the new year in this historic, beautiful, deeply meaningful, grand fellowship. I'm very glad to be back in Fort Worth. I came to this city with our family in 1942 and spent all of my school years here over on the other side of town in Riverside--Riverside Elementary School and Junior High School and Carver Riverside High School. I played football there, and we had in my senior year in 1954 a record of nine and one--nine losses and one--and to show you how long ago that was, the only school we could beat was a little, insignificant, country school called Irving. My mother and dad are still here. Dad is a pillar of the Midtown Church of Christ and would be here today--he's not sure I ought to be, but he would be--except he has his responsibilities there, but I think he's sneaking out to watch channel 11, and I'm so happy that we have channel 11 to bring Barry Bailey to the people of central Texas. The most important thing you can do is to keep him on television. I say that not because you are now having to pay us something for the time. I don't know these details--Charles Edwards is our general manager here. We have seven of these television stations across the country: In Tampa, Florida, a CBS affiliate; in New Orleans an ABC station; and in Houston, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Seattle, great independent stations like channel 11 here. So, I don't poke into these details, but I understand that Barry was on free for seven or eight years, and now we charge him a little, but it's worth it. You keep him on, because nothing, I think, is more effective in reaching people. After all, this is just a hospital, and those of you who are enrolled here, who've checked in, are in pretty good shape. It's the people who still need to come, who are there, and think of those in their homes today. I am deeply moved as I think of the opportunity through this electronic mystery--this miracle--to reach into so many homes, particularly at a time when people are trying to start anew. I appreciated our prayer.

Comments On Bill Banowsky's Sermon In The Methodist Church

The Methodist Church was built by John Wesley. The Discipline of the Methodist Church says, "This church is a great Protestant body, though it did not come directly out of the Reformation but had its origin within the Church of England. Its founder was John Wesley" (Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1952, p. 3. Emp. mine. GE). Christ built His church (Matt. 16:18), but all churches built by men are unauthorized. Salvation is in the Lord's church (Acts 2:47;

Eph. 5:23). Christ purchased His church with His own precious blood (I Pet. 1:18-19; Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:23). None of the denominations, collectively nor individually, were purchased by the blood of Christ. The denominations are spiritual houses built by men and not the Lord. The Methodist Church was built by a man; therefore, it does not belong to the Lord. The church of the Lord is the house of God (I Tim. 3:15). The prophet looked into the future and said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Psm. 127:1). The denominations are religious plants, but they have not been planted by God. Jesus says that "every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13). In the next verse he says, "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15:14).

Recently, while I was in Fort Worth, Texas, to speak on the Fort Worth Lectures at the Brown Trail School of Preaching, brethren told me that brother Bill Banowsky had preached for the First United Methodist Church in downtown Fort Worth on January 6, 1986, and the service was televised. I saw the telecast via video tape. Yes, brethren, incredible and sad as it is, this really did occur! Many of us have gone to denominational churches to speak with the understanding that instrumental music was not to be used, or if they used it, we would not sing with it, but then we showed that the use of instrumental music in worship to God and other sinful practices which are engaged in by the denominations are unauthorized. For example, another brother and I once visited a Methodist Church for five weeks in succession. In Christian kindness we showed that the Bible is sufficient; therefore, their creed is sinful. We pointed out that John Wesley, not Christ, built the Methodist Church and that sprinkling and pouring are unauthorized; therefore, it is sinful to practice them. We pointed out that it is sinful to use mechanical instruments of music in worship to God. We pointed out that salvation is in the Lord's church and not in the Methodist Church, et al. We conducted ourselves in a Christian manner, and some of the people were very cordial while some others were somewhat cool toward us but did not say anything to us that was objectionable. At the conclusion of those five lessons no one obeyed the gospel, but within the next two or three years a fine couple, charter members of that Methodist congregation, obeyed the gospel at the West Side Church of Christ in Salem, Virginia. They were lifelong Methodists, having been members of that particular Methodist congregation for approximately fifty years. The lady's father had given the land upon which the Methodist meetinghouse stands.

I have been invited to preach the gospel of Christ in several denominations. In every instance I have taught the truth and exposed error, and I have endeavored to do so with Christian kindness and love. In some instances people later obeyed the gospel, but sometimes there was strong opposition to what I taught, but in each case I never left without teaching them the truth and exposing error. Paul often went to the synagogue, not to compromise with the Jews, but to teach and preach the truth to them and to oppose their error. As a result many obeyed the gospel. Some did not accept it, but at least their blood was not upon his hands (Acts 13:51; 20:26-27). So, let it be plainly stated that it is not wrong to go where error is taught and practiced, **provided we both teach the truth, oppose error, and refrain from practicing or endorsing the error that is being practiced.**

Unfortunately, brother Bill Banowsky did not expose error on January 6, 1986 when preaching to the First United Methodist Church in downtown Fort Worth, Texas. I have never met brother Banowsky, but I have both seen and heard him. He is a handsome man, an eloquent speaker, academically well educated, having studied to the highest level. He is apparently a very likeable person with a winning personality and very talented, all of which can be a great blessing if one faithfully serves the Lord, but on the other hand can become a great detriment if one does not faithfully use his talents and influence for the Lord. Naaman "was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, **but he was a leper**" (II Kgs. 5:1. Emp. mine. GE). Likewise, a man may possess many admirable characteristics and many valuable assets and yet be a sinner. **Nevertheless, one attribute is absolutely indispensable, and that is we must be faithful to God!**

Space is limited, so we can call attention to but a few of the many things that could be said about brother Banowsky's appearance in the Methodist Church. Please take note of the fact that both the Methodist preacher and brother Banowsky mentioned the church of Christ in connection with his preaching for the Methodists. Mr. Bailey, the Methodist preacher, said of him, "He is an ordained minister in the church of Christ." Though we know that there is no clergy-laity relationship in the Lord's church, we know that Mr. Bailey was letting it be known that brother Banowsky was a preacher in the church of Christ. The Methodist preacher said, "Following the offering and following the singing of America, Dr. William Banowsky will preach." And preach he did, but unlike Paul he did not expose error. When Paul preached in Ephesus, the Bible says, "And about that time there arose no small stir concerning the way" (Acts 19:23). If Bill Banowsky had

preached like Paul, do you suppose that in the First United Methodist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, it could have been said on January 6, 1986, "And about that time there arose no small stir concerning the way"?

In brother Banowsky's introductory remarks he said, "I appreciate the gracious introduction by my friend Barry Bailey and the chance to be here today, this first Lord's Day of the new year, in this historic, beautiful, **deeply meaningful, grand fellowship**" (Emp. mine. GE). Has he never read or has he forgotten or was he will to ignore and disregard what Paul said on the subject of fellowship of error? "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). In his remarks he referred to his parents and to the Midtown Church of Christ: "My mother and dad are still here. Dad is a pillar of the Midtown Church of Christ and would be here--he's not sure I ought to be, but he would be--except he has his responsibilities there, but I think he's sneaking out to watch channel 11..." I do not know brother Banowsky's father, but I do know some members of the Midtown Church of Christ. The ones that I know are strong, stalwart Christians, and they are sad, heartbroken, and, yes, even ashamed that brother Bill Banowsky, whom they have known and loved so long, has compromised with the Methodists. For the record's sake it needs to be known that those who are truly faithful to God in the membership of the Midtown Church of Christ do not endorse brother Banowsky's compromise at all! Brother Banowsky said: "And I'm so happy that we have channel 11 to bring Barry Bailey to the people of central Texas. The most important thing you can do is to keep him on television...You keep him on, because nothing, I think, is more effective in reaching people." Are there no faithful gospel preachers in central Texas that brother Banowsky could want the people in that part of our nation to hear as opposed to hearing a denominational preacher?

I personally know many faithful and able gospel preachers in central Texas who are both willing and able to do a great job in preaching the truth on television or anywhere else! Why would he be glad to have a part in presenting on television a Methodist minister instead of a faithful and able gospel preacher? **Question:** Why did he forsake assembling with Christians in order to worship with the Methodist and even endorse their error? One thing is certain. God was not pleased with such actions (Gal. 1:8-9; II John 9-11). False teachers always get in their false doctrine, and yet, when a member of the church compromises, he doesn't say a word by way of refutation of their error. As an example Mr. Bailey, the Methodist preacher, said: "You will note that the class **Who Are The Methodists?**" will begin next Sunday, run for three sessions, January the 12th, the

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METHODIST CHURCH (Continued from p. 23)
19th, and the 26th. It will be conducted at 10:45 in Room 331 by the reverend Weldon Hayes. Those of you that might always have wanted to know something a little bit more about the Methodist Church then we invite you to participate in that class. He will be looking something at the beliefs, the doctrine, the history, the practice of worship, attempting to help you to come to a better understanding of the Methodist Church." **Question:** Why did not brother Bill Banowsky point out the truth about the Lord's church and help people come to a better understanding of that divine institution? Brother Banowsky stated, "After all, this is just a hospital, and those of you who are enrolled here, who've checked in, are in pretty good shape" (Emp. mine. GE). By implication this statement teaches that obeying Methodist doctrine puts one "in pretty good shape" spiritually. Nothing could be further from the truth. Obeying the doctrines and commandments of men causes one's worship to be in vain (Matt. 15:9). Paul warns of the futility and danger involved in following the commandments and doctrines of men in these words: "(Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (Col. 2:21-22). Brother Banowsky also said, "I appreciated our prayer." Will the prayer of one who turns away from hearing the law of God be heard? "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Prov. 28:9). The blind man stated the truth when he said, "We know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and do his will, him he heareth" (John 9:31).

In earlier years, as far as I know, brethren considered brother Bill Banowsky a faithful preacher of the word. We appeal to him to come back and stand firmly upon the truth. We urge him to teach and preach the truth and to oppose error. He would do well to consider what Paul said to Peter when Peter was "carried away with their dissimulation." Paul, among other things, said to Peter, "For if I build up again

those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor" (Gal. 2:18).

Brother Banowsky's compromise with error has been public, and that error should be publicly dealt with. According to Matthew 18:15-17, if a brother sins against another brother and only the two are involved, the wronged brother is to go to the offending party and point out "his fault" privately "between thee and him alone," and "if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." If the sinning brother "hears" (responds by acknowledging the wrong he had done and makes proper amends), the matter is resolved. The brother is "gained" and fellowship is restore. If the matter is not resolved, then Christ said, "Take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established." If a brother is so perverse that both of the foregoing steps fail, then the entire congregation is to become involved, for the Lord said, "And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican."

It is a misapplication of Matthew 18:15-17 to argue, as some are doing, that though brother Banowsky publicly sinned that he can be rebuked only in private. Let it be emphatically reiterated that brother Banowsky's sermon in the Methodist Church, and the error that he taught, both explicitly and implicitly, did not involve some private sin between brother Banowsky and one of his brethren. I am sure that other brethren feel as I do about him, and that is that we have never had even the slightest ill will against him, and since many of us have never met him, he has not privately sinned against us. However, his sin is against the Lord and "the brotherhood" (I Pet. 2:17; I Cor. 10:31-33). Our motives and purposes for him are stated in the following scriptures. "My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins" (Jas. 5:19-20).



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VOLUME XV, NUMBER 4

APRIL 1986

RECONCILIATION

FRANCIS E. WHITEMAN

For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die. But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. Romans 5:6-11

What is reconciliation? Two friends have a strong disagreement and fall out with each other, becoming mutually hostile against the other. They, while in this attitude or state, are enemies. Later they make up, being no longer enemies. They are now mutual friends. This case illustrates the action of reconciliation: there was hatred, hostility, estrangement, ill will, but now love, friendship, togetherness, good will. This is a mutual restoration of friendship.

Now consider a second case: Two friends have a strong disagreement and one becomes hostile, separating himself from the other. But the second person, though disagreeing strongly with the first, does not become

hostile nor unloving toward him. Eventually reconciliation is brought about. The hostile one's attitude has changed to love and good will. The other's attitude has not changed; he did not need a change of mind to be friends with his enemy. He simply forgave and resumed the relationship that existed prior to their conflict.

This second case is typical of man's relationship with God (which is so well portrayed in Jesus' prodigal son story of Luke 15:11-24). Through sin, man fell out toward God, becoming God's enemy; yet God continued to love hostile man, and desired to graciously bring about man's reconciliation to Him. God does not need to be reconciled to man because He never fell out with man; His attitude toward man has never been one of hostility but of love, compassion, mercy and good will (as per the prodigal son account).

But what about God's wrath, as demonstrated toward Adam and Eve, the wicked people of Noah's day, Nadab and Abihu, Ananias and Sapphira, and such? There is a vast difference between wrath and hostility. To express wrath is not necessarily indicative of hostility. A parent, for example, may justly discipline his disobedient child without becoming hostile toward the child. The parent's love and concern for his child have not changed. So it is with the wrath (or anger) of God toward disobedient man. God, being just in all His ways (Isa. 45:21; Rev. 15:3), must punish the offender (Rom. 6:23; II Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. (Continued on page 32)

THE CHURCH AND HER WORKS

MAX R. MILLER

The church of modern day has become greatly confused as to exactly what is its work and mission, and what is not. Consequently, we find the church doing many things that God did not intend for it to do. It seems that anything members of the church may be doing, that is, any project or work performed by members of the church of Christ, is worthy of church support and is declared to be the work of the church. This being a work of the church is not justified by Holy Scriptures, but merely because it seems to be a good thing, those involved in the doing are fellow Christians, and, in most cases, have asked the church to endorse, promote, or financially support their project. Then too, if some in the church want to instigate an activity and it has favor and approval of the elders (who so many are listening to the voice of people rather than the word of God), then the project is activated as a work of the church. Divine authority is not considered. Often, if a questioning voice is raised it is ignored and those raising the question of authority are looked on with ill favor.

Who knows what is the work and mission of the church? How can it be determined? How is it being determined in today's church. If a work is favored by the preacher, perhaps being of particular benefit to him, it may become the work of the church. If a project is proposed by some of the women, or parents, or if it seems to be good for our young people, or "to keep peace in the church," such is sufficient grounds for inclusion in the work of the Lord's church. Where is the Bible, Holy Scripture? No one has really thought about it! What about hermeneutics, the science of Biblical interpretation? Does it matter if a work is authorized--or not?

Where is the authority for the divided assembly? Is it in those who want it, or the Bible? Where is the authority for the church's banquet hall (fellowship room) and its gymnasium? These are generally spoken of as the Family Life Center. Have those who contended for the Family Life Center ever stood with Bible in hand and argued their case--from the Bible?

What about the entertainment ministry in the Lord's church? Is it the work of the church to purchase vehicles principally for the chauffeuring of young people to

entertainment events. Is it the work of the church to engage a youth minister to substitute for parents, to organize the youth of the church in the role of entertainment? Does a "devo" at the end of an affair justify such doings as the sacred work of the church?

A new "work" is now looming before us--the singing groups. The monthly singings of the church of Christ are a common spiritual activity of the church of Christ in many places. The hour or so of singing "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" was a time spent in worshipping God. Worship is an individual act whether it be the giving of one's means--or singing. One cannot do it for another. With the rising popularity of "gospel music" (much of it teaches false doctrine) there has been a rash of singing groups in the church (some of them purely professional). Now at the Sunday Singings, and at other times, the singing groups (quartets, trios, choirs) come forward to singing before the assembly. Some have come with their instruments of accompaniment. At best, this type program could be considered no more than worship and entertainment mingled together. Such is an adulteration of spiritual and Scriptural worship, the offering of a defiled act as much so as was the strange fire of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1,2; John 4:23,24). With the singing groups have come the musical instruments. Inconsistent are our arguments against the use of mechanical instruments in Christian worship and the use of the choir.

Why do we have the singing groups mingling their performances with congregational worship? Because, "we want it." The argument "We Want It" is impossible to rebut. Until there is a willingness to adhere to God's divinely authorized work and worship as defined in the New Testament confusion and disorder will reign in the church. Perverted works and worship are sinful to God and an abomination to those who yet call for a "thus saith the Lord" in all matters of faith and practice in Christian religion.

A great challenge is before the faithful. Elders and preachers--especially--should seriously study the work of the church. Denominationalists have as their base of authority, "we want it." Many among us are coming (some are already there) to the same sandy ground of authority. Let us take our stand on the Rock. God has spoken.

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

The Defender (UPS 935-520) is published monthly (except December) by the Bellview church of Christ, 4850 Sauffley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798. Second Class Postage Paid at Pensacola, Florida. Subscription free. All contributions to be used in operational expenses.

BIBLE DOCTRINE ON TRIAL

The Biblical doctrine of church discipline is being largely ignored, even violated without regard to consequence. Jimmie B. Hill has written two short articles calling attention to what is becoming a typical situation among many brethren. Editor

Fellowship The Disfellowshipped

Jimmie B. Hill

Are You Willing To Fellowship A Known "Crossroads Type Congregation Which Has Been Marked And Disfellowshipped By Sound, Faithful Brethren?

That is exactly what you will be doing if the Highlands church of Christ in Lakeland is allowed to participate in the 1986 Spiritual Growth Workshop along with you. The church at Highlands has been marked by the congregation at South Florida Avenue in Lakeland because of their fellowship with the Crossroads church of Christ in Gainesville, their fellowship with the Boston church of Christ (Crossroads type), their endorsements of brothers Rubel Shelly and Joe Beam and views on fellowship, and many more questionable practices to which there has been no repudiation nor denial.

Some brethren in our area have tried to pass this off as "a minor squabble between the two Lakeland churches" but it goes much further than that. That in no way describes the situation. Would our Lord and Saviour want unity at the cost of doctrine? Would He want compromise or respect for God's Holy Word? Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The Bible teaches that we are to avoid those who are marked as a result of their false teaching (Rom. 16:17), and that we are to have no fellowship with them (II John 9-11) until they have repented and asked God's forgiveness; to do so would make us partakers of their evil deeds. I am sure that you realize the weight and gravity of these teachings so please consider seriously any involvement with the Highlands congregation.

The apostle Paul tells us to "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." The brethren at South Florida Avenue have available upon request a complete review of the issues (questions asked and the

(Continued on page 30)

Consistency Or Hypocrisy

Jimmie B. Hill

In 1984, representatives (elders and preachers) from several of Central Florida's churches of Christ gathered together at the Concord Street church of Christ in Orlando, Florida to meet with brother Jack Exum. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss several doctrinal issues with brother Exum and to determine, based on his answers, whether or not he should be allowed to be a speaker at the 1984 Spiritual Growth Workshop. After much deliberation and many questions asked by the area brethren concerning brother Exum's position on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, his stand on Crossroads and his fellowship with them, and his position on the Unity in Diversity movement, it was determined that brother Exum not be used at the Workshop. Many brethren in the Central Florida area thought that was, indeed, a step in the right direction in the defeat of certain liberalistic tendencies that have entered into the church of our Lord. The Concord Street brethren, along with those others present at the 1984 meeting, were commended for their vigilance concerning this action. However, in 1986, it seems there has been a backset.

The Highlands church of Christ in Lakeland, Florida has been marked and disfellowshipped by sound, faithful brethren because of their fellowship with the Crossroads church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida, their fellowship with the Boston church of Christ in Boston, Massachusetts, their endorsements of brothers Rubel Shelly and Joe Beam and their views on fellowship and many more questionable practices to which there has been no repudiation nor denial. In spite of all this, the Highlands church has been given the second largest responsibility in the entire 1986 Spiritual Growth Workshop and of all things, the Youth Program. Where is the consistency?

The Highlands elders have refused to meet
(Continued on page 30)

Twelfth Annual Lectureship
BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL
MAY 11-15

Prophecy And Fulfillment

Bellview Church Of Christ, 4850 Saufley Rd.
Pensacola, Fl. 32506-1798

SUNDAY

9:00 A.M.	The Old Testament Prophet	Bill Coss
10:00 A.M.	False Prophets	Ira Rice
6:00 P.M.	Prophecy, God's Communication To Man	Ed Floyd
7:00 P.M.	Interpretation of Prophecy	Roy Deaver

MONDAY

1:00 P.M.	The Holy Character Of The Prophet	Fred Stancliff
2:00 P.M.	Why Study The Prophets	Tim Smith
3:00 P.M.	God Himself, Prophet Of Redemption, Gen. 3:15	L. E. Wishum
7:00 P.M.	Enemies Of Prophecy	Jim Laws
8:00 P.M.	The Incorruptible Christ Psalm 16	Walter Bumgardner

TUESDAY

8:30 A.M.	The Son Of Man, Psalm 8	Bill Dillon
9:30 A.M.	Conditional And Unconditional; Fulfilled and Unfulfilled Prophecy	Charles Tharp
10:30 A.M.	Prophecies Against The Nations	Walter Hulett
1:00 P.M.	Rulers And Nations United Against Christ, Psalm 2	Grady Miller
2:00 P.M.	Prophecy, Evidence Of Divine Revelation	Fred Davis
3:00 P.M.	"And It Shall Come To Pass Afterward..." Joel 2:28-32	Roger Campbell
7:00 P.M.	A Prophet Like Unto Moses, Deut. 18:15-22	Robert Taylor
8:00 P.M.	An Eternal Kingdom From David's Dynasty II Samuel 7:12-17	Mike Kiser

WEDNESDAY

8:30 A.M.	The New Testament Prophet	Harris McCaleb
9:30 A.M.	"And So All Israel Shall Be Saved," Rom. 11:26	Bill Clayton
10:30 A.M.	Prophecy And A.D. Seventy Doctrines	Terry Varner
1:00 P.M.	Elijah The Tishbite	Harold Bigham
2:00 P.M.	In The Spirit Of Elijah, Malachi 4:4,5	Howell Bigham
3:00 P.M.	The Kingdom, Indestructible And Eternal, Dan. 2:44,45	Clifford Dixon
7:00 P.M.	Four Prophecies In Father Abraham	Charles Pugh
8:00 P.M.	My Servant David Shall Be King, Ezek. 37:24-28	Winston Temple

THURSDAY

8:30 A.M.	God's Suffering Servant, Isaiah 53	John Gross
9:30 A.M.	Jesus Christ: Elect Of God, Isaiah 42:1-4	Elliott Glasgow
10:30 A.M.	Jesus Christ: His Death, Resurrection And Return	Ken Burlison
1:00 P.M.	The Covenant Of Christ, Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13	Charles Blair
2:00 P.M.	The Gospel Preached Unto Abraham, Gal. 3:8	Gilbert Gough
3:00 A.M.	Jesus Christ: Prophet, Priest, And King,	Jim Huffman
7:00 P.M.	Virgin Birth Of Jesus Christ, Isaiah 7:14;	Rex Turner, Sr.
8:00 P.M.	Immanuel, God With Us, Isaiah 7:14; 3:16	William Wardlaw



R. Taylor



C. Tharp



J. Laws



H. Bigham



H. Bigham



C. Dixon



W. Wardlaw



L. Wishum



B. Coss



B. Clayton



W. Hulett



G. Miller



J. Gross



Bumgardner



B. Dillon



T. Varner



H. McCaleb



R. Turner



I. Rice



R. Deaver



C. Blair



M. Kiser



G. Gough



F. Davis



K. Burlison



J. Huffman



F. Stancliff



E. Floyd



W. Temple



C. Pugh

... all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me." Luke 24:44

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FELLOWSHIP (Continued from page 27)

Highland's elders answers) involved with this disciplinary action. Brethren, do not be swayed by those who may be prejudiced; obtain this material, read it and analyze it for yourselves, and then make your stand firmly on the word of God. There comes a time to draw a line.

