

FIRST CENTURY PREACHING TODAY

Sermons compiled & edited by
JIMMY TUTEN
1980

Complete index to this edition is on page 186.

First Century Preaching Today may be ordered from:

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Price: \$7.95

INTRODUCTION

This collection of sermon outlines was first compiled in the sixties and published in a rather crude fashion with available facilities at the time. There were two editions of this publication run at that time. This collection of sermons proved to be very popular and both editions were soon sold out. Over the last ten years there has been a steady demand for its printing. I did not want to reprint it in its original form, but desired to make necessary corrections, give it professional printed status and pass it on to posterity.

There is no publication among our brethren comparable to this collection of sermon. The wide range of subjects and contributors make it a unique work. Months of hard labor went into its original form and hours upon hours of work have gone into it since. With the exception of trying to make each outline conform to standard procedure, little, if any editorializing has been done. The outlines contained herein are presented to you just as they were presented to me. I have made no attempt to eliminate any personal bias on any subject that I may have felt the contributor expressed in his outlines. Indeed, I find the outlines conforming to the truth of God's Word and therefore free of prejudice. I sincerely trust that these outlines will prove worthwhile to you. I have tried to present as many outlines as possible on a number of subjects, though limited by size and space.

This book has not been prepared to eliminate investigation. It is not designed to provide you with "canned sermons." It is produced so that you might profit from the pursuits of others and incorporate these studies into your own. Feel free to use these outlines in whatever fashion you like personally

I hope the book in this form is received well by you and that you will recommend it to others. May God richly bless you in your effort to further the cause of our Lord. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them" (Heb. 4:2).

Your Fellow-servant,

Jimmy Tuten, Jr.

1980

If in his sermon the preacher aims at nothing,
he usually hits it.

A popular preacher is one who knows when to
draw the line between preaching and meddling.

Second wind is what some preachers get when
they say, "And in conclusion."

THE ASSEMBLY

JAMES P. NEEDHAM

INTRODUCTION:

1. Many have never understood the importance of the local church assembly.
2. One's attention, or lack of it, to this phase of the life of a christian is a good thermometer by which to gauge his spiritual temperature.
3. Let us survey the whole field of "the assembly."

I. THE FACT OF THE ASSEMBLY IN THE EARLY CHURCH:

- A. Acts 2:46; 4:31; 6:2; 11:26; 20:7; I Cor. 5:4; 11:17-18, 20, 33-34-
- B. "I said unto Peter *before them all*" (hence assembled)—Gal. 2:14.
- C. "In the midst of the church (assembly) will I sing praise" (Heb. 2:12).
- D. Heb. 10:25; Jas. 2:2.

Note: These passages establish the *fact* of the assembly in the early church, but also its *importance*.

II. WHY SHOULD THE CHURCH ASSEMBLE?

- A. In one sense, the place is unimportant (Jno. 4:20-24).
- B. In another sense, the place is important:
 1. An assembly necessitates a place for such.
 2. In order for christians to discharge their duty to attend the assembly, the place must be well known.
- C. Churches assembled at various places in the New Testament:
 1. Private homes (Phile. 2; Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15).
 2. The Jewish Temple (Ax. 2:46).
 3. Upper room (Ax. 20:7-9).
 4. School building (Ax. 19:9-10).

III. WHEN SHOULD THE CHURCH ASSEMBLE?

- A. First Day of the week (Ax. 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2).
- B. Daily (Ax. 2:46; 19:9-10).
- C. Special occasions (Ax. 6; 14:17).

IV. WHY SHOULD THE CHURCH ASSEMBLE?

- A. For worship (Ax. 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 2:12).
- B. For discipline of the unruly (Matt. 18:15-17; I Cor. 5:4).
- C. To transact church business (Ax. 6:1-4).
- D. For teaching (Ax. 11:26).
- E. To report the results of evangelism (Ax. 14:17).
- F. To discuss matters of difference between and among brethren (Ax. 15; Gal. 2:11-14).
- G. To read the scriptures (I Thess. 5:27; Col. 4:16).
- H. Exhort and provoke unto love and good works (Heb. 10:24-25).

V. THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY TO BE PRESENT:

- A. It is a command (Heb. 10:25; *R^{ev.} a^{2:}14*).
- B. If one fails through neglect, he does not:
 1. Perform the duties to be discharged in the assembly.
 2. Receive the benefits afforded by the assembly.
- C. This being true, how many assemblies must one neglect before he sins? 1,2,3,5,10,100, or quit altogether?
 1. The only consistent answer is that one sins when he negligently misses the first one.

- D. If one has the right to neglect one phase of the local church program, he has the right to neglect all phases of it.

CONCLUSION:

1. One must guard against the false conclusion that if he attends all the assemblies, he has discharged all the duties of a Christian.
2. The Bible does not teach church building religion; i.e., a religion that opens and closes with the doors of a church building, but observation will show that those who through neglect fail to attend all the assemblies also negligently fail to discharge most other duties.
3. Show me a person who neglects the assemblies, and I will show you a person who is doing little, if anything, else for the Lord.

NO ONE LIKE JESUS

ELLIS WEBB

(John 6:68)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Details are unnecessary to all Bible believing people, but:
 1. No other birth like Christ (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25).
 2. No other life like his.. "Came to minister" (Matt. 20:28).
 3. His death, "for sins not his own" (Heb. 4:15).
- B. Unlike such great men like: (a) Napoleon, (b) Alexander the great, (c) Caesar, (d) Christ wrote no books, not a politician, etc.

I. NO ONE EQUAL TO CHRIST IN KNOWLEDGE:

- A. He knew creation (Col. 1:16; Jno. 1:1-3; *Gen.* 1:1; Heb. 11:3; *Gen.* 1:26).
- B. He knew God (Jno. 10:15; Matt. 11:27).
- C. Jesus knew Past (Jno. 8:58; I Cor. 10 ... "that rock was Christ...").
- D. He knew "present" (Lk. 4:16; Isa. 61:1 ... "the Spirit of the Lord").
- E. He knew future: (a) Judas to betray him; (b) Peter to deny him.
- F. ONE thing Christ didn't know ... (Mk. 13:32).

II. CHRIST "UNLIKE OTHERS IN MOTIVE" (Unselfish):

- A. Came to do will of God (Matt. 26:39-46; Heb. 2:9; John 10:18).
- B. He came to "Minister" (Matt. 20:28).
- C. He came to "empty himself" (Phil. 2:5-11).

III. JESUS WAS MATCHLESS IN POWER (No one like Him):

- A. All power "in heaven and earth" (Matt 28:18; Jno. 3:34).
- B. Power over diseases (Matt. 4:23; Jno. g..blindness).
- C. Power over lameness (Jno. 5:5-9).
- D. Power over material things (Matt. 14:15-21 ... fed 5,000 men).
- E. Power to forgive sins (Mk. 2:5-9).
- F. Christ power will end (I Cor. 15:25-26).
 1. Not set up a kingdom (Jno. 18:36).
 2. Not reign on earth (I Thess. 4:16-18).

- G. He has power to save you now (Matt. 11:28-30).
- H. When he comes back. "Will be your judge" (Acts 17:31; Matt. 25:31-46).

CONCLUSION: Now is the time ... Why delay? Won't you obey today?

LET THEM DIE!!

JEFFERSON DAVID TANT

INTRODUCTION:

1. Read two or three news reports on humanity's indifference to others,
 - a. e.g.—"Shortly after 3 a.m. Catherine Genovese came home from work. As she walked towards her apartment in the Queens section of N. Y. City, a man came out of the darkness and attacked her with a knife. Her screams awakened the neighborhood; lights flashed on and a few windows opened in the apartment building across the street. The assailant left, the lights went out and the windows closed. The man returned to his victim. Once again the lights and windows responded and the attacker drove away. "Kitty" began crawling to her apartment. Twenty minutes later, the man returned and finished his mission of death. NOT ONE PERSON telephoned the police during the assault, even though 38 people witnessed the savage attack. The excuse was as one man put it, "I didn't want to get involved."
2. Our reaction to such:
 - a. Filled with horror, shock and revulsion at such inhumanity.
 - b. Our minds are filled with questions of "Why?" and "How?"
 - c. Words in our mouths to say, "That would never be *my* reaction. I could never act in such a vile manner towards one of my fellow humans."
3. But let us consider an even more terrifying situation.
 - a. Last year one of your neighbors, relatives or acquaintances **DIED AND WENT TO HELL!**
 - b. What had you done to prevent this unspeakable tragedy?
4. Consider the situation in this congregation.
 - a. If average, over half were not born into families of Christians.
 - b. Where would *you* be today & in eternity if someone had not taken an interest in your soul?
 - c. Yet, other than possibly your husband or wife or children, **HOW MANY HAVE YOU PERSONALLY WON TO CHRIST?**