Brethren, I write these things to you because of my deep love for the church and my appreciation for the crucified Christ who gave His precious life for it. Let us not crucify to ourselves the Son of God afresh but let us keep His body pure and holy.

May the Lord be with you and may we all keep pressing toward the mark.

*		*
*	CONTRIBUTION	*
*		*
*		*
*	Mrs. Joseph Cook	\$20.00 *
*	Dorothy Bise	10.00 *
*	Shirley Cozort	20.00 *
*	Wilber Girod	10.00 *
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HYPOCRISY (Continued from page 27)

interested elderships in a conglomerate meeting such as the one with brother Exum in 1984. There is more evidence against the Highlands church concerning their fellowshipping Crossroads, their position on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, and the Unity in Diversity movement than there was against brother Exum. Brother Exum was dismissed as a speaker at the 1984 Workshop and yet, the Highlands church is being encouraged to take the Youth Program, the second largest program in the Workshop. Again, where is the consistency?

Brethren, I ask you; Has the Law of Christ changed in the last two years or have some veered from it? What kind of precedence is being set here in Central Florida by the supporters and contributors of the 1986 Spiritual Growth Workshop? If this is not hypocrisy at it's finest, then the church for which our Lord and Saviour died is not in existence today and we are in dire trouble.

RECEIVING CHRIST

GRADY MILLER

Have you ever sat and listened to someone try to explain his position on a particular issue and suddenly realize that he really has not said anything at all? Although he may go on and on, the words mean nothing; too people may come away, each having the opposite opinion of what was said. While we sometimes joke that politicians are masters of this art, we should recognize that all of us are guilty of occasionally using words and phrases that, upon reflection, mean little or nothing.

One such phrase that is quite popular today is the exhortation to "receive Christ" for salvation. It is unquestionably the key phrase in modern day evangelism. At the end of a broadcast or public service the audience is invariably encouraged to "receive Christ" as their personal Lord and Saviour. In light of the widespread usage of this phrase it might be well for us to take a moment and examine the meaning behind the term.

Many people are shocked to discover that nowhere in all the Bible is an alien sinner told to receive Christ for salvation. Why not? It may very well be that if they were told to "receive Christ" they still would not know what to do in order to be saved! What do you do when you receive Christ? How do you receive Christ? The phrase, all by itself, tells us nothing at all.

It cannot be denied that we must "receive" Jesus in some sense if we are going to be saved. The Bible declares that some did receive Him in a spiritual sense (Col. 2:6; cf. John 1:12). Thus, our question is not whether we should receive Him or not, but instead how we may receive Him. The world

desperately needs to know what to do in order to receive Jesus as their Saviour.

You should know that the message concerning the Christ has been revealed unto the world, and that you receive Christ when you receive that message and obey it. The Apostle Paul gives a condensation of this message, called the gospel (or, good news), in I Corinthians 15. There, he declared that the saints in Corinth had received the gospel that he had preached unto them, and were standing (or remaining faithful) in it. In verse two he assures them that they were saved by their obedient reception of that gospel (cf. Romans 1:16). Thus, the Corinthians received Christ when they obeyed His gospel.

Another example of believers receiving Christ in this manner is found in Acts 2. There, on the day of Pentecost, Peter delivered a powerful sermon concerning the risen Saviour. In verse 41 we find that all those who "gladly received his word [his message concerning the Saviour] were baptized? and the same day there were added unto them about 3,000 souls."

One may receive Christ as his Saviour today by responding to the gospel as did the first century Christians in Jerusalem and Corinth. Place your trust and faith in Jesus (John 8:24); repent, and turn away from your sins (Acts 17:31); confess Jesus as your Master (Rom. 10:10) be buried with Him in baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and arise to walk as a new creature (Rom. 6:4). By doing this, you receive Christ.

Reader Response

The men of this congregation decided that we should try to get good, sound publications on Biblical matters into each of the member's home.

Enclosed is the list of our current membership. Receiving your paper will encourage the work here.

Thank you for your faithful efforts in the kingdom and for your cooperation in this matter. May God bless your work for Him,

Gary Anderson

I had the opportunity today to read a copy of **Defender**. I am a preacher and the information provided in the paper is excellent, as well as informative. Please

enter my name on the mailing list.

Stephen Fisher
Carrollton, Illinois

I wish to be added to your mailing list. I and many others appreciate your work and sound stand. Please also add a young friend of mine to your list.

Ed Crawford
Independence, Missouri

I would like to receive the **Defender**. I have here a copy given to me by my sister. It is the November 1985 issue and I certainly enjoyed the article, "Bedrock of Restoration" by Max R. Miller. We need some good help like the **Defender**. I enclose \$5.00.

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Still
St. Joe, Arkansas

DEFENDER

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MAY 11-15
"Prophecy and Fulfillment"
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RECONCILIATION (Continued from page 25)

20:10-15), or else establish a way of offering mercy and forgiveness that punishment may be dismissed.

The Scriptures teach that man sinned against God and thus became estranged and alienated from Him (Isa. 59:1,2; Rom. 3:23). Man is in need of being reconciled to God, because man is the offender, or the enemy. "Be ye reconciled to God" is the inspired instruction of the apostle Paul (II Cor. 5:20). If God's righteous (just) wrath were to break out on unrighteous man, none would survive (Psa. 130:3). But "God is not willing that any should perish," i.e., be eternally lost in hell (II Pet. 3:9), so He gave Jesus in order to establish a just means of reconciliation by death and blood. Thus it is that we read, "But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). By means of this sacrificial blood-death the punishment due the sinner (death) may be dismissed, providing he, by faith, accepts this divinely given provision and submits to the specified conditions imposed by divine decree for release of guilt and punishment.

This divinely provided reconciliation is available to all peoples upon entering the spiritual body of Christ, the church. Jesus died on the cross "that he might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile] unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were

nigh" (Eph. 2:16-18). One cannot be reconciled to God outside the spiritual body of Christ. Since the body is the church (Eph. 1:22,23), one therefore must be in the church to be reconciled to God. This fact forcefully shows the necessity of the church, as well as the necessity of being in the church. The sinner enters the church by means of water baptism (I Cor. 12:13), at which time the benefits and power of Christ's blood are bestowed upon him. The sinner's sins are pardoned; he becomes adopted into the household of God and is by this fact an heir of eternal life (Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:16-29; Acts 2:38; 22:26).

The sinner is "justified by his blood," the sinner is "reconciled to God by the death of his Son," according to our text. Jesus' blood-death is a means of bringing about justification and reconciliation. To be justified and reconciled is to be saved. The same spiritual process that justifies man before God, and reconciles man to God, also saves man from sin and the wrath of God. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

Have you been reconciled to God? Do you continue to enjoy your reconciled relationship with Him, or have you let it slip away from you? Remember that God still loves you, that Christ died for you, and that the church is praying for you. "Be ye reconciled to God."



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 5

MAY 1986

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HEALING

MAX R. MILLER

1. If some receive a "baptism of the Holy Ghost" and some do not, does this not make God a respecter of persons, which He claims not to be (Acts 10:34)?
 2. If conversion is by a direct operation of the Holy Ghost, why would preachers be needed at all?
 3. Why are there no Christians where the Bible has not gone?
 4. If operation of the Holy Spirit is direct, does this not deny the Bible teaching that each of us is personally accountable to God for his actions?
 5. Would salvation by direct operation not make the gospel message unnecessary, thus contradicting such passages as Romans 1:16-17 and II Thess. 1:7-9?
 6. If healing is claimed by some today on the basis that they have the same power Christ had, why aren't all manner of diseases healed as was done by Him (Matt. 4:23-24; 9:35)?
 7. Since Jesus had no failures or relapses of those He healed, why do beneficiaries of attempted healing today have relapses?
 8. Why were those Jesus healed able to receive immediate healing without "installment plan" improvement?
 9. Why were the genuine New Testament miracles fully convincing to all, even enemies (Acts 3:1-10; 4:16)? Today, "miracle healing" is suspect.
 10. Why was the necessity of faith not a uniform condition for healing in the New Testament, since New Testament miracles worked even on unbelievers, but today's healers claim one must have faith.
 11. Why did Jesus countenance the use of physicians rather than ridicule or discourage their use (Luke 5:30)?
 12. If tongue-speaking is evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit for Christians, why are there instances of the same symptoms among pagans and idolaters who exhibit the same psychological and emotional phenomenon, though claiming no faith or connection with Christ?
 13. If an advanced blessing of the Holy Spirit is automatic for believers, why did those of Acts 8:12-17 not automatically receive it?
- No one denies the reality of New Testament miracles. It should be stressed, however, that the same Bible that teaches their reality also teaches their purpose and that they were to cease (Heb. 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 13:8-10; Eph. 4:11-16). None today possess divine power to heal, speak in tongues, or prophesy, or do anything miraculous.

HOW FAR WITH WARM FEELINGS

Fads come and go. That which is in vogue at one time is old hat at another. Each momentous event has its pet terms and phrases. Watergate had its "at that point in time." Recently newspaper and television newspeople have had their "early on." Role players of the current Unity In Diversity drama have given emphasis to such terms as "the corporate body," as they speak of the New Testament church and its "corporate worship." Another such term, certainly not to be overlooked, is "the hermeneutical principle." Every religious sect (and sectarian) has its unique vocabulary; a nomenclature is developed for every false and digressive religious movement. New meanings are given to old and accepted words and terms—or perhaps, altogether new definitions are to be given to old and accepted terms. One must perk up their ears when these terms begin to be tossed about. Listen for a new meaning.

The current Unity Movement among some in the Independent Christian Church and the church of Christ has brought forth an old and good word and has "to this point in time" made excessive use of it. It is the word irenic, which means: pacific; peaceful; conciliatory. The "by special invitation" group that met at Joplin (August '85) were required to be of an irenic spirit. It was important that an irenic spirit prevail. Flattery and great swelling words they speak, praising themselves for the wonderful irenic spirit each possessed and which have marked each following Unity Form. Discussions of certain divisive doctrines and practices were discouraged at Joplin; the most important thing about the "Summit" was to get to know one another, to learn to love one another, and to have an irenic fellowship out of which other discussion may come. In one of the Malibu sessions it was stated by one, that the core of our problem is the use of mechanical instruments of music. Until that problem was resolved, there could be no unity of the Independent Christian Church and the church of Christ. One of our own brethren

suggested we not discuss that issue but rather talk about other matters and to get to know one another better and learn to love one another.

How far do we go with the peaceable and warm feeling role? All who have come forth to discuss unity should be men of peace and love. Gentlemen of the world are able to conduct peaceable meetings wherein divergent views are cast. Why then do men who call themselves Christians have to meet time and again for the purpose of cultivating an irenic atmosphere for the purpose of discussing matters of difference?

The issue of division—its cause and its cure—must be faced. We are now as we have been all along, ready to discuss "the hermeneutical principle," to see if it is a matter of good hermeneutics or of bad hermeneutics. Debates test one's hermeneutics, one's system of interpretation. Who among those of the Christian Church can make a better affirmation for the instrument than Ira M. Boswell (Boswell-Hardeman Debate, Nashville, May 31-June 5, 1923), or J. Carroll Stark (Stark-Warlick Debate, Nov. 4-7, 1903, Henderson, Tenn.). Boswell affirmed: Singing is Scriptural in Christian worship. Stark affirmed: The word of God authorizes the use of instruments of music for praise in the church of Jesus Christ. Or will Don DeWelt or Lynn Hieronymus affirm it is neither Scriptural or unscriptural to use mechanical instruments of music in Christian Worship? We dare them to do so!

We stand at the crossroads. An irenic spirit has prevailed in every summit and unity forum. Men have shown themselves to be peaceable and of a loving disposition, to have care and respect for those who disagree with them. No further progress can be made until the issue of the instrument is met. We have heard enough about the "warm feeling," the irenic spirit. Now is the time to see what the Holy Spirit has to say about these matters.

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

The Defender (UPS 935-520) is published monthly (except December) by the Bellview church of Christ, 4850 Souffley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506-1798. Second Class Postage Paid at Pensacola, Florida. Subscription free. All contributions to be used in operational expenses.

MY SEARCH FOR TRUTH

JIM JONES

Thousands upon thousands are blinded by the darkness that Satan and his angels are spreading throughout the world. There are many reasons why people in the world do not realize or even care to know the condition of their souls.

One reason people do not care about their soul is that they grow up as children taking for granted what their parents taught them to be the truth. Matthew 19:29 states that those who are not willing to forsake parents, relatives, and friends, for Christ's sake, are not worthy of Him. Many in the world are following religious practices because of their tradition in the family, without any regard for the word of God.

Another reason is that many find themselves reading books of prominent men without searching to see if what they are saying is true. Second Timothy 4:4 says, "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Should we not search to see if what we read or hear is the truth? For some, it is simply enough that it was spoken by some well-known individual.

In the same light, we abuse our Christian liberty with the attitude; "if the preacher said it, it must be true." Reading Acts 17:10-13 shows us the Bereans searched the Scriptures daily to see if the things taught them were so. How much grief could be averted if only people would search with an open mind the Scriptures that have been given us. Paul writes in II Timothy 3:16-17 that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

I found myself in every condition that was stated above. Matthew says it best: "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15:14).

For thirty years I was led by blind leaders who gave me reassurance that the life I was living was a Christian life. I did

those things I thought I should, such as: being active in the offices of the church, attending every Sunday morning service (I did not feel the evening service was necessary), and gave my ten-percent in the offering plate. I attended a Church of Christ (instrumental), later to learn it was the same as a Christian Church. I was content with my religion. Contentment is dangerous in any circumstance, and when it enters the church, it endangers our very souls.

What triggered my quest to find the truth was the lack of knowledge to answer the simplest of questions brought up during a Bible study in my home. I started to study. I read books written by various men with many contradictory points of view. It was not until I opened my Bible and began to study that I realized how little I really knew.

As my study progressed I noticed more and more the deterioration of the Church I attended and the lack of their Scriptural authority. The deterioration was slow but gradual, and it is in many of the Churches today. As the older preachers moved on, younger men with more liberal ideas started creeping in. Their main thrust was that of entertainment (all in the name of fellowship), thinking this would keep the young people from leaving the church. We should read again Matthew 7:15 which says, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

The Christian Church today refuses to proclaim the whole counsel of God, fearing the truth will turn people away so they will not come back. Many fail to consider that those who do not accept and obey all the word of God are lost already!

There were numerous unauthorized acts being engaged in, but generally speaking, the departure from the WORD of God, only to be replaced by books written by men of many denominations, was the most noticeable. During worship services the emphasis was not on truth, but keeping the people laughing by telling jokes. There is nothing wrong with humor, but when it takes the place of the

(Continued on page 36)

SEARCH FOR TRUTH (Continued from page 35)

gospel, then we worship something other than our Father. Need we quote II Timothy 4:3? "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears."

From here, it began to snow-ball; one thing after another: holding hands, women speaking in worship, selling records and, the most popular had to be the sports activities. All the while, this was being done in the name of "fellowship." I ask you, is the church designed to please men? I think not. "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). As all of these things escalated, I was getting frustrated. I had enough conscience to know I was wrong, but not enough knowledge to know why. Then I remembered Romans 8:28 which says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I was persistent in my study and prayer, and even though I did not understand all the Scriptures I read, I did understand enough to know I was in danger of losing my soul.

With the limited knowledge I now possessed, I proceeded to talk to those in the Church of which I was a member about the unscripturalness of the things they were doing. It was not long till I was being avoided by those I considered my friends in the Church. After several months of opposing the teaching of their false doctrines, I was asked to attend a meeting of the elders. Upon confronting the elders with Colossians 3:17, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus," I simply asked for authority from the Bible for the things they were doing. They never answered or even attempted to answer my questions. By now, it was time to shake the "dust off my feet" as Paul and Barnabas did in Acts 13:51. Colossians 3:1 tells us to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. That, I was willing to do.

I started seeking for the truth by attending several different Churches. The process ended up being more of eliminating Churches, such as: the Church of God, Christian Church, Missionary Church, United Church of Christ, et. al. Out of curiosity, I visited a non-instrumental church of Christ

which was quite different for one who had grown-up with instrumental music. I may never have gone back except for the first time in my life I heard the whole counsel of God proclaimed (Acts 20:27)! As I continued to study with the preacher there and ask questions, I learned how misled I had been over the years. But how sweet to the taste was the truth, as Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). I soon obeyed the gospel (by repenting and being baptized) and continued to study and grow every day.

Knowing the truth of the Scriptures made me fervent in the faith, wanting to teach what I had now learned to those in the Christian Church. However, rejection was quick to come from the very people I had spent so many years with and loved dearly. What was so sad was that they considered themselves faithful Christians. Jeremiah tells us about people such as these. "The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them" (Jer. 8:9).

What was plainly the truth was rejected and compromised by man's way of thinking with no regard for the gospel. Instead of being disheartened, it should make our faith even stronger. James says, "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (Jam. 1:3).

It was a long struggle to find the one and only true church, and I am happy it happened just the way it did. In the same manner, I feel sorry for those who have grown up in the church not knowing what a privilege they have to serve the Lord, but instead, take for granted the precious church for which our Lord shed His blood. Dear friends, do not be mistaken, there are many faithful servants in the Lord's church, but there are also many like we read of in Revelation 3:15-16, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold or hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The struggle that confronts all the children of God is dealing with those who are lukewarm and never take a stand for the truth; but instead, their only concern is to keep the peace, being careful not to "make waves" and often times in doing so, they compromise the truth. Note what Jesus says in Matthew 12:30, "He that is not with me is against me;"

(Continued on page 39)

ONE BODY

WINSTON C. TEMPLE

This writer received an issue of a tabloid titled **There Is One Body** (Winter 1985, Vol. 2, No. 2). Its purpose is to promote unity between the Independent Christian Church and the church of Christ.

In the above mentioned tabloid one writer, Calvin Warpula, wrote in an article, "A Proposal for Unity," (page 14), the following:

. . . The basic difference between the two groups centers on how to interpret the silence of the Bible, especially in regard to the matter of corporate worship. The Christian Churches believe, "If God's word does not condemn an action it is permitted." Churches of Christ reason, "Only those things that God has authorized (specifically named or generally approved by category) are permitted." Christian Churches say, "Whatever is not prohibited is permitted." Churches of Christ say, "Whatever is not authorized is prohibited." Both groups believe "in being silent where the Bible is silent" but interpret the slogan differently. The Christian Churches think it means we must not condemn what God has not condemned. The churches of Christ think it means we must not add what God has not authorized.

In regard to the Christian Churches' concept of interpreting the silence of the Bible, let us examine two of the statements recorded in the above paragraph:

If God's word does not condemn an action it is permitted. Whatever is not prohibited is permitted.

The Bible did not condemn nor prohibit Noah from using a different type of wood other than gopher wood; therefore, according to the Christian Churches' concept of interpreting the silence of the Scriptures, Noah could have used pine, cypress, cedar, etc. The Bible does not condemn the use of salt and leaven in the preparation of the bread for use in the Lord's Supper; therefore, according to the Christian Churches' concept, we could use both salt and

leaven. Would not the same reasoning also follow in putting peanut butter and jelly on the bread? Following their same interpretation, it would be just as well to substitute orange juice for the fruit of the vine. After all, the Bible does not condemn nor prohibit the use of orange juice. Better still, according to the Christian Churches' concept, we could put "play" money in the collection on Sundays. Remember, the Bible does not condemn nor prohibit its use!

Someone is sure to reason that these observations are silly. My dear reader, that is the point! When one adopts the concept that if God's word does not condemn nor prohibit an action, it is permitted, then where will it all stop? One does not have to reflect very long on the above observations without recognizing that this is the language of the denominational world. When this writer came out of the Baptist denomination, the Baptist preacher came to pay him a visit. He wanted to know what Scriptures were bothering this writer about his salvation in the Baptist denomination. Mark 16:16 was the first reference brought up for discussion. The Baptist preacher replied: "I know what the verse says, but I also know what it does not say. It does not say that he that is baptized not shall be damned!" In regard to interpreting the silence of the Scriptures, does not the Baptist preacher's statement have the same ring as the Christian churches' concept of interpretation? If not, why not?

When the Bible authorizes a specific action, it does not need to list all of the actions which it does not authorize! How many books would it have taken to have recorded such a list?

It appears to this writer that the Christian Churches are using these so called hermeneutical concepts to put into worship anything and everything that suits their favor and fancy. One of these things is the mechanical instrument of music. They recognize that the New Testament authorizes singing as the kind of music to be used in worship to God, but they want to add another kind of music, the mechanical instrument.

Another thing which appeared in **One Body**
(Continued on page 38)

ONE BODY (Continued from page 37)

(Winter 1985, Vol. 2, No. 2, page 4) was the statement made by Don DeWelt.

Since there is no congregational singing it could hardly be required or not required. We can and do sing congregationally, but not because the New Testament teaches it, but as a matter of free choice. Since the New Testament tells us we can sing individually (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16) we feel it is not wrong to do so congregationally. The silence as to congregational singing is **permissive**, not prohibitive, most especially since our Lord sang with His apostles, the congregations sang in the Old Testament, the congregation sang in the synagogues, and we will sing together in heaven.