I. WHY DO WE HAVE SUCH A CONDITION?

- A. Lack of knowledge is the excuse offered by many.
 1. We learn what we want to learn.
 - a. Cook, sew, drive car, hold job, pass school exams.
 2. We can learn the word of God and how to teach it as well (1 Tim. 4:13-14; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16-17; Heb. 5:12; Eph. 3:3-4: 5-1-7).

- B. Lack of prospects—"I don't know anybody."
1. Some of my prospects have been service station owner, kindergarten owners, children's school teachers, neighbors, postman (converted him, which has so far led to 10 others).
 - a. Do you have a postman, grocery-man, trash collector, a neighbor?
 - b. If you have something to sell, can you find *someone* to talk to about your product?
 - (1) Ever meet a salesman who doesn't sell, a ball player who plays no games, or a Christian who doesn't save souls?
 - c. If you had some good news to share (fur coat, new car, etc.) could you find someone to listen and share with you?
 2. Jesus said the world is the field in which to sow the seed of the kingdom (Matt. 13:38).
 - a. "Any man" (Jno. 6:51; 7:17; 7:37; 10:9).
 3. You may think someone would be last person on earth to receive the word, *but you don't know, and cannot judge before giving him a chance!*
 - a. Who would view Saul of Tarsus as a good prospect?
 - b. Peter wrote of our responsibility to *every man* (1 Pet. 3:15).
- C. Fear of rejection—lack of self-confidence.
1. Known that fear of rejection one of strongest deterrents to approaching others.
 - a. The desire to be liked is common to us all.
 - b. Afraid that people will say "no" to our approaches, resulting in:
 - (1) Loss of friendship.
 - (2) Damage to our ego.
 2. But the Lord anticipated these matters long ago.
 - a. The rejection is not a personal matter (Luke 10:16).
 - (1) Consider the case of Samuel (1 Sam. 8:7).
 - b. The Lord knew that truth would not always be received (Gal. 4:16; Matt. 10:22).
 - c. He warned us of the possibility (Matt. 10:24-26, 34-37; 2 Tim. 3:12).
 3. These facts did not deter the heroes of the Faith.
 - a. Joshua (Josh. 24:15), Christ (Jno. 1:11), Stephen (Acts 7:51-58), Paul (Acts 14:19-20).
 4. We cannot be cowards with the truth.
 - a. Must fear rejection by the Lord more than by fellow man.
 - b. Must seek approval by Lord more than by fellow man.
 5. We must learn to rely upon the Word, for therein is the power (Rom. 1:16).
 - a. If a fellow-man rejects the gospel feel sorry for him, not you.
- D. Indifference.
1. Do you not care that people you know are dying without hope in the world to come?
 2. The Son of God gave his life, his blood, to save men from the fires of Hell, and some so-called Christians won't even walk across the street to ring a door bell to try to save a soul.
 - a. Listen, the Lord has a word for you (Rev. 3:14-16).
 3. If you have an ounce of love for your fellowman in your heart, you must emulate Paul's attitude (Acts 20:18-24, 31; 1 Cor. 9:16).

II. CONCLUDING REMARKS.

- A. Whatever the reason for failing to teach others, these things are sure to follow:
 1. We will meet these souls in judgment.
 - a. "When in the better land before the bar we stand, How deeply grieved our souls may be; if any lost one there should cry in deep despair, 'You never mentioned Him to me. You never mentioned Him to me, You helped me not the light to see; You met me day by day and Knew I was astray, Yet never mentioned Him to me.'"
 2. Their blood will be required at our hands (Ezek. 3:18-20; Acts 20:20; 27).
 3. We will be cut off (Jno. 15: i-2a, 5-6).
- B. What are you doing about these vital matters?