On page five of this same issue of **One Body**, DeWelt labors to show that Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 are dealing with "solo" singing. He then moves to add the instrument to individual and congregational singing.

Both sides have adopted the New Testament as the sole standard of faith and practice. Since it is silent on congregational singing--as silent as it is on church buildings, etc., we can either choose to sing congregationally or not sing congregationally or sing congregationally with an instrument or without an instrument. There is indeed freedom and unity in such choices (See his answer to Woods under paragraph twelve, page 28).

It is crystal clear to those who will see that this Christian Church preacher placed congregational singing in the realm of silence. He then interpreted Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 as individual singing. He also tried to show that these passages deal with "solo" singing in the congregation. He then proceeded to apply his hermeneutics on silence: "If God's word does not condemn an action it is permitted. Whatever is not prohibited is permitted." It is here that he picks up the instrument and moves it into the congregation.

DeWelt misses the point on Ephesians 5:19.

The context of Ephesians 5:18,19 is showing a contrast between a Christian worship service and a pagan festival. On the phrase "speaking one to another" brother Wayne Jackson in **Firm Foundation** (Vol. 103, No. 6, page 33) makes the following observation:

Second, the grammar reveals an interplay of activity on the part of the singers. Paul declares that these Christians are "speaking one to another [heautois] in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...." The term *heautois* is a reciprocal, reflexive, plural pronoun. The significance of this point is this: "When a plural subject is represented as affected by an interchange of action signified in the verb, it is called a reciprocal construction" (Dana and Mantey, *A manual, Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, p. 131). The interaction of speaking to one another in songs... clearly authorizes congregational praise in song. In spite of this New Testament declaration, DeWelt is bold to say that "we do not speak to one another when we sing" congregationally (**Gospel Advocate** 5/16/85, p. 293). Such a statement reeks of desperation!

Desperation it is and desperation it will continue to be as long as men change the word of God!

But, even if the Christian Church preachers could prove that Ephesians 5:19 is "solo" singing, or that it is "individual" singing, they have **not** and can **not** provide authority for the mechanical instrument. The instrument is the heart! In years past, they tried to "psallo" the instrument into New Testament worship and now they are trying to "solo" it in!

This writer knows that he does not have any hatred in his heart toward any preacher or any other member of the Christian Church, but he also knows that it is time to faithfully stand up against all error. This, he has and is presently trying to do. There is one body, and unity will prevail when men give up error and return to the truth as revealed in God's Word.

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(SEARCH FOR TRUTH Continued from page 36)

and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

We cannot be for truth just when it is convenient; we must stand one hundred percent of the time obeying Christ and His commandments. Are you totally for the truth of the gospel? First John 2:4 says, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." I cannot express the importance of studying God's word so we will know His commandments and keep them. First John 2:5 says, "but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him."

I urge you to go back to the word of God, contend earnestly for the faith, to serve Christ at all costs. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

Yes, I was blind from the truth for many years while following the commandments of men. Because of the word of the Lord, the faithful preaching of it and the faithful missionaries across the world standing steadfast in that word, I now can see as Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Hearing the word changed my life and it is

not any surprise, for Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have come a long way and found my salvation in Jesus Christ and His church.

Brethren, do not give up your first love by compromising the authority of Christ, but stand ever fast, always contending for the faith (Jude 3).

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 6

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THE SIN OF SITUATION ETHICS

GARY L. GRIZZELL

What is situation ethics? When the expression situation ethics is referred to in the midst of a religious discussion, it is used in the following sense:

Situation ethics is a system of ethics which is based on human wisdom, as opposed to Divine wisdom, by which acts are judged within their contexts. It is doing evil that some supposed good may come.

A good example of the above mentioned definition as applied to moral decisions is the case of a Christian man who was told by a worldly psychiatrist to quit the religion of Christ since it was causing him anxiety. The author happens to know for a fact that sin, not the religion of Jesus Christ, was the culprit causing the "anxiety" in his life. He needed to cleave to the Lord and His teaching rather than blame the Lord and His teaching.

What does the Bible have to say about this system of ethics? Obviously, the Bible condemns any system of thought devised by men which is in violation of His will as expressed in the written New Testament of Jesus Christ (Matt. 7:21-23). Notice some Biblical facts about this type of sin?

1. The apostle Paul was strongly against it! (Rom. 3:4). When his enemies accused him of it, he said that they were guilty of "slander" and they would one day receive "damnation."
2. To the church at Colossae, Paul warned, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit. . . which are not after Christ" (Col. 2:8). Note

that a Christian who listens to a situation ethics practitioner will soon be robbed of his salvation in Christ. The word philosophy here refers to pagan wisdom and this would include the practicing of sin in order to reach a desired goal. Situation ethics here is labeled the philosophy of a deceitful individual.

3. Peter was rebuked before the church for practicing situation ethics (cf. Gal. 2:11-14). He first ate with the Gentile Christians and thus gave them the impression that they were in fellowship with Jewish Christians. But then, when he feared a loss of reputation from a certain segment of the brotherhood, he separated himself from eating with the Gentiles. This led to confusion on their part. Had Peter remembered that Paul was present he might not have tried such a prank. Paul's concern and love for truth overrode his friendship ties with Peter and he rebuked him to his face before them all. Peter's statement of good will toward Paul in his second epistle implies that he repented of his practice of situation ethics (II Pet. 3:15).

A close examination of the situation may help to see the sinfulness of situation ethics:

1. Peter's desired goal: Acceptance--by both the Gentile Christians in Antioch and the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem.
 2. His methodology in reaching this goal:
- (Continued on page 43)

LET THE YOUNG MAN PREACH

Max Miller

Unfortunate indeed is the attitude of the church toward its young preachers. One of the greatest assets of the church is its young, vigorous, talented and able young preachers. Some in the more mature ranks discount and lightly consider the gospel message of young preachers because "they are so inexperienced in life." Recently one of the "older and wiser" brethren spoke with disproving tones of the Scriptural lesson a young preacher had presented on the subject of true riches. The young preacher discounted sharply the values of temporal possessions and set great values on those things of eternal worth and quality (cf. Matt. 6:19-21). His message was discounted by our brother because the young preacher, in that he had so little of value and so young in life, "just didn't know what he was talking about." True, he may not have known what he was talking about as far as his personal experiences were concerned, but he did know what Jesus said and thought about the matters. That was enough. I suppose, if the young man had given a "personal testimony" of some of his experiences this too would have been rejected by the brother. The young preacher had no message for him regardless of the message or the source of it! Such is typical of so many who piously condescend to hear young men preach.

If the preacher's message be "book, chapter and verse," it needs no further validation by his experience of life; neither is the message invalid because he does not speak from experience. If experience was the criterion of preaching many themes of the gospel would never be preached, such as: death, resurrection, heaven, hell, virgin birth, judgment, and such like.

Much of the failing of gospel preaching is not in the preacher. The failure is in the hearer. Those who won't abide by the gospel message presented by a young man will not abide by the same message of an older man. The materialistic minded brother who wouldn't hear the young brother's sermon on true riches would not hear the older brother who preached the same message!

But unto young preachers, let me say, "Preach the word. Preach and preach and preach." Don't wait until you are older, more seasoned and more experienced. Realize that you even now are the "Preachers of Today." Now you have time and opportunity to preach. It is true that some won't hear you--and this will always be true, regardless of your age, looks, abilities, or whatever. Some will not hear and be saved (cf. Matt. 13:14,15). Nevertheless, continue in your preparation. Memorize the Scriptures, saturate your soul with the unchanging, eternal word of God. Learn false doctrines and their refutations. Know especially the uses and deceptions of Liberalism. Know that your salvation and the ability to present the truth and to defend it is in your handling aright the word of God (I Tim. 4:16).

Young men, realize that there are many in your hearing who love the truth, want to hear it, want it preached. Do not deprive them of the great joy of the good news of Christ. The voice of the critic may sound as a multitude when in reality they are as the croakings of frogs on the pond. It just seems they are many! Learn: There are always more who believe the truth than you preach than there are those who oppose it. This may come as a surprise to you. Many who believe and live that truth will never make much-ado, but they will be your strength and support--when the chips are down.

Young men, the cause of Christ will falter without you. You are important. I know, and you should too, that the kingdom is not built on men, therefore we glory not in men. However, men are important and essential to the spread of the kingdom. God has placed great confidence in man. You share that confidence that God has placed in His disciples in His charging them to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). Consider the young Samuels, Davids, Daniels, Timothys that God has used to His glory. You number with them as faithful proclaimers of truth through the ages.

Young men, yours is no little undertaking
(Continued on page 45)

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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SITUATION ETHICS (Continued from page 41)

Compromise--by situation ethics, i.e., trust in his own human wisdom as opposed to the divine wisdom found only in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. What the gospel teaches: That supreme loyalty to God by obedience to the gospel is necessary in all situations of life (Acts 10:34-35; Matt. 6:33; II John 9). This is the case even though at times not all segments of the brotherhood will be pleased with a Christian's behavior. Peter should have continued eating with the Gentiles and confronted the ungodly behavior of the Jews. If the Jews loved the truth of the gospel, they would have repented. If they did not repent, then Peter would have been forced to fellowship only the Gentiles in Antioch (II John 9-11).

Have You Practiced Situation Ethics?

Only a blind man at midnight cannot see the many, many compromises ongoing in numerous congregations today. In view of the fact that Satan has done, is doing and will do all within his earthly power to destroy God's people, he tempts members to do evil to reach their goals. The sins of lying, stealing, hypocrisy and selfish ambition are not beneath one who is enslaved to a practice of situation ethics. The individual who practices situation ethics in the church may be an elder, deacon, preacher or one who works with the youth. The following are only a few examples of the terrible consequences of situation ethics:

1. Trusting in the faulty conclusions of secular psychology.
2. Church politicians who seek only the praise and applause of men.
3. Toleration of the Christian Church with their instrumental music in the name of Bible unity.
4. The appointment of unqualified men to the office of the eldership.
5. The use of profanity in Christian counseling in the name of shock treatment.
6. Churches hoarding up tens of thousands of dollars of the Lord's money for moth and rust to corrupt.
7. Premature baptisms in a desire to grow numerically.
8. The use of so-called translations which contain so much error that if the verses under question marked through,

one would be unable to read.

9. Accepting into fellowship members who are living in adultery.
10. Preachers who speak on lectureships with false teachers without preaching against the error of those false teachers.

Why Do Some Practice Situation Ethics

A sincere desire to succeed can influence one to use an unlawful means. Elders desire to lead well, deacons want to serve successfully and preachers want to see results from their preaching. This is well and good. But it must be remembered that the temptation presented by the devil to take short cuts in bringing about God's purposes is sin (II Cor. 2:11). The "dye in the wool" situation ethics practitioner will never admit that he is guilty of such. Brethren, beware! He will do just about anything he can get away with in order to reach his goals. He will lie when he determines that he will not be detected. He will teach false doctrine if his purposes call for it. It does not bother his seared conscience to intentionally deceive (I Tim. 4:2). In addition to a desire to succeed, here are some other possible reasons a person practices Situation Ethics in the work of the church:

1. Lack of trust in God and in the power of the gospel.
2. Desire for preeminence in the local church (III John 9-10).
3. Love of money (I Tim. 16:10).
4. Egotism.
5. A desire to see unity in the church at any cost, even the cost of truth.
6. A desire to see the church grow at any cost, even by filling it with adulterers, drunkards and other unconverted types (Gal. 5:19-21).

A Lesson From History

The oral discussion between brother Foy E. Wallace Jr. and Dr. J. Frank Norris, Baptist, took place in 1934 at the First Baptist Church building at Fort Worth, Texas. That particular debate was called by some, "The debate of the century." The persecution brother Wallace received from Norris before, during, and after the debate is almost unbelievable and certainly inexcusable. To influence the people to believe his stand to be a Biblical one, this faith only "debater" intentionally misquoted cer-

(Continued on page 44)

FAITH COMES BY HEARING

TERRY JOE KEE

Any knowledge we have on any subject has come to us through our ten senses. Man has five physical senses: feeling, smelling, tasting, seeing and hearing. Man also has five internal senses: perception, reflection, memory, reason and judgment. Most of us are well aware of our physical senses, but perhaps not as well acquainted with our internal senses. These internal senses are defined as:

- Perception: A direct acquaintance with anything through the five physical senses.
- Reflection: The mental consideration of these things.
- Memory: The power to reproduce and identify what has been learned or experienced.
- Reason: The power to comprehend and decide something.
- Judgment: The power to pass a formal decision based on the above.

It is impossible for us to pass judgment on anything about which we have not reasoned. We cannot reason on those things we do not have in our memories and we cannot have anything in our memories upon which we have

not reflected. Finally, we cannot reflect on a thing we have not perceived and perception only comes to us by use of our five physical senses. Therefore, we cannot know anything which we have not become acquainted with through one or more of our five physical senses.

Now, how do we know there is a God? We cannot feel Him, smell Him or taste Him. To know God we must have seen Him or heard Him. God is spirit; no man has ever seen God (John 1:18). Therefore, the only way for us to know God is to hear Him. Without inspiration and revelation we could not know God. God reveals himself to us through His Word. In **no other way** could we know Him.

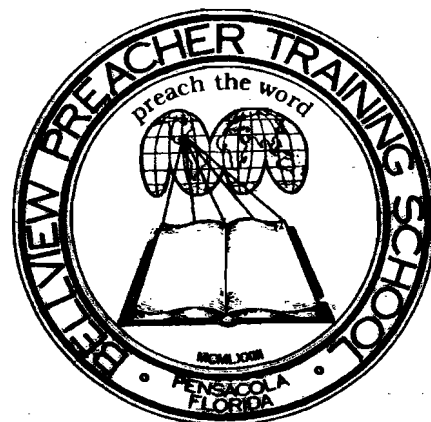
This is likewise true of any Bible subject. The only way to have a knowledge of the truth is to hear it. None of us have been eyewitnesses of these things. Those in the first century could know from sight, from observation about Jesus. But our faith comes today only from hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). No man can make any formal decision upon the gospel who has not heard it. Will you not hear it today?

SITUATION ETHICS (Continued from page 43)

tain writers, had his stenographers to put their pencils down when Wallace was refuting his false arguments and a host of other "short cuts." When brother Wallace perceived one of his dishonest tricks and thus pointed it out to him, he became angry. Before a crowd of thousands he threatened Wallace that he had 100 armed men in the audience. Brother Wallace never gave up his teaching of the truth during the debate. After the debate, many brotherhood papers tried to describe the wickedness and dishonest character of such a practitioner of situation ethics. I believe the statement from **The Vindicator**, December 1934 described him best: "A psychologist capitalizing on religion for earthly glory and filthy lucre." Norris had not learned what many today have not learned, i.e. it is never right to do wrong (James 4:17).

It was basically situation ethics that the Jews in Jesus's day were guilty of in their attempt to reach their religious goals. They, like many today, believed that they

could have God on their own humanly devised terms (Rom. 16:17-18; Phil. 3:18-19). May we ever trust in the gospel as God's wisdom to save us from sin, govern our lives, and reach our God given goals in the church today (Rom. 1:16-17); I Cor. 1:17-25). May all church leaders do the work of evangelism, benevolence and edification by the means which only the gospel authorizes and be satisfied to allow God to bless our efforts as He sees fit.



THE WONDERFUL BELLVIEW LECTURES

DENNIS GULLEDGE

The week of May 11-15 it was again my good fortune to be able to attend the wonderful lectureship put on by the Bellview Preacher Training School at the Bellview church of Christ in Pensacola, Florida. The theme of the lectureship this year was, "Prophecy and Fulfillment." A better and more timely theme could not have been selected. To say that the subject of prophecy has been grossly mishandled by many in religious circles, and that emphasis on prophecy fuels the fire of many religious speculators is certainly to state the truth. Almost any TV evangelist or radio preacher will quickly confirm that affirmation.

At this lectureship we were not treated to speculation. There were no appeals to Mosaic prophecies (which pertained to Israel of old and were fulfilled thousands of years ago) to

promote and support such unscriptural notions as a futuristic rapture, a return of Christ to earth to reign in Jerusalem for a millennium, a kingdom yet to come, a literal battle at Armageddon between the forces of God and Satan, and such things as that. There was none of the confusion relating to plagues, pestilences, wars, earthquakes, signs and wonders such as are often times heard among those who fain to speak of prophecy. We were treated to wonderful lessons, however, on the prophets, their work, their character and their teaching, as well as other matters related to both Old Testament and New Testament prophecy. Each lesson bore evidence of a great amount of preparation on the part of the speaker. Brother Max Miller, the lectureship director, and the Bellview elders have my thanks for a wonderful lecture program.

CONTEMPORARY

JAMES C. BOYD

More and more I read about this and that being "contemporary." The word means "belonging to the same period of time." There are many who advocate the up-dating of "christianity" and they are the cheer-leaders of this wave of being "contemporary."

In reality, contemporary worship is worship designed to suit the people, what they want, like, prefer, and tolerate. Whether it is according to the Bible or not does not seem to matter.

Contemporary gospel music is about as wild at times as acid-rock, and the beat is

about the same, the instruments often the same, only the words have been changed to make it sound religious in nature rather than sensual and appealing.

Contemporary sermons have taken the form of dealing with every matter of interest among society except the gospel, which includes the church, the plan of salvation, the condemnation of sin, etc.

What the world needs is conformity to the faith of Christ of the first century that is revealed in Scripture rather than this quest to be what religionists call "contemporary."

YOUNG PREACHERS (Continued from page 42)

of puny men. You, like Jesus Christ, are about your Father's business (Luke 2:49). It is a great work done by great men. Preaching remains "the poorest trade, but the highest calling" known to man. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, that can compare to the importance of the work you are doing. The most important thing that happens in your community all week long is when you stand up to preach the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Christ. Forget about gimmicks, "public relations," PTA programs, civic

clubs; quit trying to qualify as marriage counselors or ministry to special groups--and "do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry" (II Tim. 4:5). "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:48).

Finally, keep preaching, keep studying, keep working. It won't be long until you will no longer have the problems of a young preacher!

SECOND-RATE PREACHERS

B. C. CARR, Director

Florida School Of Preaching

Recently, a well-known brother stood before a group of brethren at a preachers' luncheon and made this statement: "Brethren, let's face it, the schools of preaching are turning out second-rate preachers." Why would this brother make such a statement? He was there for the purpose of competing for dollars of the brethren in that area which might be turned toward a work which he promotes. Was this remark made to create prejudice? Whether this was the intent I do not know. What I do know is that this is the result in many cases, especially for those who do not investigate. Such tactics have been used through the years.

Our Christian colleges have had to cope with such charges. Good students have been told that if they want recognition they should attend a large state school or university, for after all, our Christian colleges turn out second-rate products. Thank God this has proven false, although many do not yet believe it.

Suppose someone should make the charge that our orphan homes turn out second-rate citizens. Would this be a fair appraisal? It would no doubt cause some to think less of their institutions. No doubt it would cause some to lose their fervor for supporting such institutions. I believe this would be unkind, unfair, and even unChristian.

It seems we have fallen victims of the world and Satan in our efforts to exalt "greatness" by the wrong standards. We need to realize that God has a different standard for greatness (I Sam. 16:7). The Lord describes true greatness in Matt. 20:25-28. This should be the standard for determining such today.

Some Facts To Be Considered: We do not wish to become engaged in a fight with our Christian schools. They have their place. I am the product of three of our Christian colleges. We love the men who have given their lives to Christian education. On page 1 of our catalog we have stated for many years that we are not in competition with any other school. Having served the last 17 years as the Director of The Florida School of Preaching, I resent the statement that

schools of preaching turn out second-rate men. I challenge you to examine a few facts.

1. Does size determine who is first or second-rate?

We freely admit that most schools of preaching are not as large as most of our Christian colleges (or universities). However, one must remember that we have but one major, one goal--that of training men to preach, whereas our colleges have many objectives. To be more realistic, we need to compare the number of preacher students in schools of preaching with that in our colleges. I think you would find we are NOT second in this category. If size makes "second-rate," the church of our Lord would be "second-rate" when compared to denominations (Matt. 7:13-14).

2. Can proper ratings be made upon the basis of the budget required to operate a school?

Some seem to think so. When we compare dollars needed to operate a college we are talking about **millions** compared to **hundreds** required to operate a school of preaching. We believe we can justify dollars given to the schools of preaching to train preachers. (Read II Tim. 2:2 this would apply to individuals or churches). More preachers are produced per dollar in schools of preaching!

3. Are our students second-rate?

This we deny! It is true that some of our brethren encourage some of our brightest men (they think) to go to a school to become engineers, doctors, lawyers, etc., instead of encouraging them to devote their lives to Christ (how sad!). But we have learned that very often the "C" student makes the best servant for the Lord. Many times he baptizes more people than the "A" student. We challenge you to find men anywhere more dedicated to the cause of Christ. Among our students we could find those who could compete, in any work expected of preachers, with those of other institutions. The difference might be that we do offer opportunities for service to some who would not be accepted in some of our schools because of academic standards often set up by those outside the church.

4. What about the size of the church where they preach?

We have former students in large and small churches. We rejoice that many of our
(Continued on page 47)

PREACHERS. (Continued from page 46)

men are willing to serve in places where the church is small. They are willing to work hard on small salaries to build a strong work. Does this make them second-rate? Some of our men have quit jobs making more money than they will ever make preaching, because they have their priorities straight. Does this make them second-rate? How would Paul be rated (Romans 15:20)? We teach our men, that in seeking a place to preach, their first consideration should be to go where they can do the most good.

5. Do degrees make great preachers?

It is often said that preachers need advanced degrees to assure acceptance in the world. While in some places this might be a "plus," we need to recognize that degrees are not synonymous with education. Degrees don't preach and they don't save people. Think of some of our most powerful preachers who never had degrees (e.g. Marshall Keeble). Degrees do not necessarily tell the amount of class work done or preparation one has made. We give a diploma for two years work. To earn this, one must complete at least one hundred semester hours in Bible and Bible-related subjects. Compare this to our Christian colleges that will allow 66 2/3 semester hours in the same courses in four years and then grant a degree. Our students are prepared in their field!