THE TALKING BOOK

LLOYD L. NASH

- I. IT IS A BOOK OF WISDOM** (Prov. 6:20).
- II. ALL MEN NEED THIS BOOK** (Jer. 10:23; I Peter 4:11).
- III. IT TELLS US THAT GOD AND HIS SON IS ALIVE** (Ps. 90:1; Rev. 1:18).
- IV. IT TELLS US ABOUT THE DOCTRINES AND COMMANDMENTS OF MEN** (Mat. 15:8-9; 13-14; Col. 2:21-22).
- V. IT TELLS US ABOUT HEAVEN AND HELL** (Mat. 25:31-46).
- VI. IT TELLS US ABOUT THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM OR CHURCH** (Isa. 2:1-4; Dan. 2:44; Mat. 16:18).
- VII. IT TELLS US WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO GET INTO IT** (Col. 1:18; Mk, 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:4; Gal. 3:27).

GOD GIVE ME PATIENCE - RIGHT NOW!

JAMES W. RURY

INTRODUCTION:

1. Patience is one of those traits of character that all desire and few possess. I was reminded of this on one occasion when a lady asked me to preach on patience - She then added, "please preach about it soon, I can't wait!"
2. For those who want to hear about patience quickly, I submit the following facts in outline form.

BODY:

I. THE NEED OF PATIENCE:

- A. "Ye have need of patience. . ." (Heb. 10:36).
- B. Peter says to "become partakers of the divine nature," and to do so we must add patience (2 Pet. 1:4-6).

II. THE MEANING OF PATIENCE:

- A. Greek, HUPOMONE, the Greek word that is translated "patience." HUPO meaning "under" plus MENO which means "to abide." So literally the term means "to bear up under," or "endure."
- B. Stress is upon the fact that Love "beareth all things" (1 Cor. 13:7). This characteristic of love is patience.
- C. Patience, however, is not just passive submission and indifference to whatever happens to one. It is steadfast endurance and triumphant trust in the value of remaining constant.
- D. Jesus said, "he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22).
- E. Patience is not merely a segment of one's character. It is a spirit that prevades every fiber of one's disposition.
- F. "Let us then, be up and doing, with a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing, learn to labor and to wait" (Longfellow).

III. GOD HAS PATIENCE:

- A. "Endured the cross" (Heb. 12:2).
- B. Paul prayed that Christians might be directed into the patience of Christ (2 Thess. 3:5).
- C. Think of the rejection, the disappointment and the pain that Christ endured, not miraculously, but by strength of character.

V. THE APOSTLES HAD PATIENCE:

- A. Paul said he was a minister of Christ "in much patience" (2 Cor. 6:4).
- B. Paul said he endured all things for the elect's sake" (2 Tim. 2:10). Sometimes one must endure even the "elect" themselves (Gal. 6:1).
- C. Paul did not cease to pray that ye may be strengthened with all power unto all patience (Col. 1:9-11).

VI. THE DIFFICULTY OF PATIENCE:

- A. Patience is difficult to gain and hard to maintain. But it can be learned!
- B. Notice the importance of Peter's statement in 1 Peter 2:20.
- C. The Bible speaks of the patience of Job (Jas. 5:11), but someone has suggested that "even Job with his boils must have scratched a little!" Patience is not easy for anyone.

VII. HOW TO DEVELOP PATIENCE:

- A. Patience is consciously developed as any other quality of character.
- B. It comes from enduring trials (Jas. 1:2-4). "Tribulation worketh steadfastness" (Rom. 5:3).
- C. Paul speaks of the "patience and comfort of the Scriptures" (Rom. 15:4).
- D. Consider carefully Revelation 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:3.

VIII. THE REWARD OF PATIENCE:

- A. As expressed in James 1:4.
- B. "Winning souls" is a reward of patience (Lk. 21:19).
- C. Notice the beauty of Psalms 40:1-2. Chinese Proverb: "patience for the moment, comfort for ten years."

THE NEW MORALITY

JIMMY TUTEN, JR.

(I Cor. 6:9-11)

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Church—a company of baptized believers (I Cor. 12:13, 18).
2. It is called the "ekklesia," or "called out" (Col. 1:13-14; 2 Thess. 2:13-16).
3. Individually and collectively, members of the body are to maintain good works (Tit. 2:11-14; I Pet. 4:4).

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S GREATEST DANGER—BEING ABSORBED BY THE WORLD: (Rom. 12:1-2).

- A. Explain in detail the text.
- B. Changes in the modern world—Some are good and some are bad.
 1. Greatest danger is the decline in moral standards—Its gradualness poses the greatest threat.
- C. The *New Morality* poses the greatest threat to our morals. It thwarts God's purpose in our lives which must find realization through proper balance. This includes both love and the keeping of God's commands.
 1. *Definition*: "The New Moralist does not accept at all the notion that there are moral standards which are revealed by God. He does not believe that God laid down laws which are for all men, at all times, under all conditions. He is, therefore, a relativist" (Ernest Harrison, Anglican Priest, *A Church Without God*: J. B. Lippincott, 1967, P. 118).
 2. This means that right or wrong always depends upon the situation, that there are no moral laws binding and not even God has the right to tell us what to do or not to do (for documentation see, *Look*, March 8, 1966, P. 22. *Is the Schoolhouse The Proper Place To Teach Sex?*, Gordon Drake, P. 6. One should also read *Situation Ethics*, by Joseph Fletcher, 1966. *Honest To God* by A. T. Robinson. *Adultery for Adults, A Unique Guide for Self-Improvement*, by Marilyn Mercer and Janice Peterson).
- D. This position overlooks the fact that some things are right and wrong inherently so, and that God's commands are binding in every generation (Gal. 5:19-24; Rev. 21:8, 27).
 1. Secondly, it argues that ethical decisions can be made so as to set aside moral law in exceptional cases (Example, German mother commits adultery with guard in a prison camp [Russian] knowing that if she becomes pregnant she will be released). Questions:
 - a. Does this not result in determining moral decisions in advance just as commitment to moral regulations would?
 - b. Does this not constitute "willful sin" (Heb. 10:26)?
 2. Thirdly, this view is not realistic. When humans are left to decide on moments of passion what is to be done only on the basis of "concern" rationalization of selfish conduct comes too naturally.

II. THE YOUTH OF OUR NATION ARE BEING VICTIMIZED AND HERDED LIKE SHEEP INTO A LIFE OF AIMLESS INDECENCY.

- A. Everything possible is being done to destroy their faith in God, in morality and the so-called "old order."
 1. Young people, think! Your departure from conventional morals is not spontaneous, nor a part of being up to date with the space generation. Nor is the disapproval of parents, the preacher, etc. a demonstration of our not understanding you, or being out of date.

- B. What are the movements designed to corrupt youth?
 1. They are religious—The National Council of Churches is pro-communist and anti-Bible, with admitted atheists on its board.
 2. The communist rules for revolution are being put into effect in America. The Dusseldorf Papers (1919) demonstrated clearly what is happening in America. The *very first* item is "corrupt the young, get them away from religion. Get them interested in sex. Make them superficial, destroy their ruggedness."
 - a. Can we not see a pattern here?
 3. Gross commercialization of prime sources of stimulation (Movies, etc.), stressing of sexual impulse, experimentation and exploitation in Society.
 4. SIECUS type "sex education" in the class room (Dr. Kirdendall says, "the purpose of sex education is not primarily to control and suppress sex expression, as in the past, but to indicate the immense possibilities for human fulfillment of sexuality" Discussion Guide #1, Humanist, January-February, 1967. He said this while he was connected with SIECUS).

III. RESULT UPON SOCIETY. IT HAS CHANGED!

- A. Parents are viewed as holding to Victorian absolutes, as being prudish, neurotic and taboo.
- B. There is a generation as to morals—The Charlotte Observer, Sept. 14, 1969, shows that regarding pre-marital sex relations those thirty years old and up thought it was immoral, using religious and moral codes as a basis. Those twenty years and younger thought it was fine and cited the change in society and moral codes as the basis for their conviction (only 29% in this age group disapproved).
- C. Rejection of the Bible with its Divine imperatives. Besides stripping the Bible of its supernatural origin, being prejudiced against verbal inspiration, we are being told that we should not even concern ourselves with God.
 1. If Bible morals are not absolute, but relative (as some claim), what then is the purpose of its teaching regarding morals? Does this not make man a God unto himself and "relativeism" mental idolatry?

IV. WHAT PEOPLE ARE TO DO IN MORALS (AND ALL OTHER THINGS) IS DETERMINED BY THE BIBLE, THE WORD OF GOD (Col. 3:17-24; Jer. 10:23; 2 Jno. 9).