6. But schools of preaching are not accredited by an accrediting association.

Thank God! This is not by accident, but on purpose. Other schools can speak for themselves, but we don't want any outside group telling us how to train our preachers. Several years ago brother Robert Bell came from Tampa and addressed a large group of preachers and elders. He praised our schools of preaching. He encouraged their support. He pleaded for us never to submit to standards of accrediting associations, because he thought this was one of the problems with our colleges. He was **not** opposed to our colleges, having served many years on the board of Abilene Christian, but he saw the dangers and he warned us. Do the standards of men determine who is second-rate?

7. Can we judge by results?

Many inquire about the number baptized by our students. Again we compare favorably with any group. Some of our graduates have baptized a hundred or more per year. Much depends upon the place and many other circumstances. Their effectiveness can be compared

in many other ways also.

8. What about the number of missionaries turned out?

We gladly invite you to compare the number of missionaries turned out by schools of preaching with our other schools. You will find that our students are excelling in mission fields. Others have taken a cue, so that colleges are now placing more emphasis on mission work. How would your congregation rate in the number of missionaries being trained or supported. Somebody has a responsibility here (Matt. 20:10-20; Rom. 10:13-17).

9. Are students from schools of preaching second-rate in Bible knowledge?

Try us! Our men are preaching more Bible, giving book, chapter, and verse than many others. This is what we believe in. This is what we teach.

10. Are our students second-rate when it comes to standing in the old paths and contending for the faith?

No! I think you will find for the most part they are on the "cutting edge" of every issue threatening the church today, because they stand opposed to the many liberal tendencies in the church today. There **are** those who would try to negate their effectiveness by crying "second-rate." Compare this with a very popular young preacher who recently wrote concerning First Corinthians: "Read chapter 8 to see that God even allows people who believe in more than one god (what greater doctrinal error can you make?) to be members of the church?" This man is evidently rated first-class!

11. Please consider this: If schools of preaching turn out second-rate preachers, why did Harding, Abilene, and David Lipscomb colleges establish schools of preaching when they already had four year programs and graduate programs? Could it be that they knew something others hate to admit?

12. If our students are regarded as second-rate, why do we receive so many letters from churches asking if we could send them a man to fill their pulpits? We receive many more requests each year for preachers, much more than we can supply. Many of these state specifically, "We want a man trained in a school of preaching." **Why** is this the case? Could it be they have learned something that others hope will not be found out": **These men are among the best!**

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"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 7

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GOD'S SPECIFICATIONS DEMAND OBSERVANCE OF THE LAW OF EXCLUSION

L. E. WISHUM

In everyday life when a thing is specified all other things are excluded. If a builder orders a helper to cut a board two feet long, and the helper cuts the board three feet long, the builder will immediately tell him he has violated the specification. If the helper states that the order did not say "not to cut the board three feet long" (and insists on continuing to use such reasoning), then, he would be fired for failure to observe the law of exclusion regarding specifics. When the builder ordered the board two feet long, this order excluded all other lengths.

Specifications demand observance of the law of exclusion and we understand and observe such a law in everyday life all the time. Specifying eliminates naming all other possibilities. If everyone refused to observe the law of exclusion in relation to specifics, then all order would be eliminated and the result would be complete chaos. The same is true in religion. When God specifies, it not only demands complete obedience to that which is specified, but it excludes all other possibilities. God's commands that specify are both inclusive and exclusive. Hebrews 5:9 on the inclusive and I John 9 on the exclusive.

God specified immersion in water for the remission of sins by the use of the word "baptizo" in Acts 2:38. This specification is further taught by the word "buried" in reference to baptism in Romans 6:4. This specification excludes sprinkling. If God had meant sprinkling, He would have used the word "rantizo," and He surely would not have used the word "buried" in reference to sprinkling. To sprinkle is to disobey.

The Bible recorded "bread" and the "fruit of the vine" to be used in representing the body and blood of Jesus in His memorial supper (Matt. 26:26,29). This specification

excludes bananas and Coca Cola being used in the supper. In fact, observing the law of exclusion, demands that all other items of food and drink be excluded.

When God specified "singing" in Ephesians 5:19, He excluded all other kinds of music. Had He said "music," then we would be free to use any kind of music. But, when He said "singing," obedience to God demands that all other music be excluded. To add other music is to disobey.

When the Bible specifies "the first day of the week" to observe the Lord's Supper, all other days of the week are excluded. I Corinthians 11:33 states the members of the church "came together to eat." I Corinthians 11:20 states that they assembled to "eat the Lord's Supper." I Corinthians 16:2 tells us they met on the first day of the week to worship. This practice was in obedience to Jesus' command to teach "to observe all things" (Matt. 28:20). The inspired Apostles taught the people as Jesus commanded.

Paul, an Apostle, delivered that which he received from the Lord (I Cor. 11:23). Paul taught the same things in all churches (I Cor. 4:17). In Troas, Paul and the disciples gathered on the first day of the week to observe the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7). Paul waited throughout the other days of the week until the first day of the week. Paul not only understood the law of exclusion relating to the specific day, he carefully observed it (Acts 20:6-11). All churches did the same (I Cor. 16:1).

When God tells WHAT to do, HOW to do it, and WHEN to do it, the WHEN and HOW are as binding as the WHAT. While GENERIC commands allow expedient liberties, a SPECIFIC command eliminates expedient liberties. God's authority must be respected! (I John 9; I Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18,19.)

SEND TAPE AND RESUMÉ

MAX R. MILLER

Matthew Henry said of preaching, "It is the highest calling, but the poorest trade." We agree. There is no greater satisfaction for the human soul than that of expounding the unsearchable riches of Christ. God richly blesses the lives of those who preach the gospel with blessings unlike those beamed on others of His children. Preaching the gospel of Christ is indeed the high calling of God. Preaching, like other ways of life, has some undesirable, unwelcome, and at times almost unbearable, realities to face. Those stark realities, in Henry's mind, is what makes preaching the poorest trade.

Preaching leads the preacher and his family from one place to another; ultimately to move again. Sometimes the moves are made quickly, smoothly, with all things going well. However, most of the moves the preacher and his family make are difficult, heart rending and costly. Departure from friends and neighbors, the children's friends--leaving those places that have become dear grieves the heart. But often, for one reason or another, moves must be made.

Determining the place to move is usually the most difficult part of relocating. The preacher's family is in a state of uncertainty. The "lame duck" season between the old work and the new lends an uneasy air to family affairs. Inquiries are sent to churches in need of an evangelist. Phone calls are made. Sometimes weeks, or even months pass with no progressive development. The family, living in the midst of packing crates, becomes anxious. What is going to happen? when? where will we go?

A needless difficulty is presented to a preacher who inquires of churches who have need of a preacher. Today, a new thing: the preacher calls an elder, makes known his availability and asks for an opportunity to talk with the elders of the possibility of their working together. A few words on the phone could likely satisfy each mind and indicate whether a meeting of the minds would be profitable for their needs. Today, rather than a brief informative discussion where the inquiring preacher speaks of his

qualifications and experiences, and the elder representing the church, its needs, and expectation in a preacher, the elder responds by saying, "Send a tape and a resumé." Some churches have received as many as thirty or forty tapes and resumé's. Tapes and resumé's do not really do justice to the preacher or to the church. One of the best resumé's we have read was that of one of the most unsuccessful preachers of our day. Audio tapes don't look the audience in the eye; video tapes--what preacher looks into a camera when preaching? Are elders interested in employing a piece of tape for their pulpit! Who writes the resumé? Modest men who are shy to claim their qualifications, who feel to list their accomplishment would be bragging? or men who would exaggerate the smallest accomplishments? or the professional writer of resumé's (many of those are sent!)? Many a time elders have employed the "tape and resumé" and were amazed and disappointed in the preacher who came following it.

The tape and resumé is unfair to all. It is expensive to the preacher to obtain tapes to send to several places. Some now are requiring a video tape be sent, calling for more expense and well nigh impossible for some preachers to provide. Who looks or listens to all the tapes and seriously reads the pile of resumé's? Elders don't want to look or listen to many tapes (and don't); they lightly consider even the most fabulous resumé's (they can be made to look good), so, why do they ask for them?

Let us go back to the tried and proven good way. By phone or letter make certain facts known. Then meet face to face, person to person, and talk about our Father's business. If the first man considered has the qualifications, seems to be a man able to do the job--employ him. Cut off the parade. Time is important to the preacher. He does not have time to see the parade to its end.

It is our wish that good and sensible elders consider the "tape and resumé" routine as expensive and time consuming to the preacher, and a poor representative of the man they will engage for their work. May good sense and good practices prevail.

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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THE SEVEN "I AM'S"

The gospel account as written by John is characterized by seven sayings of Jesus called the "I Am's."

First I Am--The Bread of Life, 6:22-71.

Second I Am--The Light of the World, 8:12-20.

Third I Am--The Great I Am, 8:46-59.

Fourth I Am--The Door and the Good Shepherd, 10:1-21.

Fifth I Am--The Resurrection and the Life, 11:1-27.

Sixth I Am--The Way, the Truth and the Life, 14:6.

Seventh I Am--The Vine, 15:1-8.

These seven sayings were not idle statements of a Judean dreamer, but were confirmed to be true by miracles, wonders and signs. When all the evidence is considered regarding the signs and the seven sayings (which the signs or miracles confirmed), the rational mind cannot but exclaim concerning the author of the "I Am's" that "no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2).

I Am The Bread Of Life

In John 6, Christ declared himself as the sustainer of life and supplier of the soul's needs by the word, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:22-71). The highly significant events in John 6 causes one to reflect concerning a previous statement of John, that "he came unto his own and his own received him not" (1:11). The circumstances leading to the first I Am should first be noted:

The record makes plain the Lord's prior conflict with Jewish hierarchy in the matter of cleansing the temple (John 2) and healing the impotent man (John 5). These who were the somewhats of Jerusalem were learning fast that the Nazarene wasn't to be taken lightly; already plans were in motion to have the Lord removed (John 5:18). Against such enmity the Saviour gave abundant and manifold testimony to His deity (John 5:19-47).

In John 6:1, we are informed of the Lord's going into Galilee. During this time thousands of superficial spectators flocked to hear Him. Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes and the men said, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:14). The multitudes, however, were accepting him for what they wanted Him to be, not what He truly was (John 6:15). In John 6:26,27 Jesus drew attention to the shallow concepts of the people, but in reply the people said Jesus hadn't given sufficient signs. Moses fed the entire nation of Israel on manna for forty years and Jesus had fed a much smaller number of people but once (John 6:31)! Jesus, in turn, pointed out that God gave the manna, not Moses, and what God was giving there and then was the true bread which nourishes not the body but the soul (John 6:32,33). The materialistic Jews, not perceiving the Saviour's point, could conceive only of some sort of magic food (John 6:34).

Words previously spoken apparently not being plain enough, the Saviour abandoned any veiled allusions and declared in verse 35, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never thirst" thus announcing Himself as the fulfillment of spiritual hunger and to a famishing race He presents Himself as the great remedy of lifelong hunger and thirst. Due to the plainness of the Lord's speech, it must be stated that the Jews weren't misunderstanding His teaching, rather they were rebelling against it. Against such hardness of heart, Jesus throws the force of their own words in verses 49,50, stating that the manna in the wilderness availed not to dissipate death, but He said, "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." To further advance His thought he says, "...the bread that I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world" (v. 52). Thus, the death of Christ would be the gateway to life for humanity and without His dying the blessing of eternal life would not be granted.

The dissension of the Jews was heightened in verses 53-58 when the Lord explained emphatically that, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (v. 53). The Lord,

(Continued on page 52)

Seven "I Am's" (Continued from page 51)
 spake figuratively of humanity appropriating His death and blood (cf. Rom. 6). Dissension is transformed into defection in verses 60-66. Verse 66 sadly says, "From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." As Matthew Henry puts it, "None so blind as they that will not see; for they may be so blind as to question whether it be day or no, when the sun shines in their faces." Truly, hardened rebellion follows on the heels of willful blindness.

The divine claim to be the bread of life coming from heaven infers not only the divinity of Christ but also His antiquity and authority. It should be the delight of the souls of men to hunger and thirst after this wonderful heavenly food. Manna from heaven, Christ the satisfier of man's spiritual hunger.

The Light Of the World

Following the episode of Jesus and the adulteress in John 8:1-11, the narrative tells of the solemn and meaningful assertion of Christ, "I am the light of the world." The Old Testament anticipated the Christ to be the "light" of both Jew and Gentile (Isa. 9:2; 42:6; 49:6; etc.). God's presence in ancient days was, at times, signified by light (Exod. 40:34-38) and because the presence of God is found in Jesus, He is spoken of as "light" (Luke 1:78,79; 2:32). How altogether proper were the Saviour's words, "I am the light of the world." Notice: He is **the** light (there is no other); he is the light of the **world** (neither Jew nor Gentile could say the light did not shine unto them). Unfortunately, these words of hope fell upon closed minds and deaf ears. Matthew Henry said, "What a dungeon the world would be without the sun" and as Jesus is the light of the world (as the sun is the light of the solar system), we add, "what disaster the soul encounters without Christ."

Jesus' corresponding phrase, ". . . he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," brings forth the relation Christ sustains to the world. To a lost traveler, following a light can mean life, to follow Christ means life in the eternal sense. Followers of the light must step carefully along the street of strict obedience and over the hills of complete trust, refusing any detour on the highway of holiness until our steps at last end in death

(Heb. 5:8,9; Isa. 35:8; Rev. 2:19).

As the Pharisees complained against the Lord's teaching and denied His words (v. 13) Jesus countered by saying that He was on sure ground being in intimate union with the Father, and furthermore, offered the three-fold testimony of the Father, the Spirit, as well as the Son's own witness to the greatest fact of the universe, that is, the deity of Jesus of Nazareth.

The Pharisees derisively question the whereabouts of one of the witnesses saying, "Where is thy Father?" This question was proof in itself that the Jews were blind to the light of the world and the Old Testament prophecies foretelling the Messiah as light had become frightfully dim to the Jewish mind. They could no more understand what the Saviour had done thus far than blind men can see colors. In rejecting Christ they were rejecting God (John 14:9) and in spite of these bold avowals, Jesus remained free for His time had not yet come.

The Great I Am

In John 8:46, Jesus lays the foundation for remarkable claim of His being deity.

First he proposes to be anterior to Abraham. His challenge to convict Him of sin could not be answered successfully, although, bold and formidable accusations had been brought against Him (John 5:18). The Jews found themselves marshalled against the only one who ever lived that needed not to repent, who eschewed every evil, and stands alone and unsurpassed in excellence of character and holiness.

Albert Barnes once wrote "all sinners manifest a remarkable slowness in understanding the plainest truths in religion," such is illustrated by the Jewish reaction to the words of Jesus in John 8:51 that, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." The Jews reckoned this as physical death but the Lord envisioned a death which comes as an effect of sin. Jesus was promising what Abraham could never. The inescapable conclusion of Jesus' statements was that He was greater than Abraham!

Abraham was truly faithful and cherished the favor of God above the life of his son and his obedient example admonished us all to look ever heavenward "to a city which

hath foundations whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). But the difference in Abraham and Christ is the difference in being the friend of God and the Son of God. Abraham was a stranger and sojourner on earth (Heb. 11:9) but Christ, once Himself also a stranger and sojourner, yet now is King of the kingdom that is not of this world (John 18:36).

In John 8:54,55 Jesus spoke of the honor and intimate knowledge He had of God. Despite the empty boasts of the Jews, they had over the years cooled in their devotion to deity. The only way Christ could claim the honor of God was to have been one with God in the divine counsels and undertakings. God himself had directly acknowledged the authority of His Son on more than one occasion (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; John 12:28). The Saviour's affirmation was, "your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad" (John 8:56). Abraham saw it in prospect not presence; he saw at a distance the divine visitation of earth. Such a far off prophetic glance did not stagger Abraham, for he knew what God promised He was able also to perform.

Again, the slowness of the Jews to comprehend is evident as they say, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" (v. 57). Chronologically Jesus was about 30 years of age, but could it be that our Lord's sufferings and the weight of sorrow that He bore gave Him the appearance of a greater age? In the timeless declaration, "Before Abraham was I am" (John 8:58) the Lord put it as plainly as it could be.

The phrase "I am" is the sum of the object of Old Testament faith (Exod. 3:14; Deut. 32:39; Isa. 43:10; etc.) and a clear declaration of the identity of Christ with the Father. But, as is characteristic of enemies of right, anything is bearable except the truth and their taking up of stones indicated an end of further arguments. This evil habit would continue on until, at least, the day of Stephen (Acts 7:59) and Paul (Acts 14:19). In John 8:25, the Jews had asked "Who art thou?" They now received their answer.

I Am The Door

As a part of further establishing His claim to be God in the flesh John 10 records the double "I am"—"I am the door" and "I am the good shepherd" (v. 9,11). Contextually,

the use of the double phrase "verily, verily" at the beginning of chapter 10 connects the preceding events of chapter 9 to the teaching of chapter 10. These words were never used at the commencement of a discourse to introduce a fresh topic. The Pharisees had ostracized the healed man but Jesus found him and comforted him (John 9:35-38). The Pharisees claimed the right to be guides of the people, but, as was evident in chapter 9, they were poor guides mistreating the man born blind (9:18). The phrase "I am the door" indicated Jesus was the singular means of entrance into the sheepfold. Thus, to follow the Pharisees was to walk in the shadow of the false guides and to miss the divine pasture (heavenly blessings) altogether. What a happy thing a door is; behind it is protection, peace and pleasure. Man seeks the impossible to find another door other than Christ. In an age where the imagination of man soars on wings of blasphemy to designate deity as an impersonal "The Force" it is comforting to know that in a caring and loving way Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd" (John 10:14). Since men are likened to sheep and are prone to stray in turbulent storms of life, they need looking after by a Shepherd whose protective power can lead them even through the valley of the shadow of death (Isa. 53:6; Psa. 23:4). John 10 is not alone in teaching the Shepherd's role of the Saviour; for as in death He is the good shepherd (John 10:5), then in His resurrection He was the great shepherd (Heb. 13:20); in the glory of His coming again He will be the chief shepherd (1 Pet. 5:4).

In contrast to the good shepherd, the Pharisees were only hirelings who minded things as far as personal advantage and safety went but nothing more beyond (John 10:12-13). In fulfilling the prophetic office of Messiah, the role of the good shepherd would be to seek out and feed the lost sheep (Ezek. 34:23-24). This thing Jesus had done. The Pharisees, however, were neither protectors nor providers but rather were more likened to thieves and robbers. Whoever heard of a good shepherd so mistreating an object of his appointed care as the Jews had the man born blind (John 9:13-34)?

Since it is by the word of God that we are called (II Thess. 2:14); sustained (Acts 20:32) and judged (John 12:48), it is also by the Word that we follow the good shepherd (John 10:27,28). The good shepherd's steps
(Continued on page 54)

Seven "I Am's" (Continued from page 53)
 shall lead aright: "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps" (I Pet. 2:21). While the Pharisees avoided the lost (John 4:9), Jesus sought the lost (Luke 19:10); while the Jews cursed men (John 7:49), Jesus died for men. It was quite evident who was the Good Shepherd of Israel and the Eternal One who came from the presence of God.

The Resurrection And The Life

A one word summary of John 11 is "resurrection." The raising of Lazarus from the dead serves as the background for the fifth I Am--The resurrection and the life. As John was the apostle whom Jesus loved, the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus was the family Jesus loved; but more than love for them would be demonstrated for in raising the dead, the issues of life and power are manifested. The words "I am the resurrection and the life" are at one and the same time an assertion and a pledge.

Verses 1-3 open with a home in trouble and soon to be enveloped in the sorrows of death; but even dark and stormy days are light and tranquil to the divine mind. To Jesus was sent a message that Lazarus was sick. Instead of making rapid course to his side, the Lord displayed no sense of urgency and tarried two days. "He who is assured needs not make haste." Eventually taking leave to go to Bethany, Jesus prepared the minds of the disciples for what He was to do. Jesus describes death as "sleep" (v. 11), and why not? Has not the Light of Life raised the dead before (Luke 7:11-15; Mark 5:35-42)? Spiritually dull ears ever require plainness of speech, thus in verse 14, the Lord says "Lazarus is dead." Near to Bethany Jesus meets with Martha first and assures her, "thy brother shall rise again" (v. 23). Martha misses the immediacy of the Lord's words for it is not the ultimate (future) resurrection of which the Saviour speaks but life-giving power is about to be shown in the present to the purpose "that the Son of God might be glorified thereby" (v. 4). Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25,26). As shadows flee when light enters, so death leaves when the Life comes. With these words the patriarch Job's inquiry, "If a man die shall he live again?" (Job 14:14) receives

its answer. If we live this life in fellowship with God, we shall never die. There is light after darkness and gain after loss.

When meeting with Mary, Jesus wept and groaned probably out of compassion and an uncommon sympathy. With preparations in order and the stage set, the Lord speaks three precious words and "...he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes" (v. 44).

The resurrection of Lazarus reveals there is more to man than the body, for the soul lives on. Once body and soul is separated then only deity could fuse body and soul together again. "I am the resurrection" is the utterance of the unutterable and raising Lazarus was doing the un-do-able. Job said that there was more hope of a tree obtaining immortality than a man, at least, if cut down the tree may sprout again (Job 14:7). Such was the verdict of his experience. However, the claim of Christ contains power to banish death, the king of terrors, from His own domain. Here, in the full light of God's revealed will the men's hope for resurrection and life far exceeds nature's alternative. Could such be accomplished by a man who was a sinner? or by one who is one iota less than "God with us"? In the beginning it was said, "Let there be light"; in the gospel, the Son said, "Let there be life."