- A. Moral obligations stem from man's dual nature and citizenship (Phil. 3:20-21). It is a responsibility to God (I Tim. 1:1-3; I Pet. 1:13-19).
 1. Morality is not optional, but demanded in view of the judgment (Ax. 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10).
- B. What does the Bible say about morals? (I Cor. 6:18, Gal. 5:19; Col. 3:5-6; 2 Tim. 2:22; Heb. 13:4).
- C. There is no greater textbook: It produces responsibility, self-respect and concern for others.

CONCLUSION:

1. The new morality breaks down every rule upon which society is founded.
2. It is time that all homes, the churches of our Lord, and our nation be God-orientated.
3. Heaven help us to come back to God (Prov. 2:1-5).

PREACHING GOD'S WORD

JOHN IVERSON

INTRODUCTION:

1. Even those who have vague idea of what the Bible teaches, know preaching is ordained of God (Titus 1:1-3).
2. Some of the greatest men who have ever lived were proclaimers of God's Word:
 - a. Noah (2 Pet. 2:5).
 - b. Solomon (Eccl. 1:1).
 - c. Paul (I Tim. 2:7).
 - d. Jesus (Lk. 4:18-19).

I. SOME OF THE PURPOSES OF PREACHING:

- A. Save the lost (Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 1:10-17).
- B. Edify the saved (Matt. 28:18-20; Ax. 20:32).

II. KINDS OF PREACHING NEEDED:

- A. *Pointed and direct*, or eye-opening (Ax. 2:36-38). Cannot expect to convict sinners by a "tread-easy," "go-lightly" type of preaching.
- B. *Adapted preaching*. Some examples:
 1. John The Baptist (Matt. 14:1-12).
 2. Stephen (Ax. 7:54-60).
 3. Paul (Ax. 24:25).

Note: Men who know that certain things should be preached, but refuse to do so, are "men-pleasers" and "time-servers."

- C. *Distinctive preaching*. Preaching that is not distinctive is not gospel preaching. This requires both *negative* and positive preaching.
 1. Matt. 6:1-18; 2 Tim. 4:1-4.
- D. *Applied Preaching*. Preach that which can be applied, not some glittering generalities. Present the principles of the New Testament in such a way as to make them applicable to the needs of the audience.
 1. 2 Tim. 2:17-18—Paul names and identifies the false teachers.
 2. Those who wish to tickle itching ears instead of pleasing God, will not seek to apply their preaching (Gal. 1:10).

III. KINDS OF PREACHERS NEEDED.

We often do not have the right kind of preaching because we do not have the right kind of preachers.

- A. *Like David*—must love truth and hate evil (Psa. 119:97, 104).
- B. Right kind of preachers today will:
 1. Preach *full* gospel (Rom. 15:19; Ax. 20:20-27).
 2. Respect the *silence* of the Scriptures (Deut. 29:29; Matt. 28:20).
 3. Preach *like the apostles* (Ax. 4:20; 2 Cor. 4:13, i.e., with conviction).
- C. Some one aptly stated: "A man who will not preach his convictions, either is not a man or has no convictions to preach."

IV. RESULTS OF PREACHING.

- A. Those with "good and honest hearts" will hear and obey; others will not see (2 Cor. 2:16).

CONCLUSION: May God help us to faithfully preach his word.

THE GODS MEN SERVE

MIKE CRUSHON

INTRODUCTION:

1. *The text:* (II Kings 17:24-33).
 - a. The Assyrians had removed the conquered Israelites from the land and repopulated it with other nations.
 - b. Through the efforts of a priest of Bethel the new inhabitants were taught concerning God.
 - c. They then recognized Jehovah but at the same time continued to serve their traditional idols.
2. *The key passage:* *They feared the Lord, and served their own gods.*
 - a. This is a tendency found in all men therefore children of God need to be warned about its danger.
3. The attitude of recognizing Jehovah while at the same time serving gods of their own making and choosing led to the downfall of both nations of the Israelites.
 - a. Kingdom of Israel:
 - (1.) Worshipped the golden calves as well as pagan idols.
 - (2.) They refused to hearken to the warnings of the prophets.
 - (3.) They were carried away by the Assyrians as punishment.
 - (4.) Rejected the golden calves but fell into idol worship.
 - (5.) Several reforms were followed by return to idolatry.
 - (6.) The warnings of the prophets were ultimately rejected.
 - (7.) They were carried into Babylonian captivity as a result.
4. *The present danger:*
 - a. Christians today could be guilty of the same sin by making a God out of certain common factors in today's world.
 - b. Such an action fools man into thinking that he is acceptable with God but in reality such action alienates us from God.