The Way, The Truth And The Life

Having made the sad announcement in John 13:33 that "...yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, whither I go, ye cannot come. . ." the Lord sets His face toward the impending and stormy passion of Golgotha. The Saviour gives another clear manifestation of Himself in John 14:1-6 by declaring the triple I am: "I am the way, the truth and the life." The apostles were troubled, and with good reason, having heard the Lord announce His separation; but there is comfort in separation which shall calm the trouble. The apostles have hard labors set before them and to endure, they would need faith. Believing in God and Christ and trusting in the promise of being reunited someday in the place of many mansions (John 14:3) could bolster even the weakest among them. What great meaning is in the Saviour's words expressing absolute and impressive certainty. The Lord says "I am the way, the only way, the new and living way (Acts 4:12; Heb. 10:20). He is the way to

eternal honors and immortal joys. Jesus didn't say, "I teach truth." He said, "I am the truth." There is some truth in all great religions but Incarnate truth is found only in Christ. As the Word (John 1:1-4) was the agent of the creation of physical life so the Incarnate word is the agent of spiritual life.

In the comfort of these words, the apostles would conquer; in the boldness of this threefold saying, they would become bold (Acts 4:13).

I Am The Vine

"In Unity There is Strength" is the principle thought undergirding the passage of John 15:1-8. Here is the lesson of the vine and the branches symbolizing the relationship of Christ to the disciples. Often the prophets of old used the vines as an object lesson to Israel (Psa. 8:8-16; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 2:21,22; 12:10; Ezek. 17:6-10; Hos. 10:1; etc.). The appropriateness of Christ's illustration is thus seen.

Among New Testament matters of chief emphasis is the relationship of Christ to his disciples. Dr. A. T. Pierson in **Peloubet's Select Notes**, 1905 p. 140, has pointed out seven figures under which this union is set forth. One figure each is drawn from:

1. The animal kingdom: the sheep and shepherd (John 10).
2. The vegetable kingdom: the vine and branches (John 15).
3. The mineral kingdom: the living stone (Eph. 2).
4. The human body (Rom. 12).
5. The state or commonwealth (Eph. 2,3).
6. The marriage relationship, bride and groom (Eph. 5).
7. An finally, "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (I Cor. 6:17).

Much misunderstanding has prevailed as to the identity of "the branches" about which Jesus spoke. Some say the religious bodies called denominations are branches of the one true vine, but unless we are willing to grant an absurdity of nature, namely, one vine bearing various fruits, then we must be content to say what Jesus did. He said of individual disciples, "Ye are the branches." He spake not of denominations or

organized religious bodies. A lesson for all is that Christ is the Christian's vitality and source of strength; how soon a severed branch dies!

The point of the vine illustration is the bearing of good fruit. In order for good fruit to be realized, pruning and cultivating are required, but above all, the branch must stay attached to the vine. It is not enough that fruit be borne, but **good** fruit is expected. Ancient Israel had borne "wild grapes" (Isa. 5:2) and had become an empty vine (Hos. 10:1), but the failure of Israel must not be repeated by the church.

Surely the little band of disciples would see the necessity of continued fellowship with Christ and absolute dependence on Him. Such fruitful obedience would bring forth gracious and eternal rewards. Christ, as the true vine would make ample provision for the disciples, keeping them night and day; the disciples in turn must guard against becoming detached, barren, and unfruitful. Oneness in Christ both necessary and desirable.

The "I Am's" of John deserve man's careful and diligent study because men will never come to Christ except they first know who He is. Saul of Tarsus, shaken and smitten said, "Who art thou, Lord?" (Acts 9:5). John gives an answer in seven ways:

I am the Bread of Life,
I am the Light of the World,
I am before Abraham was,
I am the Door and Good Shepherd,
I am the Resurrection and the Life,
I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life,
I am the True Vine.

These sayings blend together in the personality of Him who said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 9:7).

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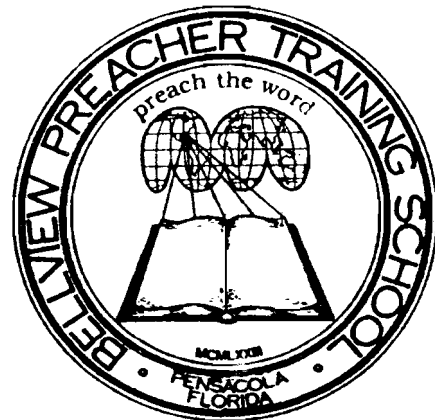
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WRITE FOR CATALOGUE AND APPLICATION



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL."

Phil 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 8

AUGUST 1986

KISER TO BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

MAX R. MILLER

The elders of the Bellview church of Christ are happy to announce that Michael W. Kiser has been added to the staff of the Bellview Preacher Training School where he will be employed as Administrator and Instructor. His major field of teaching will be in Apologetics, Logic and Debate, as well as textual studies. His wide experience and years of study will greatly enhance the academic strength of the school.

Kiser was born in Huntingdon, West Virginia. His family moved to Russell, Kentucky where he graduated from high school. He married Dollie Mead in 1965, herself a daughter of a gospel preacher, and to this

union were born three children: Leslie, a student at Murray State University; Lisa, a student at David Lipscomb College, and Lacinda, yet at home.

Kiser began preaching in 1960 and since has

conducted evangelistic meetings in fifteen of the United States and in foreign countries as well. He has preached the gospel via radio for twenty years, and for the past four years conducted the most popular television program on station WBBJ, Jackson, Tennessee. He has done located evangelistic work in the states of Ohio, Virginia, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Georgia, and Tennessee. He and his family were resident missionaries in Ghana, West Africa. He has returned to Ghana for ten tours of preaching through the churches and in the Ghana Bible College at Kumasi.

His studies and experiences in debate with denominational men will be a great asset to the students in Bellview Preacher Training School. In his principal debates he had discussed the subjects of: the Godhead, miracles, instrumental music in Christian worship, and the issues of church co-operation and orphan homes.

The Bellview Preacher Training School is grateful for the coming of Mike Kiser to the school and looks forward to being the beneficiary of his knowledge of the Bible; his practical experiences in Christian service and ability to share these precious qualities with others.



Michael W. Kiser

"FAITH OF OUR FATHERS LIVING STILL"

MAX R. MILLER

"Faith of our fathers! living still" is a golden link of a glorious, courageous past to the present time. The stirring hymn, "Faith Of Our Fathers," praises gallant soldiers of the cross who before our day sacrificed, endured, and suffered for the cause of Christ; who fought the good fight of faith, won, and passed the victory unto the generations following them. The lives, teachings, and deeds of brethren of the past have tremendously influenced the lives and works of many who continue in their steps today.

The death of brother E. R. Harper marks the near end of an era of church history. One by one the great and effective preachers of that era pass on to their crown. Young and vigorous they came to the scene to do battle for Christ, through the prime and strength of manhood they wielded the sword of the Spirit proclaiming liberty in Christ, fought every foe of righteousness, and laid the crown of their victories at the feet of their Master. Time and infirmity take their dreaded toll; they fade away, they are all too soon gone.

We should be grateful for their valiant lives. They blazed the trail for many of us, they plowed the new ground, sowed the seed of the kingdom, and we reaped the harvest of their labors. Brewer, Hardeman, the Wallaces, and so many others with Harper gave us a church that was strong in faith and pure in doctrine. Where they, one by one, laid down their sword and shield in death, the challenges of premillennialism, anti-isms, and Holy Spirit-isms had been met and defeated. They gave us a church that recognized the "one faith" and the "one body." They gave us a church whose women were pure and who fulfilled their rightful and respected place in the kingdom. They gave us a church that was alive with evangelistic fervor, carrying the gospel to the whole world. And, as important as all of this they

gave us, the church today, a warning of things that were to come. They warned us of an impending apostasy. They set the cry against liberalism, compromise, and apathy; three destructive enemies of today's church. We did not give heed to their warnings.

The "old preachers" (as they are now spoken of) were men of the Book. E. R. Harper was a master pulpiteer. His power was in the right use of Holy Scriptures. Hardeman's Tabernacle Meetings drew multitudes because Hardeman was a Bible preaching man. Foy Wallace, Jr., a faithful expositor of the truth met the crafty foe with the unsheathed sword of the Spirit, the word of God. They all were learned in other studies, they would have made their mark in any profession, but they chose to preach Christ and Him crucified. They never turned to the right or to the left, neither did they retreat. For all this, stars line their crown.

When we consider the men of old, men of renown, we should be more than grateful for their lives and service, we should want to emulate them. No, it isn't wrong to pattern a life after another. Paul encouraged Corinthians to "be followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1). To his beloved brethren at Philippi he exhorted, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample" (Phil. 3:17). Christ the greatest of all, said, "that ye should follow his steps" (I Pet. 2:21). Those of the generation before us should be no less an example for us.

*Faith of our fathers! We will love,
Both friend and foe in all our strife;
And preach thee too, as love knows how,
By kindly words and virtuous life.*

*Faith of our fathers, holy faith
We will be true to thee till death.*

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?

E. R. HARPER

If you were traveling down the highway, going on a mission that called for you to arrest men and women and put them in prison, and suddenly there were to shine round about you a light so bright that you could not see and you were made to fall to the earth, frightened, bewildered and not able to understand what it all meant, what would you do or say?

That very thing happened to one of the world's greatest characters: A man who was an educated man; a leader of men; a man whose life and writings have changed as many men for Christ as any man who has ever lived. This man's name was Saul; Saul of Tarsus.

In Acts 9:1-6 we have the introduction to this story. Get your New Testament and follow with me as we study the conversion of this great man of God. Beginning with verse one it says, "And Saul, yet breathing out



E. R. Harper

threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shone round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, "Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, **What wilt thou have me to do?** And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the **city** and **there** it will be told thee **what thou must do.**" This was **personal**. It shows there was "something to do to be saved." If not isn't it strange the Lord did not say to him, "Why Saul there is nothing man can do to be

saved." Instead, he told him he would be told what he "must do." It was not arbitrary on Saul's part. He had to do it for it was a "must." We will find the **only** thing he was "told to do." It will be the **one** thing you are being told **you do not** have to obey. Some vital principles are couched in this conversation between these two great personalities.

Questions For Consideration

We need to know who this man, Saul of Tarsus, is. Saul tells us as he says in Acts 22:3, "I am verily a man which am a Jew born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of our fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day." He said further in Acts 26:4-5, "My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straightest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee." From this we see Saul was an "educated man"; he was a "devoutly religious man," belonging to the most devout group of his race, the Pharisees. The conversion of this man from such a devout religion will have to be explained. Its explanation will have to be more than to say this man was demented and in his moments of hysterical insanity, he was cursed with "religious hallucinations." No man ever wrote more calmly; no man ever wrote more sanely; no man ever wrote more accurately the details of affairs than did this man, Saul of Tarsus. His writings, if followed, would change this world into a world of paradise; men would live for God; our world would be at peace; and the nations of earth would be transformed to blossom into fields, almost elesian, while on this earth we dwell. Tell me a man who can write and live like this is not capable of giving accurately his own conversion. Schools have grown up all about us but not one of them has ever produced a personality that surpasses in his works this humble man who sat at the feet of Dr. Gamaliel in the city of Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago. Yes, the change in this man must be accounted for before we throw away our Bible. (Continued on page 60)

LORD, WHAT MUST...(Continued from page 59)

Not only was Saul an educated man and devoutly religious; he was an "honest man" in his religion. He says in Acts 23:1 "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Will you listen to his defense before Felix as he says in Acts 24:12-15, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men." That you may see just how zealously honest this man was, let me read from him as he stands before King Agrippa, Acts 26:9-12, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which things I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priest, at midday, O king I saw in the way a light from heaven." Never lived a more devoutly honest man than Saul of Tarsus.

Saul was also a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37-38). He was a leader of his race (Acts 7:58). He was mad against the church (Acts 26:16). Here we have an "educated man"; a "religious man"; a "devoutly honest man in his religion"; a "Roman Citizen," a "leader of his people," and a man who enjoyed the "confidence of his race" before his surrender to Jesus of Nazareth. Think you he is not competent to testify concerning his own conversion!

Though an educated man; though an honestly religious man; though he believed in the resurrection of both the just and the unjust; this man, Saul of Tarsus was a lost man. It isn't enough to be, educated, honest and religious or even zealous as Saul in his religion. Man has to also obey his Lord or he remains lost (II Thess. 1:8-9).

Here is a lost man with his Saviour, He

asks his Saviour, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" His Saviour would not tell him what to do. He told Saul to "go into the city and there it would be told him what he **must do**." There must be a reason for the Lord's not telling Saul what to do. Many people today tell me the Lord or an angel or the Holy Spirit spoke to them and told them **how** to be saved or told them they **were** saved. Strange Christ would not do that for Saul, isn't it? No, He does not do it that way! The reason Christ did not tell him what to do but sent Ananias is the same reason the angel in Acts 10 did not tell Cornelius what to do but sent Peter to him. It is the same reason why the Spirit in Acts 8 did not tell the eunuch what to do, but came to Philip and had him to join himself to the chariot.

In Earthen Vessels

Paul explains the reason for this as he says in II Corinthians 4:5-7, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this **treasure in earthen vessels**, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

Here we have the explanation to the question, why Christ, the angel, or the Holy Spirit did not tell Saul, Cornelius, or the eunuch, what to do. Christ, the Angel, and the Holy Spirit, are all "heavenly vessels" and **this treasure, this revelation of God to man** was given into the hands of "earthen vessels." If Christ or the Spirit were to come and "speak peace to our souls"; or tell us "what to do" they would be violating God's orders. No, they have never spoken to us nor have they "operated miraculously on our hearts" **apart from the Gospel** of Christ that we may be saved. They operate **through** the preaching of God's word and that only in the salvation of the sinner. Hence, Christ, the Saviour, did not tell Saul the sinner, what to do to be saved. He sent Ananias to tell him "what he **must do**."

The religion of our Lord is an intelligent religion; it is a taught religion; it is based upon understanding; not upon superstitions or imaginations. Man's salvation is not based upon his feelings. It is too serious a matter for man to have **only**

his feelings as his guide. Feelings are the result, **every time**, of his teaching. No exceptions. A lie believed will produce the same effect as truth believed--absolutely no difference so far as contented feelings are concerned. All this time Saul **"felt like he was saved"**; yet he was lost. Cornelius and the eunuch both, because of their teachings, felt absolutely safe and were on the road to eternal happiness; but both were lost. The Lord said in John 8:32, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." We must not follow error for in it we can be perfectly contented and satisfied and yet be lost as were all these. Says one, "Brother Harper, I **know** I have received the miraculous operation of the Spirit. I **know** I am saved because I have experienced the regenerating power of the Spirit in my heart." Now humbly, kindly, with no intention of harming or wounding the most sensitive heart in my audience, may I ask you to explain this to me if that theory be correct? Why is it that those who claim this "supernatural converting power" are so divided in **what** they get and **when** they get it? Now the following is absolutely the truth: One group says, I was operated on by God's regenerating Spirit in order to be saved that I **might** believe **because I was saved**. Another group says to this group just the opposite, you are wrong; it does not come **that way**. I received this regenerating power first that "I might believe in order to be saved. Still a **third** group says, We were "baptized with the Holy Spirit" and being now "holy sanctified" we can't sin; a **fourth** group says **all of you** are wrong. We received this regenerating power and were **baptized** in the Holy Spirit and can **perform miracles** and heal all manner of diseases as did the apostles. Neither of these groups fellowships the other. On and on I could go giving different groups that claim this power yet no two of them agree but each of them denies what the other has. Each group gives the same experiences, sights and the same Scriptures. There is but one explanation to all of this: **They were taught to expect this feeling at that particular time**. Had it **really** been the Spirit doing **all this** He would have done it alike. The apostles who were baptized in the Spirit did not divide the people.

Christianity Is Intelligent

The church of Christ makes no such claims. We know that our Lord's religion is a religion based upon intelligence and reason and

He has given us the Bible that we may be taught what to do to be saved. Paul said in Ephesians 3:3 that by "revelation he made known unto me the mystery as I wrote afore in few words whereby, when ye read, ye may **understand** my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." He **wrote it down** for us to **read**, that **reading** we may **understand**. Christ said in Matthew 13:15, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed: (They were not born that way) lest anytime they should see with their eyes; hear with their ears; and understand with their hearts, and I should heal them." In John 6:45 Christ says, "And they shall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." After Christ arose from the dead and had met with his disciples, the record of which is in Matthew 28:18-20, he said, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Philip asked the eunuch, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" He replied, "How can I except some man should guide me?" Christianity is not mysterious, it is understandable.

Since now we find that heavenly vessels cannot teach men how to be saved and that Christ has given this into the hands of "earthen vessels." We are anxious to know what this "earthen vessel," Ananias, told this sinner to do. He told him the right thing I am sure for Christ sent Ananias to Saul for the specific purpose. There can be no mistake here for Christ **sent him**.

Saul Gets His Answer

Having now asked his Saviour, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Christ sends Saul to the city. Saul is blind, does not eat, cannot sleep, and is praying for three days and nights. Yet having believed in Christ as the Son of God, the Saviour of the world; having been praying and in a penitent condition for three days and nights, he is **still a lost man**. He hasn't yet been told **what to do**. Someone is ready to say, he was saved on the road to Damascus when he talked to Christ. We shall see what the Bible says on this. It **has** to be right. Are you willing to take what it says, though it contradicts what you once believed? Saul was willing to surrender **every false idea** he had for the truth. Are we?

The Lord appears unto Ananias and sends
(Continued on page 62)

LORD, WHAT MUST...(Continued from page 61)

him to Saul. When Ananias came he found Saul, blind, hungry, and praying, yet lost. Had he been saved he would not have been in such a condition as found here. If he knew he was saved, why this condition for three days and nights? When the man of God came he did not say to Saul, "Saul, you must keep on praying until you have prayed through to victory." Why? Victory over sin to the alien sinner does not come that way. If it had, Saul would have already received it before Ananias came, for he had been praying for three days and nights. God demands of the lost, a penitent, believing heart, as Saul had here. But Saul's conversion shows beyond refutation that it takes more than that. Ananias told him what he **"must do"**: "Arise and be **baptized and wash away thy sins**, calling on the name of the Lord." Do what, Lord? "Arise and be baptized and wash away **thy sins**." If "salvation from sins" came at the moment man **believes or trusts** in the Saviour, Saul would have **already** had his sins "washed away" before Ananias could tell him "what he **must do**." Here is a conversion that proves **positively** that man is not saved by "faith only" nor is an **alien sinner** (one who has never been a Christian) saved by just "praying for salvation." Saul's sins were washed away in his completion of baptism and not before.

Thy Sins

There is one expression here that **forever** settles the question, "When was Saul saved?" Ananias said to him, "Arise and be baptized and **wash away thy sins**." No, it did not say, "symbolically wash away thy sins." Symbolic is **not** there. Saul's sins were really washed away in the blood of Christ. This little word "thy" forever tells the story of his salvation if we will just open our eyes and see. **Thy** denotes **possession**. I say "thy house." It means but one thing: It is **yours**. It does not belong to anyone else. Now your Bible said, "thy sins." The guilt of his sins was still upon him and he had to be baptized to have his sins washed away (Acts 22:16). Read Acts 9:1-22 and Acts 22:1-16. The order here was: Be told what to do; believe; repent; and be baptized; then came the **washing away** of his sins. Not the sins of someone else. But **"thy sins"**.

Buried In Baptism

Let us read Paul's letter to the church at

Rome and see further what he had to say. In Romans 6:3-4, he says, "know ye not that so many of **us** (includes himself) as were baptized **into Christ** were baptized **into his death**? Therefore we (including himself again) were **buried with him** by baptism into death; that like as Christ was **raised up** from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Now we find that Christ sent Ananias to Saul to tell him what he **"must do"**. He did not tell him to "believe"; he did not tell him to "repent." He **only** told him to "be **baptized and wash away thy sins**." Why? No need telling him to "believe," this he had done for three days. No need to command him to repent for his actions proved that he had repented. Yet he was to be told what he **must do**. The only thing he was commanded to do was to be "baptized," the very thing the world is fighting today and saying is "nonessential." Question: Why is it that baptism, the **only thing** he was told to do, happens to be the **only command** that he **did not have to do**? **This can't be answered!** Saul was saved just like **all others**. All have to be baptized to be saved.

Our Question Answered

Now the answer to our question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" is very simple in its requirements and easily understood by everyone. Here it is: Surrender your former religion, believe in me, repent of your wrongs, and with faith in me as the Son of the living God, be baptized **that thy sins be washed away**, calling on the name of the Lord. He did that. Was he saved? Yes, and became a member of the church the Lord built and was made an apostle unto the Gentiles. What he did was right. If you will do the same thing it will make you a Christian as it did Saul. Will you not today come believing in this same Christ, repenting of your sins, and then be "buried with your Lord in baptism" as was Saul, that your sins may be "washed away" in the precious blood of Christ? This, Saul was **commanded** to do! This was what Saul of Tarsus **"must do"**. If Saul **must be baptized** that **his sins** may be washed away in the precious blood of Christ, why think you that we do not have to do the same thing?

January 23, 1955

E. R. HARPER: 1898—1986

GARLAND ELKINS

God said to Joshua, "Moses my servant is dead" (Jos. 1:2). He, likewise, could say, "E. R. Harper my servant is dead." Brother Harper, like Barnabas, "was a good man" (Acts 11:23). Like Paul, he "preached the word" (II Tim. 4:2) and "was set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:16). Like Apollos, he was "an eloquent man" and "mighty in the scriptures" (Acts 18:24). Like John, he was tender and compassionate. He was a family man. He deeply loved and appreciated his family, and they loved and appreciated him.

When brother Harper lived in Little Rock, he pioneered in preaching the gospel over a powerful radio station. As a result of his great efforts in that field, he became the best known preacher in Arkansas. He also played a major role in arranging the Hardeman--Bogard Debate, which is among the most prominent of any debate in which one of our brethren participated and was a resounding victory for truth. Brother Harper was an outstanding debater in his own right, having engaged in numerous such discussions.

He was a master of assemblies. His lessons, whether in the pulpit or on national radio, were eminently Scriptural. They were filled with Scripture and straightforward but always presented in a loving and kind fashion. His sermon on "The Church The Prophet Saw" was truly a masterpiece. I have never heard it excelled. When brother Thomas B. Warren made the announcement that our 1980 **Spiritual Sword** Lectureship theme would be "The Church," brother Harper and I were sitting together. He whispered to me and said, "Call it 'The Church--The Beautiful Bride Of Christ.'" We accepted his suggestion, and a large hardback book has within its cover some of the finest material available on "The Church--The Beautiful Bride Of Christ." It was during that lectureship that we had an Appreciation Dinner honoring brother Harper.

Through the years brother Harper was loved and appreciated by multitudes of people for his spirituality, mental ability, moral character, courage, and humility. He had encouraged many young preachers, and his love, compassion, and comfort had often been extended to those in sorrow. He was successful in leading many souls to Christ.

Brother Harper shall, truly be missed. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13).

DILLON'S "I AM'S"

"The Seven I Am's" of Jesus, an article appearing in **Defender**, July 1986, was authored by our good friend and brother, Bill Dillon of LaFayette, Georgia. We want to give credit where credit is due. We have had several good comments on the article.

Editor

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL" Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 1986

RAHAB THE HARLOT AND SITUATION ETHICS?

GARY L. GRIZZELL

In the June issue of **Defender** an article entitled "The Sin Of Situation Ethics" appeared by the author. Shortly thereafter the editor of **Defender**, brother Max R. Miller, received a letter from a reader who suggested that the case of Rahab the harlot should have been discussed. The letter stated that:

In Joshua 2:3 Rahab told a deliberate lie to the men of Jericho sent by the king in order to protect the spies in their hiding place. In Joshua 6:22-25 Rahab is rewarded for her sin through the sparing of her life and that of her families and in Hebrews 11:31 she is further exalted for her action by being listed in the great faith chapter of the Bible.

The reader requested that this "example" of situation ethics be commented on in **Defender**. In view of the fact that some use the lying and deception of Rahab as an approved example of situation ethics and thus an excuse to commit sin today, we shall discuss the matter.

Bible Facts About Rahab

The Biblical information concerning Rahab the harlot is found in Joshua 2; 6:22-25; Matthew 1:5; Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25. The facts involving and surrounding her sins of lying and deception relate to Israel's

conquest of the Land of Canaan. The Jews were encamped near the city of Jericho just across the Jordan River. Soon the soles of the feet of the twelve priests bearing the ark of the covenant would touch the waters of the Jordan and God would part the river before their very eyes (Joshua 3:12-13). Thus, the Jews could pass over on dry ground and be in a closer strategic position to over-take the city.

Before the crossing of the Jordan Joshua sent two spies (messengers) to investigate the city of Jericho (Joshua 2:1). This mission proved to be successful since it was learned that: "Truly, the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us" (Joshua 2:24). The citizens of Jericho had heard how the God of Israel had "dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side of Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed" (Joshua 2:10). The spies learned this information from one Rahab the harlot.

When the two spies came into Jericho, "they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there" (Joshua 2:1). This woman had heard of the works of God and thus desired to be a citizen of the blessed nation of Israel. Determined to protect the spies from their enemy, the King, she
(Continued on page 67)

TRUST NOT IN PRINCES

MAX R. MILLER

*Put not your trust in princes,
nor in the son of man, in whom
there is no help.
Happy is he that hath the God
of Jacob for his help,
Whose hope is in the Lord his God:
The Lord shall reign forever,
even, thy God, O Zion, unto all
generations. Praise ye the Lord
Psalm 146*

All things are not well in Zion. Evangelistic zeal has cooled, the love of many has grown cold, strife and division mars the day. A new sound, a new gospel (which is not another, Gal. 1:6,7) has replaced the Old Jerusalem gospel in many pulpits. Apostasy threatens. In such times many falter in the steps of faith, some will lose faith and are lost. One may wonder, "what shall I do? where shall I turn? O what will I do?"

Jesus Christ should always be the object of our vision. We should ever walk in the steps of Jesus. All times are times for faith, and much more so in times of darkness and despair. The Psalmist has words of encouragement for every generation and for every trial of faith. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help." Many lose their souls because they have put their trust in man. Their preacher quit preaching, or worse, begins to preach "some new thing." Their elders do not take a stand against false doctrines or sinful deeds, or they will not stand behind sound doctrine preached by faithful men; sin goes without rebuke; the sinner is justified in his transgression.

"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help." Look not to man; look to God. Have faith in God. Put trust in Him. The apostle Paul said, in the face of trial and death, "sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe

God, that it shall be even as it was told me" (Acts 27:25). Faith in the eternal truths of God is an encouragement to the soul. God Himself is a survivor, His Cause will survive. Things of today are of small moment on the calendar of eternity. God has a plan.

There are just causes for optimism. The world today is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Souls are weary of the burden of sin. Rather than standing in the shadows of doom, God's people today must breathe the spirit of Caleb as Israel looked toward Canaan, "let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:30). The glory days of the kingdom were when the gospel was preached freely. Evangelism is the work of the church in its every age. Self-centered churches have failed to respond to God's plan of preaching the gospel to every creature on earth. They must turn outward to a lost world with the saving gospel of Christ.

Let the church turn from its gymnasiums and dining halls (family life centers), let it turn from its selfish service to its special interest groups, that is, youth groups, singles and such, and turn to all men everywhere, let its "counselor" turn again to the theme of redemption in Christ. There is still an inherent power in the gospel. Turn it loose! Let it flow. Once again be excited to preach, to challenge the world and its error, to confront the denominations and their creeds, to pioneer virgin territories where the seed of the kingdom has not been planted, to reap where none other has sown.

The ills of the church will be healed when we once again are able to joy in our own salvation (Psa. 51:12), and to rejoice in the God of our salvation (Habak. 3:18). Wait not for others—do the will of God. Speak words of salvation, call again to the Old Paths and let us walk therein.

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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RAHAB (Continued from page 65)

exercised an obedient faith before Jehovah, who would soon destroy her city. Note the events which transpired:

- 1) Rahab hid the messengers under flax on her roof (Joshua 2:6).
- 2) She told the king's men that spies came to her house, but that she did not know where they were (Joshua 2:4).
- 3) She encouraged the enemies of Joshua to go in the wrong direction in their pursuit (Joshua 2:5).
- 4) Later, she sent the Israelite men out another way, i.e., down the wall of the city on a cord (Joshua 2:16).
- 5) The spies asked her not to tell of their hiding place in the mountains and to this she consented (Joshua 2:14).
- 6) She requested that she and her family be saved from the coming destruction of the city. This was granted to her on the condition that they were all in her house at the time of the fulfillment of the judgment on the city (2:19).

Later, when the walls of Jericho fell flat (Joshua 6:20), Joshua commanded the two spies to go to Rahab's house (identified by a scarlet line which she had placed in her window) and bring out all that were in her house. Therefore, she and her family were saved from the utter destruction of the city (Joshua 6:22-23).

Rahab's Virtues

Before we discuss the sins of this woman, let's note the reasons God chose to count her righteous in His sight:

- 1) She believed in the omnipotent God of Heaven saying, "I know that the Lord hath given you the land" (Joshua 2:9).
- 2) She was the only one in the city, except perhaps those in her house, who would befriend God's men (Joshua 6:23).
- 3) She helped to fulfill the mission of the spies by giving valuable information concerning the fearfulness of the people of Jericho (Joshua 2:9-11).
- 4) She was tender-hearted and benevolent toward her father, mother, brethren, sisters and all of their children (Joshua 2:12-13; 6:23).
- 5) She hid the messengers (Joshua 6:25) and later assisted them to escape from God's enemies. This was done by

lowering them down the wall of the city by a cord (Joshua 2:15).

- 6) After fleeing from the city, she lived as a woman of Israel (Joshua 6:25). This is significant since this means that she lived as an Israelite, i.e. one of God's faithful people.
- 7) She married Salmon, an Israelite, and became the mother of Boaz, Jesse's grandfather. Thus, she is listed in Matthew 1:5 in the pure lineage of Christ (only four women had this honor).
- 8) In contrast to a dead faith, she serves as an example of an obedient faith (Heb. 11:31; Jas. 2:25).
- 9) She is an example to all Christians in that we must obey God rather than man whenever man's civil law is in conflict with the divine will (Acts 5:29).
- 10) Rahab serves as an example of hope to all dregs of society who doubt the possibility of their own reformation of character (Joshua 6:25).
- 11) The incident of Rahab the harlot reveals the great providence of God in saving her and her family. Their salvation was a direct result of her association with the messengers of Joshua (Joshua 6:23).
- 12) The salvation which was obtained in her house alone serves as a type of the "house of God, which is the church of the living God" wherein alone is salvation (I Tim. 3:15; Acts 2:47; Col. 1:13-14).

Rahab's Sins

In spite of all the good things that may be said about Rahab it is obvious from the text that she was a harlot at the time of the secret entrance of the spies (Joshua 2:1). Some become disturbed to think that she was a prostitute and argue that she was either an innkeeper or **had been** a harlot, yet retained the reputation of a harlot. However, there is no need to try to explain away her immoral lifestyle since she obviously repented.

There is no doubt that she lied and thus intentionally deceived the king's men as to the whereabouts of the spies. Again, in an attempt to solve the riddle of commendation by the New Testament writers, some have placed unreasonable and unbiblical demands on the Scriptures. But, we must not seek to justify Rahab's lying since God has always considered lying as an abomination (Prov.

AN INTERVIEW WITH E. R. HARPER

GRADY MILLER

[In February of 1975 I was twenty-one years old and a junior at Freed-Hardeman College. As part of a class in religious journalism, taught by James R. McGill, I interviewed and wrote a short article about E. R. Harper. Brother Harper, my father and I took a lunch break at a local restaurant in Henderson; he was as anxious to eat off-campus as I was! This brief article has been pulled from old school notes and printed, not because it is especially worthy, but in appreciation and as a small tribute to a great man of God.]

Recently, during the Thirty-Ninth Annual Freed-Hardeman College Lecture-ship, it was my good pleasure to interview E. R. Harper, a faithful soldier of the Cross who has long been on the firing line. Brother Harper is certainly no stranger to Freed-Hardeman College; he was honored just last year as our Alumnus of the Year. Brother Harper, now seventy-seven years old, has been a familiar sight in Henderson the first full week in February for many, many years.

Brother Harper could not be described as a man of high education, as the world generally views scholarship. Indeed, during our conversation he recalled that he received his eighth grade diploma at the age of twenty-three. Brother Harper, however, has dedicated his life to a study of the Sacred Scriptures, which has enabled him to stand as a bulwark through the years against the forces of premillennialism, anti-ism, and now liberalism. This writer discovered that brother Harper is very personable and full of energy despite his years. In fact, brother Harper was very excited about his new book, dealing with current issues concerning the Holy Spirit, which is due to be published within the next few months.

Brother Harper first came to Henderson and Freed-Hardeman College fifty-five years ago, in 1920, following a short hitch in the U.S. Navy. During his stay in Henderson he boarded at the N. B. Hardeman house. He soon fell behind in his payments to Hardeman and only a gift of \$90.00 from his younger brother allowed him to remain in school. While Harper was a student, he distinguished himself as a singer. A Methodist preacher soon offered to pay his tuition if only Harper would accompany him and

lead singing during his revivals. This had to be a great temptation for the young student, who was virtually without funds during those trying years. Nevertheless, brother Harper informed the revivalist that he could not conscientiously assist in a sectarian meeting.

Following his stay in Henderson, Harper attended Union University, a Baptist-affiliated college in nearby Jackson, Tennessee. Brother Harper graduated second in his class; he would have been the valedictorian but he had consistently refused to participate in the chapel services. In later years the rumor spread that Union would have honored him as valedictorian anyway if he had not been a "Campbellite."

Brother Harper gained considerable recognition through his evangelistic efforts. He was particularly successful in his radio ministry while engaged in local work at Little Rock, Arkansas. While in Little Rock he served as the general spokesman and host of the historic Hardeman-Bogard debate, conducted in 1938; he also served as Hardeman's moderator. Because of his uncompromising defense of the faith, brother Harper is recognized today as one of the mainstays of the brotherhood.

During our conversation, which lasted about an hour and a half, brother Harper made the following observations.

Ben M. Bogard: Bogard, a short, stocky man with a mustache, possessed remarkable composure; he simply would not be rattled while debating. Although he was the Baptist champion, Harper

felt that he knew the truth. He was exposed to too much of it!

N. B. Hardeman: Hardeman, co-founder of Freed-Hardeman College and often called the Prince of Preachers, knew no equal as far as oratorical prowess. Hardeman was aided immeasurably by the scholarly L. L. Brigrance.

A. G. Freed: An immaculate gentleman, Freed believed in giving students a thorough education. He was not concerned in the least with accreditation for the college. This proved to be one of the factors that drove a wedge between Freed and Hardeman, culminating with their dismissal in 1923. Freed was an excellent debater who took the platform because he loved the truth; he was not at all fond of the show that often accompanies a religious debate. Harper regretted that Freed's debates are not in print. Bogard once declared that Freed was

"the most contrary white man I know" because of his tenacity.

J. D. Tant: "I loved J. D. Tant, I declare, I loved J. D. Tant." Brother Harper observed that there was only one J. D. Tant; the world could stand only one!

Upon receiving his tea after a waitress refilled it, and calling her back: "They'll forget the second lemon every time!"

The brotherhood owes an enormous debt to E. R. Harper and men like him. Some, perhaps, have forgotten the battles that he waged on their behalf while they were yet weak. While speaking on this issue, brother Harper's voice broke and tears came to his eyes. Still, he finds no small comfort in the fact that, while men may overlook and fail to reward and appreciate us in this life, our Heavenly Father will surely not slight us in the next.

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"The Book of Colossians"

Oct. 19-23, 1986

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SCHEDULE OF LECTURES

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

9:30 J. MOFFITT	Introduction To Colossians
10:20 T. WARREN	Outline And Basic Message Of Colossians
7:00 F. SMITH	Salutation (1:1-2)
8:00 C. CATES	Thanksgiving (1:3-8)

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

9:00 B. SMITH	Prayer (1:9-12)
10:00 D. SZTANYO	God (1:12-13)
11:00 J. STEARSMAN	Christ (1:13-23)
1:00 G. ELKINS	Paul's Work (1:24-2:3)
2:00 C. LAVENDER	General Warning And Exhortation (2:4-7)
3:00 G. MUSIC	Fulness Of The Godhead In Christ (2:9)
7:00 J. GILMORE	Men Are Made Free In Christ (2:10-12)
8:00 B. JACKSON	Warnings Against False Teachers (2:13-15)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21

9:00 H. BYNUM	Refuse To Bow To Ceremonial Prohibitions (2:16-17)
10:00 W. WINKLER	Refuse To Worship Inferior Beings (2:18-19)
11:00 T. VARNER	Refuse To Submit To Ascetic Regulations (2:20-21)
1:00 D. BROWN	Reasons For This Refusal (2:22-23)
2:00 F. STARLING	What Is Truly Of Value In Spiritual Growth (3:1-4)
3:00 N. MERIDETH	The Beauty Of Holiness And Spirit Of Praise (3:5-17)
7:00 W. CLARK	Application To Specific Classes (3:18-4:1)
8:00 B. DOBBS	Counsel In Regard To Outsiders (4:2-6)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

9:00 R. SHARP	Some Personal Messages And Greetings (4:7-18)
10:00 T. WARREN	Principles Of Interpretation In Colossians
11:00 P. DAVIS	Excursus On The Doctrine Of God In Colossians
1:00 F. NICHOLS	Excursus On The Person Of Christ In Colossians
2:00 W. CLAIBORNE	Excursus On The Work Of Christ In Colossians
3:00 D. McCLISH	Excursus On The Power Of Darkness In Colossians
7:00 R. DEEVER	Excursus On A Cappella Singing In Colossians
8:00 J. RAMSEY	Excursus On Salvation (From Alien Sins) In Colossians

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

9:00 H. KIRK	Excursus On Christian Living In Colossians
10:00 T. HIGHTOWER	Excursus On Mere Human (False) Doctrine In Colossians
11:00 W. WILDER	Excursus On The Cross In Colossians
1:00 W. COATS	Excursus On The Church In Colossians
2:00 R. TAYLOR	Excursus On Being Good Soldiers In Colossians
3:00 M. DEEVER	Excursus On Knowledge And Faith In Colossians
7:00 A. CONNALLY	Excursus On The Family In Colossians
8:00 A. HIGHERS	Excursus On The Doctrine Of Authority In Colossians

RAHAB (Continued from page 67)

6:16-19). It is impossible for God to lie or approve of lying (John 14:6; 16:13; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18). **Does God approve of that of which the devil is the father?** (John 8:44).

Divine Commendation of Rahab

Why then, if Rahab was a harlot and a liar, do three inspired writers of the New Testament speak favorably of Rahab? Is Rahab the harlot a divinely approved example of situation ethics (doing evil that good might come)? The reason the New Testament commends Rahab to us is because she had an obedient faith (Heb. 11:31; James 2:25). God does not either explicitly or implicitly commend the sin of Rahab. If so, where is the book, chapter and verse?

Those who believe that God rewarded Rahab for her sin either do not know or will not apply the Bible truth that **God judges a man by the whole of his life, not one act of sin in his life.** The confusion that some possess in their interpretation of the life of Rahab should be identified. It is the author's contention that **a lack of appreciation for the implicit teaching of the Bible is seen in those who believe that God rewarded Rahab's evil-doing.** Some become distracted into the misconception that Rahab did not repent of her sins because there is no recorded reproof of Rahab's sin. But her repentance is implied since the New Testament writers commend only those Old Testament characters whose lives as a whole reflect an obedient faith (cf. Heb. 11). Do you really believe the Holy Spirit would have included her in the genealogy table of Christ in Matthew 1:5 if she had not repented? God judged Rahab by the direction she was going and not by one particular act of sin in her life. Granted, had she continued in the practice of sin, history would read differently. Thus, is it reasonable to believe Rahab to have been impenitent while dwelling in Israel, married to Israelite, and becoming a link in the pure lineage of our blessed Lord?

The Example of Noah

When interpreting the Scriptures it must be remembered that the Holy Spirit records the sinful deeds of a good person's life as well as the righteous deeds. Consider Noah: He did many wonderful and righteous acts (Gen. 6-8). He is called 1) A just man; 2) Perfect in his generations; and 3) One who walked

with God (Gen. 6:9). But, after the flood Noah became an husbandman, planted a vineyard: "And he drank of the wine and was drunken" (Gen. 9:21). Ham, his youngest son, published his father's shame to his brothers. Then, the Biblical record tells us that Noah died at the age of 950 years. There is absolutely no record of anyone reproving Noah for his sin. There is no record of his repentance. This is the extent of the Old Testament revelation of Noah's retirement years. Did Noah die in an unrepentant state? No, just as Rahab did not die a harlot and a liar. No, Noah did not die in an unrepentant state any more than Abraham and Sarah, who told a lie to the Pharaoh (Gen. 12:10-20; Heb. 11:8-11).

In the New Testament Noah is listed as one of the great heroes of faith (Heb. 11:7). He is commended as one who feared God, built the ark, saved his family from the flood and preached righteousness to the people (Heb. 11:7; II Pet. 2:5; I Pet. 3:20-21). In the twenty seven books of the New Testament there is not one hint of the historical fact of his sin of drunkenness. The only logical conclusion is that this implies his repentance prior to his death. The Holy Spirit simply did not choose to reveal the details of Noah's repentance in either Testament.

The Burden of Proof

Today, the "Christian practitioner of situation ethics" may attempt to harmonize his sinful behavior by arguing that there is divine approval of Rahab's sin. However, the burden of proof is upon their shoulders to prove that God rewarded Rahab's practice of sin. The Bible says to "prove all things, hold fast that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21). We therefore ask for just **one** book, chapter and verse where God commended any act of Rahab's which was not a **righteous** act (cf. I Pet. 4:11).

Hebrews 11:31 commends Rahab because "she received the spies with peace." This says nothing about her statements to the king's men. James 2:25 commends Rahab for her "works." This refers to her **righteous works** since James never commends "evil work" (cf. Jas. 3:16). These works of Rahab are explicitly stated by the writer: 1) Receiving the spies and, 2) Sending them out another way.

The reason her sin of lying is not me
(Continued on page 72)

THE REAL TRUTH ABOUT WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL (WBS)

ERNEST S. UNDERWOOD

Those of us who really care about maintaining the truth of God before the world have never promoted or endorsed the "child" of the late Jimmie Lovell, that child being **World Bible School**. Brother Lovell was a man who apparently cared little for God's truth. He frequently stated his willingness to fellowship just about anybody who called himself a Christian, regardless of whether that person had obeyed God's commands or not. He also stoutly defended the liberals and the digressives in the brotherhood. About the only ones he ever found fault with were those who were insisting in faithful adherence to the truth. Of these he was always critical.

Upon the death of brother Lovell the "mantle" fell upon brother Reuel Lemmons, and rightly so. No one who has the slightest inclination of faithfulness to God's word expected brother Lemmons to do or think differently than brother Lovell. In fact, it is recognized by all who are sound in the faith that brother Lemmons has gone "out from us" (I John 2:19). Faithful children of God no longer extend Christian fellowship to him.

In the last issue of **Action** (August 1968) brother Lemmons finally admits the utter uselessness of **World Bible School**. In his editorial he wrote, "The Bible is each man's precious possession as if it had been especially prepared for him alone. Hense [sic] we cannot bind upon any man anything other than **what his own understanding of the Scriptures leads him to...** That's why I like WBS, it turns every student in the world loose with his own Bible. What he gets out of it becomes his "religion." He has not strained it through one of **our** systems." (Emphasis mine, ESU). Later on in the same editorial he wrote, "One reason, I believe, for the success of WBS efforts is the **lack of church-anity** involved. These lessons center on Jesus. They zero in on salvation and sin."

The observant reader will immediately notice the glaring inconsistency of brother Lemmons' writing. If every student is to be "turned loose with his own Bible" and do what "his own understanding of the Scriptures leads him to," why "strain" him through the system of WBS? Why not just send him a Bible with instruction to "sink or swim." Forget the Lord's commandment to "go into all the

world and **preach** the gospel" according to his reasoning. When the Jews returned from captivity it is stated that Ezra and the Levites "caused the people to understand the law" (Neh. 8:6-7). The next verse states: "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." Were Ezra and the Levites trying to "strain" the people through **their** system? The truth of the matter is that brother Lemmons wants to **strain** the student through a system he is fond of, a system wherein he (the student) cannot really **know** that God exists, if there really is **one true church**, and if one really **should** defend the gospel against all false teachers and teachings.

If we cannot "bind upon any man anything other than what his own understanding of the Scriptures leads him to" we are in for trouble. Suppose that a man's understanding of the Scriptures leads him to deny the deity of Jesus Christ, must we accept such understanding and fellowship him who so "understands?" that will instantly put us in the camp of those who call themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses." (Incidentally, brother Lovell promoted the idea that these people, and others, may very well be the "good Samaritan" today (**Voices Of Action**, p. 106).

What about those who "understand" that premillennialism, salvation by faith only, impossibility of apostasy, the use of the mechanical instrument of music is permissible in worship, one church is as good as another, ad infinitum, are taught in the Scriptures. According to brother Lemmons' statement we would not be allowed to "strain" this person's beliefs through "one of our system," but must accept him on "what his **own** understanding of the Scriptures leads him to." Brother Lemmons candidly admits that this is the direction of WBS. He says, "That's why I like WBS."

From what he says about the success in de-emphasizing the church, it would seem that he goes back to the mid 60's and picks up on what was then called the "Jesus Freak" movement. Both this movement, and the Campus Evangelism movement promoted the slogan, "Preach the **Man**, not the **Plan**." One headline
(Continued on page 72)

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RAHAB (Continued from page 67)

tioned in these two New Testament references is because at the time the writers penned these words, Rahab had repented and been forgiven by God. Contrast this with the fact that the New Testament writers may refer to an evil character in the Old Testament to warn us of the danger of apostasy, and unless another verse qualifies the information given this implies that he never repented, e.g. Cain (Jude 11). Add to this the fact that when the Holy Spirit mentioned Rahab (Rachab, KJV) in the genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1:5), He did not refer to her as "the harlot."

The fact that some use the sin of Noah to justify their sin of drunkenness is not an excuse for their drunkenness (Gal. 5:21). And the fact that some use the action of Rahab to justify lying, deception and hypocrisy in the church today is no excuse for their sin of situation ethics (Rev. 21:8). May we all determine to love God and keep His commandments (John 14:15).

**FIRST ANNUAL MISSISSIPPI
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WBS (Continued from page 71)

in a local paper stated about the college students who came to Florida for the spring break: "College students say they 'dig' Christ, but 'hate' the church." We emphatically and categorically deny any proposition which contends that one can preach Christ without preaching His body, the church. Are such teachings part and parcel of WBS? This is the claim brother Lemmons makes for it. Remember that he said, "One reason, I believe, for the success of WBS efforts is the **lack of churchanity involved.**" Who should know better than he what the thrust of the "system" is?

In reality it would seem that WBS is nothing more than warmed over denominational slop. It does not surprise us that brother Lemmons, and those who agree with him, have been feeding from the same trough for many years now. We believe that faithful brethren will beware of and avoid WBS.

**MISSOURI - KANSAS LECTURES
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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil. 1:17

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PREMILLENNIALISM EXPLAINED AND REFUTED

Winston C. Temple

The doctrine of premillennialism is a reflection upon God and an insult upon the prophecies of the Old Testament and their fulfillment. It is not to accuse those who believe the theory of being insincere, or dishonest, but even though they be both honest and sincere, they are wrong. The theory they propagate before a confused but anxious world is an insult to God because it either makes Him, or His prophets (either one or both) a deceiver, and destroys one's faith in Him as an all powerful and all knowing God. Premillennialism is a false doctrine and is a denial of Old Testament prophecy. It simply says, God failed!

Premillennialism defined means "before the millennium." The doctrine is: Christ first came to earth to set up the earthly kingdom of David in Jerusalem, and to rule in His earthly body for a thousand years, but that He failed; He was defeated because the Jewish nation rejected Him. God failed in His promise to Christ, the seed of David, therefore, Christ will have to return to earth to undertake the correction of failure at His first coming. Based on the above statements, the Premillennialists believe that Christ is coming back to earth before He begins His reign of one thousand years. The word **pre** means before, **mille** means one thousand, and **annum** means year. **ism** means that it is not so!

That the reader may know there is no misrepresentation of Premillennial advocates when it is charged they teach God failed in His first promise, a verbatim quote from the tract, "The Second Coming of Elijah" from the Radio Bible Class conducted by Richard DeHaan is offered:

But God in his knowledge knew that Israel would reject the King when he came, and therefore the kingdom would be postponed, and not set up until His second com-

ing They rejected the King, and instead of the kingdom comes the cross, the resurrection, the setting aside of Israel, the calling out of the church, and then after that will come the Kingdom.

This statement teaches that the New Testament, with all that perfected it, is no part of the Old Testament's revealed promises. Hence, what is revealed in the New Testament has no connection with the Lord's first advent. It is an interim arrangement for a plan gone wrong. The church age was set up in order that the Lord God would have time to rearrange His affairs and marshal His forces for a second trial to perform that which He so desperately tried to accomplish at His Son's first appearing. Premillennialism disassociates completely the entirety of the New Testament, with all its accomplishments, actions, and teachings, from being any part of that promised by the Old Testament prophets.

Historical Premillennialism saw no future hope for Israel outside the church, but modern day Dispensational Premillennialism sees salvation for Israel as a nation outside the pale of the church. This modern day concept was originated and promoted by such men as J. N. Darby (Plymouth Brethren), and C. I. Scofield and his **Scofield Reference Bible**. They have divided time into seven Dispensations:

1. Innocence: Creation of Adam to the fall.
 2. Conscience: Fall to the flood.
 3. Human Government: From the flood to the Call of Abraham.
 4. Promise: From the call of Abraham to the law given at Sinai.
 5. Law: From Sinai through most of Christ's public ministry.
 6. Grace: Closing days of Christ's public ministry until His second coming.
 7. Kingdom: The Millennium until the end of
- (Continued on page 75)

ONE OR SEVEN THOUSAND

Max R. Miller

Crises of faith spring suddenly and unexpectedly upon all, yea, even on the staunch and courageous. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world, so said John. Those who are counted as faithful are the ones who may claim the victories of faith in the name of their Lord and Master. But even for them, there comes the crises of faith, challenges that must be met in the strength of faith.

None more courageous was to be found in all Israel than God's prophet, Elijah the Tishbite. With startling suddenness he first appears on the pages of holy writ (I Kings 17:1). His appearance images boldness, courage, action, fearless faith. The authors of the New Testament books mentioned and extolled no other prophet as they did the prophet Elijah. He was God's champion. His name literally meant, "my God is Jehovah," and refers to his life's calling as God's prophet. He was to uphold the cause and righteousness of God as the one and only true God. He challenged the sin of king Ahab and of all Israel. He stood before the many priests of Baal, challenged them and their god; he brought them to the brook Kishon and slew them in a grand demonstration of faith. Mighty in faith and power was the man of God.

Shamefully, sadly, before Queen Jezebel he was altogether a different man. He met a crisis of faith. Under threat of a sinful and cruel woman "he arose, and went for his life." No other confrontation challenged his faith as did Jezebel. He fled, he surrendered, he was quickly defeated. Under a juniper tree he sits in his loneliness, wishing death to seize upon him. Only God's assurance would revive the fighter, restore his courage, and again give him the victories of faith he once knew. In his weakness he hears the voice of the Almighty saying, "yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (I Kings 19). Elijah, at the word of the Lord, arose and again walked in the strength of his faith.

There are those, who like Elijah, become frightened and flee the service of God be-

cause their faith has been challenged. Strife and discord, worldliness, apostasy, seeing little or no fruit of one's labors, lack of moral, spiritual or financial help, or a multitude of other things, have caused them to become fearful, to lose faith, and, as Elijah, to despair as the only righteous remaining servant of God. Such is not the case.

But--what if--what if you alone were the only earthly servant of the Almighty? what if all others defect, all others have gone the way of apostasy? There is no greater demonstration of faith than that of standing alone. Questions come to mind: did I serve God because others did? is my encouragement from fellowlaborers or from God? is there no work to be done because all others have quit? will the excuse "I quit because others did," be acceptable to God at the judgment?

Paul stood alone: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me" (II Tim. 4:16); "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me (II Tim 1:15). The challenge to Paul's faith made him stronger. John, on Patmos Isle, seemingly alone, realized the presence of his Lord who laid His right hand upon him and said, "Fear not" (Rev. 1:17). Remember Jesus on Calvary's bloody cross, there alone, there faithful.

These are the times for God's people to summon their faith and to take their stand there, "for by faith ye stand" (II Cor. 1:24). The Christian life is a walk by faith, faith in God's word (II Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17). If seemingly we must stand alone, let us stand alone. Let us be pleased to serve a faithful God whether in number or in the loneliness of our Patmos Isle. Let the quitters quit. Let the quibblers prattle on, let those of the nature of Demas, Hymenaeus, Alexander, Phygellus, Hermogenes, whoever--let them go their way. Remember the words of our Lord, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may bold say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5,6.). There are seven thousand others who hold this conviction. Say, "me too."

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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PREMILLENNIALISM (Continued from page 73)

His earthly reign.

They also believe in two gospels: the first was repentance and water baptism for the Jews only which was to last until there would be a dispensational change to the second gospel. This second gospel would be for both Jews and Gentiles, but these would be saved by faith only. They deny the spiritual identity of Israel and the church; they set grace and law against each other.

The Mormons, Jehovah Witness, Adventist, The Plymouth Brethren individual Baptists, and almost all other Protestant denominations accept the Dispensational Premillennial view.

Israel Saved And Restored To Palestine

The Premillennialists go to Genesis 17:8 to try to prove that the land promise to Abraham was an everlasting promise. They make their argument on the word "everlasting." The text reads: And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.

The answer to this argument is found in the next covenant which is circumcision. In verse thirteen, God said, "...and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." In verse nine, states the duration, it would be "...throughout your generations." This is the point that they overlook. When the circumcision covenant ended, their generations ended. Circumcision ended with the coming of the New Testament. Observe the following:

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God (Rom. 2:28,29).

Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:2-4).

One need go no further to establish the fact that the "circumcision of the heart" has set aside the "circumcision of the flesh." This being true, the "everlasting covenant of circumcision" has come to an end. Since it was to last only "throughout their generation," one finds also that the period called the "generations of the Jews," as found in the Bible has come to an end. This is equally true in regard to the "land promise" and

its being "everlasting." It was throughout their generations.

Was the land promise fulfilled? If yes, then once fulfilled, it can never be re-fulfilled. Note the following:

They failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord has spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass (Joshua 21:45).

And behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you, and not one thing hath failed thereof (Joshua 23:14).

Modern day advocates of premillennialism are using the promises made to Israel of their return from Babylon as proof texts that Israel is yet to be gathered back to Jerusalem in fulfillment of these Scriptures, but God warned Israel that after they returned to Canaan from Egypt, they would be destroyed quickly from off this good land if they kept not the covenant which God commanded them (Joshua 23:15,16). This return to their own land has been fulfilled;

So the priests, and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities (Ezra 2:70).

The Dispensationalist read Romans 11:26 where it states "and so all Israel shall be saved" and conclude that this means Israel as a nation shall be saved. The word so is an adverb of manner. The only way a any Jew will ever be saved is by faithful obedience to the gospel of the Christ. In verse twenty Paul points out that some of the Jews were broken off because of unbelief; he also shows that they can be grafted in again if they will believe (v. 23). Jews must be saved like (in the same manner) the Gentiles (Gal. 3:26-28).

One would conclude from observing and explaining these passages that the restoration of the Jews to their home land of Palestine has already taken place. Since this is the case there will be no miraculous salvation for the Jews as a nation.

The Kingdom Versus The Church

The Dispensationalists teach that the kingdom of God, which is the church, is a different entity from the kingdom of heaven which is the Premillennial kingdom yet to come. This concept is easily refuted by the Scriptures. Observe the following passages:

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 4:17).

And saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel (Mark 1:15).

And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Matt. 16:18,19).

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God (Matt. 19:23,24).

From the reading of these passages one can see that the kingdom of God, which is the church, is the same as the kingdom of heaven. The Premillennial Dispensationalists take passages in the New Testament which present the kingdom as being in the future and apply them to the millennial kingdom which, according to them, will be set up at Christ's second coming. Such passages as Matthew 16:18, Luke 22:16-18; Acts 14:22; II Peter 1:10,11 and Matthew 19:28 are all applied to the time of the Millennial kingdom (See **Jesus is Coming** by W.E. Blackstone pp. 83-86). What they fail to see is that the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God as foretold by the prophets, has already come and had its fulfillment in the first century and was realized in the establishment of the church of Christ on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection.

Consider some of the Old Testament prophesy of the kingdom and its fulfillment:

Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth (Jer. 23:5).

And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the children of men (II Sam. 7:12-14).

In Jeremiah 23:5, the prophet foretold that a king would come through the lineage of David. Christ is that King (See Matt. 1:1). The prophet Nathan predicted unto David that when he was dead that God would raise up one from his seed which would be king over his kingdom and that his throne would be established for ever. Primarily, this was fulfilled in Solomon (I Chron. 28:6,7). Ultimately, it was fulfilled in Christ (Heb. 1:5,8). For further proof, read the following:

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus...the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end (Luke 1:31-33).

Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom you have crucified both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:29-36).

It is important to notice that the promise foretold by Nathan in II Samuel 7:12-14, and by the angel in Luke 1:31-33, was fulfilled when David was yet dead, and that it was realized when Christ was resurrected and not at His second coming. All passages prior to the kingdom or church being established on the day of Pentecost were in the future tense. After the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter two, all passages, with the exception of those which refer to the heavenly state of the kingdom (Acts 14:22; II Pet. 1:10,11), are in the past tense. (Consider Col. 1:13, Heb. 12:28 and Rev. 1:9).

The Premillennialists failed to recognize that the kingdom or the church came on the day of Pentecost. They also fail to recognize that Christ began His reign over

His kingdom which had been given Him at His ascension (Dan. 7:13,14; Acts 1:9-11). They do not seem to understand that Christ is now reigning over His kingdom or church and shall do so until the last enemy (which is death) shall be destroyed. At which time, he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and "...shall have put down all rule and authority and power" (I Cor. 15:24). Note the following:

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Cor. 15:24-26).

At the second coming of Christ, He will raise those that are His. From other passages such as John 5:28,29 and Acts 24:15, one learns that all the dead, the righteous and the wicked, will be raised at His second coming. Then will come the end, the end of this age and the end of time. Nothing is said in these passages about an earthly reign of a thousand years. The order is: Christ comes and then comes the end. There is no room for a thousand year reign! After Acts two, passages such as Acts 14:22 and II Peter 1:10,11, which speak of the kingdom as being in the future tense, are speaking of the time when it will exist in its heavenly state.

The Two Gospel Theory

The Premillennial Dispensationalists teach that the New Testament reveals two gospels, one for the Jew and one for the Gentile. They state that the gospel for the Jews consists of repentance and water baptism, and that the gospel for the Gentiles consists of repentance and faith.

They are divided as to when the Jews' gospel stopped, and the Gentiles' began. Some say that it was Acts chapter seven; others say that the transition took place fourteen years prior to the time Paul had his heavenly vision as recorded in II Corinthians 12:1-4. They believe that the "fourteen years ago" which Paul spoke of takes one back to the time of Acts chapter fourteen and fifteen. They further believe that Peter preached repentance and water baptism to the Jews up until the time of Acts fifteen at which time Paul was commissioned to preach the repentance and faith only gospel to the Gentiles, but since there has been a dispensational change, Paul's faith only gospel would not be for Jews only, but for the Gentiles as well. They believe that all races in this present age must be saved by faith only.

One other group of dispensationalists must

be mentioned, and that is the Ultra Dispensationalists. They believe that the transition from the water baptism gospel to the faith only gospel did not take place until Acts 28:28 where it is recorded:

Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

A careful reading of the Book of Acts will refute these theories:

And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of **this way**, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem (Acts 9:2).

Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he **commanded** them to be **baptized** in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days (Acts 10:47,48).

Please note that Cornelius was a Gentile, a centurion of the band called the Italian band (Acts 10:1). According to the first group of dispensationalists, this could not have been true because chapter ten is later than chapter seven (the supposed dispensational change). Read further:

And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert **the right ways** of the Lord? (Acts 13:10).

The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us **the way of salvation** (Acts 16:17). And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was **baptized**, he and all his straightway (Acts 16:30-33).

And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of **that way** before the multitude, he departed from them...

When they heard this, they were **baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:5).

Please observe the words "way" and "baptism."

Also, note that people are still being baptized in water after the time of Acts chapter seven and chapter fourteen (the times which the dispensationalists claim water baptism had ceased). Furthermore, "And I persecuted **this way** unto the death. (Acts 22:4).

This way in this verse is the same way that Paul was persecuting in Acts 9:2, and this way was the way of salvation (Acts 16:17). This way included water baptism which according to some of the dispensationalists had ceased by the time of Acts 22:4. Continue to read:

But this I confess unto thee that after **the way** which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers... Acts 24:22)

Felix...having more perfect knowledge of that **way**, (Acts 24:22).

Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the **people** and to the **Gentiles** (Acts 26:22,23).

Paul was preaching to both Jews and Gentiles the death and resurrection of Christ. This was the same gospel Peter preached to Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). In short, Paul was preaching the same gospel that Peter was preaching. There had been no change in the gospel from the time of Acts two until Acts 26:22,23. Read two more passages:

And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning until evening (Acts 28:23).

Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him (Acts 28:31).

Acts 28:31 is the last verse of the last chapter of Acts. We may with confidence conclude that Paul from the time of his conversion until the close of the Book of Acts preached the same and single gospel of the kingdom which Peter preached. There is only one gospel and it includes water baptism (I Cor. 15:1-4;; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:3,4; Eph. 5:25,26).

The apostle Paul said in Galatians 1:23:

"But they heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past **now** preacheth **the faith** which he once destroyed." (emphasis in the above by WCT.)

Paul was now preaching the faith or the same gospel which he once destroyed. He was not preaching a different gospel than what he had preached at his conversion. Down goes the theory of the two gospels!

The Two Resurrections And The Thousand Year Reign In Between

According to the Premillennial Dispensationalists, Christ will come back and rapture His church. This is the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5). While the raptured saints are with the Lord, there will be a seven year period of tribulation upon the earth. Revelation chapter twenty does not reveal anything about a rapture or a tribulation. These advocates believe that after the seven years of rapture and tribulation that Christ will set up His thousand year reign in the city of Jerusalem, and will sit and rule on David's throne. They fail to realize that Peter in Acts 2:29-36 taught that Christ began His reign on Pentecost day of Acts chapter two (cf. Dan. 2:44; Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8). He began His reign over His church which is the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God. Consider the following passage:

Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both (Zech. 6:13).

This is a clear prophetic reference to Christ. He would build the temple of the Lord. He has built it! Christians make up the spiritual kingdom or temple of God (I Cor. 3:16; I Cor. 6:19; Eph. 2:19-22). Christ would be a priest upon His throne. He is our high priest today (Heb. 10:21; 4:15). Christians serve as priests under their high priest who is Christ.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (I Pet. 2:9).

Christ would sit upon His throne as priest-king and when He would sit, He would rule or reign. He is sitting upon His throne now (Heb. 1:3), and has been ever since He received His kingdom on His ascension (Dan. 7:13,14; Acts 2:29-36). Christ was raised up to sit on David's throne. God gave David's throne to Christ (Luke 1:32). Since Christ now sits on David's throne in heaven, and He

will not give up that heavenly throne and come and sit upon His footstool.

The **Lord** is in his holy temple, the **Lord's** throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men (Ps. 11:4).

Christ is a priest on His throne. He could not be a priest upon the earth.

For if he were on earth he should not be a priest seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law (Heb. 8:4).

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us (Heb. 9:24).

Since Christ who is our high priest is in heaven, He is sitting upon His throne and reigning as **King of kings, and Lord of lords** (Rev. 19:16).

The first resurrection spoken of in Revelation 20:5 is the resurrection of the "souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God" (Rev. 20:4). These martyrs that reigned with Christ during the one thousand years were those who held faith during the period of oppression by the beast which was the Roman Emperor during that period of time. In Revelation 20:5, the vision portrays the victory of the martyrs underneath the altar (Rev. 6:10). Their victory is symbolized as a resurrection and as being seated on thrones. Christ's victory was manifested and exemplified in His resurrection and His being seated on His throne which stands as a symbol of His total triumph (Ezek. 37:1-14; Isa. 26:19; Hosea 13:14). "The rest of the dead" who lived not until the thousand years are finished are not the dead awaiting a bodily resurrection as the Premillennialists teach. As the cause for which the martyrs had died is symbolized by a resurrection, so "the rest of the dead" are those killed by the sword of Christ in their war on behalf of the beast and paganism (Rev. 19:21). These shall experience a resurrection of their cause in the effort of Satan which will come toward the end of time through new allies, Gog and Magog (Rev. 20:7-9).

In Revelation 20:6, the first resurrection is the victory of the cause and principles to which these martyred saints were faithful—even unto death. "Over these the second death hath no power." These are those who overcame (Rev. 2:11). "They shall be priests of God and of Christ's, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Other than reigning with him through this victory and triumph, nothing more is known about this reign. The

one thousand years is figurative and means a complete period of time.

In verse seven, Satan is loosed, but only for a little season; he is restrained from doing anything by the faithfulness of the saints. When such a spirit of loyal devotion to the principles and cause of Christ no longer distinguish God's people, the restraining power is gone; Satan is loosed once more.

In verse eight, Satan no longer works through one great imperial power, but as it had been from the beginning, deception continues to be his means of control. This is a continuation of the same war that has been raging through the centuries, but it is a new battle. An interpretation of Gog and Magog must rest on Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39. This battle will be a moral and a spiritual one. Such forces as atheism, humanism, communism, materialism, astrology, and all manner of false and perverted religions.

In verse nine, war is made on the camp of the saints which is God's church. God miraculously rescues it. In verse ten, Satan is cast into the lake of fire. In verses eleven through fifteen, the final judgment is revealed. All of the dead both good and bad stand before God (John 5:28,29). Those found written in the book of life go home to be with their God in heaven. Those not found written in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Those who were in the first resurrection were those apostles and other faithful martyrs who were faithful until death. They have been and are still reigning with Christ over His kingdom.

In these passages, there are not two resurrections, one for the raptured church and the second for the wicked dead after a millennial reign. When Christ comes again all men will be raised and judged according to their works (Rev. 20:12).

May all men come out of error they have embraced and return to the truth of the Bible.

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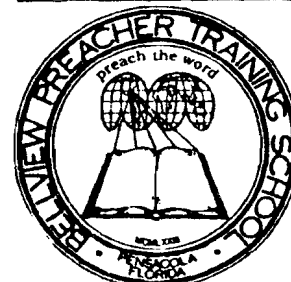
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Phil. 1:17

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER 1986

JESUS, LORD OF YOUR LIFE

Thomas Franklin

The title above is not a Biblical question. Yet I have heard it put to young candidates for baptism in lieu of the statement required by Philip from the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:37). Why should we change the question? Philip's inquiry is in keeping with other Biblically stated prerequisites to becoming a child of God, such as John 1:12 and Matthew 10:32. In contrast, the phrase "make Jesus Lord of your life" is not even found in the Bible.

Further, I strongly doubt that this phrase can be supported as a Biblical concept. When God made Adam He could have constituted Himself as Lord of Adam's life. But He did not. He made man a free moral agent, responsible for his own behavior. This does not mean that God was not Adam's Lord. But it does mean that God did not take control of Adam's life. He provided information and guidance for Adam, including penalties for sin; but it is obvious that what God really wanted of His creation was a voluntary obedience motivated by faith and love.

Neither did Jesus come saying, "you must make me Lord of your life." What He said was, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Certainly a strong commitment to the gospel of Christ takes care of a great number of life's decisions but we cannot thereby escape the responsibility to use our God given faculties to choose proper courses of action and to carry out our obligations as children, parents, citizens, and Christians. When I Corinthians 6:20 refers to our status as bond servants of the Lord, "For ye are bought with a price," note that this is followed by, "therefore glorify God in your body"; a command which we can choose to obey or not to obey. We are still in charge.

Jesus is "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36), and His being so is not dependent on anything we do or do not do. This article does not seek in any way to minimize His Lordship, or to say that we should not make Jesus the focal point of our lives (Col. 3:4), and let Him live in us (Gal. 2:20), and we in Him (II Cor. 5:17). but it is to say that we can and should do all of this without adopting an expression implying that the Christian is no longer a free moral agent, responsible for his own life and conduct.

Ordinarily when what we teach and do is in accordance with sound Bible teaching we have no trouble expressing or describing it in Biblical terminology. On the other hand most knowledgeable Christians are able to detect the erroneous connotations in such non-biblical expressions as; "the rapture," "praying through," "join the church of your choice" and "accept Jesus as your personal savior." I heard the latter expression used in a Birmingham church last summer followed by the admonition to the members to go out and "witness for Christ." The only thing we can properly "witness" about is ourselves, our own experiences and feelings. What is wrong with "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15), "teaching them" (Matt. 28:20) and "Preach the word" (II Tim. 4:2)? All religious people, including Hindoos, Moslems and Buddhists can witness and testify with great enthusiasm and conviction as to their feelings about their religion and what it has meant to their life: but only Christians are equipped to preach the gospel, the power of God unto salvation! In doing this we would also do well to heed Paul's advice to Timothy to "Hold fast the form of sound words" (II Tim. 1:13).

GATEWAY TO HEAVEN

Max R. Miller

In Logic there is the syllogism. It is a device to test ideas, theories or propositions. A syllogism consists of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion. If the major and minor premises are correct, the conclusion must be correct. If either of the premises is incorrect, the conclusion is invalid. The syllogism, as a tool of logic, is centuries old, tried and tested, reliable for testing of either ancient or modern arguments or ideas.

In consideration of this article the syllogism is brought to play on the idea that there is but one church through which the saved soul makes their way to heaven. Consider first the following syllogism.

Major Premise: The house of God is the gate to heaven Gen. 28:17
Minor Premise: The house of God is the church of the living God I Tim. 3:15
Therefore: God's church is the gate to heaven

There are many who hopefully look to heaven as their eternal home. Incredibly, many of those who have faith in heaven, the home of the soul, have no confidence, no relationship, with the church of Christ which, in the words of Jesus, is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:18,19). The Jesus people chanted, "Jesus, yes; the church, no!" Their chant is nothing more or less than the cry denominationalists have been sounding out for centuries.

The Lord's church is the gateway to heaven. Jesus spoke of those who would seek unlawful entries into glory (John 10:1). The church is the body of Christ; the body of Christ is the church (Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18). All the saved are added to the church (Acts 2:47). It is needless to say, no unsaved person is added to the church. The unsaved are out of His body, the church, the saved are in His body the church. Those who

are in the church are those who have believed in Jesus (John 8:24), have repented of their sins (Luke 13:5), ever confessing Him to be the Christ, the son of God (Rom. 10:9,10; Acts 8:37), and then are baptized into the one body. Paul wrote, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Cor. 12:13). He again wrote, "There is one body" (Eph. 4:4). It has been shown that the body is the church, and it naturally follows--if there is one body and the one body is the church, there is but one church, His church, the church He bought with His redeeming blood at Calvary. These statements are proved by the Scriptures here presented and made arguably secure in the following syllogism.

Major Premise: The church is His body Eph. 1:22,23

Minor Premise: There is but one body Eph. 4:4
Therefore: There is but one church.

All the saved are added to the church, the one body. Christ is the Savior of the body, that is, He is the Savior of the church (Eph. 5:23). At the end of time He will "deliver up the kingdom to God" (I Cor. 15:24). The "kingdom of God" is the church Jesus said He would build and which He spoke of as the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:18,19).

Entrance into the body of Christ (or the church of Christ, or the kingdom of Christ) is in the act of baptism. One is baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12), baptized into the one body (I Cor. 12:13) which is the church. What one does to obtain salvation is that which one does to gain entrance into the one body, His church. In baptism one receives the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), one's sins are washed away (Acts 22:16), is put into the place one receives all the spiritual blessings, that place is "in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). From the grave of baptism (where those who have died to sin are buried with their Lord) one is raised to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). If any man be in Christ (having been baptized into Christ)
(Continued on page 87)

DEFENDER

Max R. Miller, Editor
Winston Temple, Assistant Editor

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An Expression of Concern

We, the undersigned preachers of the gospel, set forth the following heartfelt expression of genuine concern. It is offered in sincere Christian love for our brethren everywhere to consider. It is our fervent desire that this expression may help to avert division and prevent further harm to the spiritual body of Christ. Our prayer is that this statement to which we affix our names will awaken many brethren to some ever-increasing dangers confronting us.

I. We are deeply disturbed over the liberalism that is so evident in the brotherhood today. By "liberalism" we mean especially the following items, though not excluding other specifics that could be mentioned:

- A. There is a drifting from the Bible-centered, definitive, distinctive doctrine that once characterized our preaching. Presently, uncertain sounds and weak messages emanate from many pulpits among us. Brethren are becoming accustomed to diluted and polluted preaching. We are rapidly approaching the point where many of our people, including preachers and elders, no longer know the difference between true Christianity and the corrupted forms of it so prevalent about us.
- B. There is a concerted effort on the part of some of our brethren to restructure the organization, worship and work of the church along sectarian lines, thus tending to denominationalize the New Testament body of Christ.
- C. A spirit of doctrinal compromise and fellowshiping of those in blatant religious error has permeated our ranks.
- D. The world has made alarming inroads into the church. Instead of the church influencing the world for righteousness, as it should, the world has adversely affected many brethren in matters of morality and conduct of life.
- E. The typical emphasis of the denominational world on recreation, entertainment, and solving the social ills of society has been incorporated into the thinking and programs of many congregations, supplanting the God-given work of meeting the desperate spiritual needs of those both within and without the body of Christ.

II. We are also greatly concerned over the controversy surrounding Abilene Christian University, and we feel that it needs to be properly resolved.

- A. About a year and a half ago, two ACU biology professors were charged with teaching as fact the theory of evolution, without any refutation whatsoever. Strong evidence was presented to substantiate the charges. In January of 1986, an ACU graduate with a Ph.D. in the field of biology published a book entitled, *Is Genesis Myth?*, in which much of the evidence was made available to the brotherhood. Since then, even more facts and damaging testimony have emerged.
- B. In February of 1986, ACU responded with an "Investigative Report" and "Institutional Statement," in which the charges were wholly denied. Though many have accepted these statements without question, it is our conviction that they have not responsibly addressed the accusations, much less answered them. And many specifics were left untouched.
- C. ACU's statement was simply the result of blanket acceptance of the findings of an in-house "Special Committee," which consisted of three members of the Board of Trustees appointed to investigate the matter. We believe that such an arrangement was the same, in principle, as if President Nixon had appointed three close associates to investigate the Watergate scandal. A lack of objectivity and thoroughness must surely account for the definite conflict between the tangible evidence available and the official denial issued by the school. In our judgment, this leaves a cloud of shaken confidence hanging over Abilene Christian University.
- D. Some apparently feel that our educational institutions should never be called in question. We believe that this attitude is seriously flawed. If New Testament writers could highlight the mistakes of certain first-century congregations, surely no school is immune to scrutiny. It is because we want to see ACU safeguarded for the benefit of the Lord's people that we raise these concerns.
- E. We therefore urgently request the ACU Administration and/or Board of Trustees to allow an impartial, independent investigation of the evolution controversy by a committee of men who are outside the framework of the ACU family, who are knowledgeable in Bible-science matters, and who have the confidence of sound brethren. Such an investigation should be as extensive as possible in order for a proper determination to be made and a just disposition of the matter to be implemented.
- F. Over the past several years, ACU has also become increasingly known for using numerous liberal-leaning speakers on its annual lectureship and other programs. Such has caused great concern to many about the direction the school is headed. Surely faithful and concerned brethren have the right to call for inquiry as to why such speakers are given a warm reception on ACU platforms to promote ideas which are harmful to the Cause we love.

This statement is simply an urgent plea from preachers of the gospel who love the Lord, His church, and His cause with all our hearts. We oppose both radicalism and liberalism, and we feel sure that the vast majority in the Lord's church today share these convictions. Therefore, we wish to emphasize the following:

We are convinced that it is time for more and more brethren to speak forth plainly! We must not sit idly by and watch the cause of truth erode. We urge brethren everywhere to join us in letting their voices be heard.

Express your convictions to the elders and preacher of your local congregation. Write letters to ACU Board members and Administrators, and let them know how you feel. (We can furnish a list of their names and addresses.) Brethren, please speak up! "Truth is not only violated by falsehood; it may be equally outraged by silence."

The names affixed to this statement by no means exhaust the roll of faithful and concerned preachers. We are merely representative of many who are anxious for the welfare of the Lord's church.

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REACTION: WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL

Max R. Miller

In **Defender**, of September 1986, Ernest Underwood wrote an article entitled "The Real Truth About World Bible School (WBS)." The article has brought comments favorable and defensive of WBS; some other comments were the opposite. Apparently WBS is as the saying, "there is some good in the worst of us, and some bad in the best of us." There are good things about WBS, there are some things not good. This we have known for a long time.

Some respondents have strongly defended the study material (lessons and booklets) used in WBS evangelism. Underwood did not address his attention to the lesson material but to brother Reuel Lemmons and his own assessment of the work WBS is doing. A quote from brother Underwood is in order at this point:

My article dealt with brother Lemmons' personal and editorial appraisal of World Bible School [**Action**, Aug. 1986]. I quoted him in the article and drew the conclusions of the article from his own evaluation of WBS. Since brother Lovell stated before his death that he wanted brother Lemmons to take over WBS, a thing which he apparently has done, then one would think that no one could better evaluate the thrust and purpose of the system than he. My quotes of his statements simply showed that evaluation which he gave. If he is correct in that appraisal then my conclusions are correct. If he is incorrect then those who use the material in question should call upon him to apologize for describing it in such a fashion.

Some other notes about WBS should be

considered. It was intended from the beginning that WBS would be the work of individuals teaching by mail students in places afar. Many have used it according to that design. However, the impact of WBS in some places has been adverse. Some students have been converted to WBS moreso than to Christ and His church. WBS should not appear as an organization separate and apart from the church. One who has had extensive experience with WBS on the mission field of Ghana, West Africa has stated:

Nothing should be endorsed as a good work when at home and abroad it has the appearance of an organization separate and apart from the church. From the literature point of view WBS is a commercial enterprise; from the organizational point of view, it is unscriptural; from the teaching followup point of view, it is a violation of James 3:1; from the native preacher's point of view it is "no good"; from a missionary's point of view it is a headache; from a student's point of view, it is a separate organization from the church of Christ.

These problems associated with WBS would not necessarily prevail in all instances. However, it must be realized there are problems with the project and a careful execution of the program is essential to the well being of all who are involved, those at home as well as those abroad.

In this issue of **Defender** (p.85) is an article by brother Frank Chesser, a sound and able gospel preacher, entitled "Another view of World Bible School (WBS)," in which he advances the good qualities of the program. We suggest you read his article.

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Another View Of World Bible School (WBS)

Frank Chesser

In the September issue of **Defender**, an article appeared by brother Ernest Underwood discussing the demerits of World Bible School. A personal call to brother Underwood preceded this article, and a very cordial conversation ensued. Brother Underwood has been long held in high esteem by this writer for his strong stand for the faith.

Brother Underwood's criticism of World Bible School was based on statements by brother Reuel Lemmons in the August 1986 issue of **Action**. Having never seen the correspondence course utilized by World Bible School, one can well understand brother Underwood's reaction in view of brother Lemmons' statements. Under the same circumstances, this writer would have reached the same conclusion.

The statements by brother Lemmons were unfortunate, indefensible and in no way characteristic of the materials used in World Bible School. He harmed the very cause he is endeavoring to promote. With no personal knowledge of World Bible School and having read the statements by brother Lemmons, this writer would have concluded as did brother Underwood that "faithful brethren will beware of and avoid WBS."

However, the truth is, World Bible School is one of the greatest, most effective tools for evangelism presently being wielded by members of the church. It can convert every Christian who thus desires into a foreign missionary. It can transport a teenager, widow or college president to a mud hut in Africa, or any one of a thousand other places, with the saving message of the gospel of Christ. It can enable every Christian to go to homes and places that are inaccessible to missionaries on the field. It is an invaluable tool for the saving of souls.

Moreover, notwithstanding brother Lemmon's statement implying minimal emphasis on the church in WBS materials, the very first course zeroes in on the church, its oneness and necessity. This initial course consists of three pages. The first page contains an

introductory statement, a brief panoramic view of the Bible. The second page is replete with Bible verses, void of human comment. (Many WBS students do not have a Bible). The third page consists of questions based on these verses. Nineteen of the verses and nine of the questions focus directly on the establishment, oneness, essentiality and relationship of the church to Christ.

Furthermore, the success of World Bible School is not dependent on the utilization of WBS materials. Each congregation or individual can employ whatever correspondence material or method they desire. In addition, World Bible School is not tied to the coat tails of brother Lemmons. This point needs to be understood. Sound brethren have shied away from the employment of this marvelous evangelistic tool due to its association with brother Lemmons. When a teacher in WBS receives the names of interested persons in some foreign land, those people become his personal students. He does the corresponding. He does the teaching. He answers their questions. He utilizes whatever method of study he deems most effective. It is as though he is sitting in their home with an open Bible. The student does not know "whether there be any Reuel Lemmons."

Brethren, please make use of this extraordinary implement for worldwide proclamation of the gospel. Brother Eric Dickey is a sound, faithful gospel preacher. He is presently employed fulltime in promoting World Bible School and leading teams of mission workers to foreign lands. He has no personal connection with brother Lemmons. Should you desire information about WBS or names of students in foreign lands who are waiting and willing to be taught, please contact brother Dickey at the following address: 3118 45th Street; Lubbock, Texas, 79413. The greatest tragedy of the encroachment of liberalism in the church today is its killing effect on the evangelistic thrust of the kingdom of God. May God help us to get on with the awesome task before us.

A SERMON ABOUT NOTHING

L. E. Wishum

I have always tried to write about something, which some readers seem to consider as nothing. This time I am writing about nothing with hoping they will think it is something.

"He [God] stretched out the north over empty space, and hangeth the earth upon NOTHING" (Job 26:7). Now, considering the size and the weight of the earth, to hang it upon nothing is far beyond the power of mankind, therefore, God! All creation manifests God and through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3). Now to say that the universe was not made from that which is seen is far different from saying that NOTHING created the world.

"For with God NOTHING shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). The context speaks of the virgin birth of Jesus, a one time sign that proves Christ to be the Son of God and therefore the Saviour (Matt. 1:20-23). Realizing that the Almighty created the universe and that He brought forth His Son of a virgin, should serve to assure us that He will keep His word in blessing and judging mankind. As the American Standard Version says in Luke 1:37, "No word of God shall be void of power."

"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to NOTHING the understanding of the prudent" (I Cor. 1:19). God did this through Christ and His plan of salvation in order that mankind might be humbled to obey Him (I Cor. 1:24-31). Those of so-called knowledge would deny God as Creator and Saviour and are "puffed-up" and "knoweth NOTHING yet as he ought to know" (I Cor. 8:1,2). When Christ speaks, we human beings should heed the advise, obeying, "NOTHING doubting" (Acts 11:12; 10:20). "For we can do NOTHING against truth" (II Cor. 13:8).

Paul said, "I kept back NOTHING that was profitable unto you..." (Acts 20:20). In our teaching, we must do likewise. With hope, "in NOTHING" be ashamed to suffer for truth and "in NOTHING terrified by your adversaries..." (Phil. 1:20,28). Pray in faith "NOTHING wavering" (Jas. 1:6). May the devil have "NOTHING" in us (John 14:30).

"We brought NOTHING into this world, and

it is certain we can carry NOTHING out" (I Tim. 6:7). Therefore, learn that "godliness with contentment is great gain," and heed the dangers of the love of riches (I Tim. 6:6-10). We can be "as poor, yet making many rich; as having NOTHING, and yet possessing all things" (II Cor. 6:10). Yet, work that ye "may have lack of NOTHING" (I Thess. 4:11,12).

New Testament love must perform religious acts, else it profiteth NOTHING (I Cor. 13:3). "Let NOTHING be done through strife or vain glory" (Phil. 2:3). If one consents not to Christ's words "he is proud, knowing NOTHING" (I Tim. 6:4). Christians must obey commands without prejudice, "doing NOTHING by partiality" (I Tim. 5:21).

Today "if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you NOTHING" (Gal. 5:2). Circumcision, as a religious ordinance, signifies submission to the Old, but today God saves through the New Testament. So, "circumcision is NOTHING and uncircumcision is NOTHING, but keeping the commandments of God is what counts" (I Cor. 7:19 NKJV). The old law mad NOTHING perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did" (Heb. 7:19). Also, idol religion "is NOTHING in the world" (I Cor. 8:4). Christ said, "without me ye are NOTHING" (John 15:5). "He left NOTHING that is not put under Him" (Heb. 2:8). Jesus said, "that of all which he hath given me I should lose NOTHING, but raise it up" (John 6:39), which should give us the hope we need to serve faithfully to the end.

This is what I have for NOTHING! We pray
if will be SOMETHING!

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THE MACEDONIAN CALLS

Max R. Miller

One stood on the far shore and called out, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us" (Acts 16:9). The people of Macedonia had great need of the saving gospel, Paul and Silas carried it to them, consequently, many were saved.

The small church at Elliot Lake, Ontario Canada cries out for a gospel preacher to come and preach the gospel to them. Elliot Lake is a relative new city. Uranium was discovered several years ago there in the wilderness of Ontario. Immediately a city began and has grown to some twenty thousand souls. It is a modern city well laid out, and offers many opportunities for the gospel. They need a preacher.

Herb Wier, a native of the area and a graduate of Memphis School of Preaching, began the work. Progress has been slow. Brother Weir lives seventy miles from Elliot Lake. His health has demanded he slow down.

FIFTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP AT GARFIELD HEIGHTS CHURCH

The Fifth Annual Lectureship of the Garfield Heights Church of Christ at Indianapolis November 2-6 was a wonderful experience of faith for those who were able to attend. It was a great contribution to the brotherhood of Christ.

The lecture book, **A Return Unto Jehovah** (studies from the prophets) is a worthy addition to their past published editions and to those other lectureship books being published by faithful church lectures. These books are made available for the purpose of teaching God's will in printed form. It is not for financial profit. Therefore, we recommend you purchase as many of these books as you may afford. A list of the books and price follows:

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Burt Johnson (full time employee in the Uranium mines) and Herb Weir are carrying on the work--but they need a full time man in the city. The church owns a nice church building and housing accommodations for a preacher and his family.

The U. S. A. dollar has a Canadian value of about \$1.40. Ten thousand U.S.A. dollars will equal \$1,400 Canadian. A church in the U.S.A. could provide support for a preacher for about \$15,000 annually, such would be adequate for preacher support at Elliot Lake.

The Elliot Lake church is small. It needs a preacher; the city is of many souls. Radio is available. Someone please hear the call and send a man to preach in Elliot Lake. Contact may be made with Herb Weir or Burt Johnson at P. O. Box 496, Elliot Lake, Ontario Canada PSA 259 1-705-848-8690.

GATEWAY (Continued from page 82)

"he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). This is the effect of the new birth. Jesus said a man must be born again (anew) in order to see the kingdom of God; he must be born of water and Spirit (John 3:3,5). As newborn he no longer is charged with the sin and guilt of the former self for the old man is crucified with Christ (put to death), "that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6). As a newborn creature in Christ he now addresses God as "Our Father which art in heaven" (Matt. 6:6). The new creature, the born again creature, is now a Christian with the hope of heaven his home.

All who believe in Jesus want to go to heaven and share glory with Him for an eternity. Many have not known the importance of the church as it relates to ones heavenly destiny. The Scripture states, "...the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17). The house of God is the church of the living God, the New Testament writers affirms, and is the gate of heaven (I Tim. 3:15). May we strive to enter in through that straight and narrow way. There is no other.

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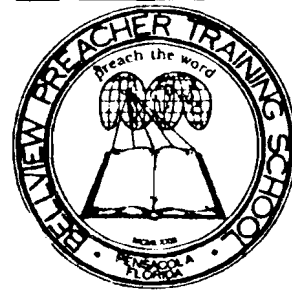
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