I. The false Gods we are tempted to serve.

- A. The God of Earthly Wisdom:
 1. Christians often put too much emphasis upon earthly wisdom. Placing its attainment at a level of greater importance than Bible study or service to God.
 2. This is unwise for we find that the philosophy of the world is-
 - a. Vain and deceitful; a corruptive influence (Col. 2:8).
 - b. Perverting (Is. 47:10).
 - c. Human and temporary (Job 12:2).
 - d. Opposed to the revelation of God's word.
 - (1.) Gospel is foolishness to men (I Cor. 1:19-21), i.e., the philosopher and writer Ayn Rand said on the Johnny Carson show, "a rational person cannot believe in God." Thus she equated belief with irrationality.
 3. Such attitudes as develop because of an overestimation of the value of earthly wisdom are considered foolishness by God (I Cor. 3:19).
- B. The God of Materialism:
 1. The material things of this world can easily be turned into an idol. When this happens to a Christian it is manifested in his unwillingness to give either time or money to the Lord because of the value he places upon both in his efforts to amass material goods.

2. We should think twice about such tendencies since the Bible says that riches are:
 - a. Unreliable (Prov. 11:28) & the parable of the rich fool.
 - b. A premature and unfulfilling state (Lk. 6:24) & the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16).
 - c. A snare (I Tim. 6:9) & the rich young man (Lk. 18:22-25).
- C. The God of Pleasure:
 1. Some Christians turn the seeking of pleasure into the most important aspect of their lives. When thus elevated pleasure becomes an idol.
 2. The Bible says that the desire to satisfy the pleasureful drives-
 - a. Chokes a Christian (Lk. 8:14).
 - b. Enslaves the men who seek it (Tit. 3:3).
 - (1.) This is seen in the enslaving effects of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and many other things as well.
 - (2.) Any time a pleasure of this world becomes more important to us than service to God we are making it our idol.
 - c. Its pursuit is vanity (Eccl. 2:1-11).
- D. The God of Self:
 1. Often we see expressed in the attitudes of individual this exultation of self. The conceited opinion that our own ideas, opinions, and preferences ought to be the standard of the world.
 2. Such over confidence and self indulgence is unwarranted when we see that according to the Bible such pride is:
 - a. A state of hopelessness (Prov. 26:12).
 - b. Precedes destruction (Prov. 16:18) i.e. Ben-hadad's boast of coming victory, Ahab's reply "Let not him that putteth his armor on boast himself as him that taketh it off." Ben-hadad was defeated, his pride undermined him.
 - c. A source of contention (Prov. 13:10).

CONCLUSION:

1. We have seen how men can serve their self made Gods while at the same time claiming their allegiance to Jehovah as Christians.
2. We also have observed that the Bible points *out the* weakness *of all* these self made Gods.
3. We know that service to idols results in judgment at the hand of God.
4. We all have a decision to make now concerning our service to God. Let us have the strength to make the choice that Joshua made (Josh. 24:15).

THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST

KEITH T. THOMPSON

(2 Cor. 4:6)

As we look at the face of Jesus Christ we are able to see the likeness of God. Cf. John 14:9. Paul did not say, "Look at me!" but rather, "Look at Jesus Christ! and there you will see the glory of God." Cf. 2 Cor. 4:5. Let us look at the face of Jesus Christ—

- I. *The severe face*: "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Pet. 3:22.) Cf. Ex. 34=6,7; Mark 3:5; Rev. 6:16; Rev. 20:11.
- II. *The sublime face*: "His face did shine at the sun" (Matt. 17:2.) Cf. 2 Pet. 1:16.
- III. *The steadfast face*: "... he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." (Luke 9:51) Cf. Matt. 16:21; 17:22, 23; Mark 10:32; John 11:7-10.
- IV. *The submissive face*: "He went a little further, and fell on his face." (Matt. 26:39) Cf. Matt. 26:36-46; John 4:34; 8:29.
- V. *The smitten face*: "And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face" (Luke 22:64).
- VI. *The face to be sought*: "When thou saidest, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek" (Psalm 27:8.) Cf. Rev. 22:4; Matt. 5:8.

A SOUND CHURCH

LARRY RAY HAFLEY

INTRODUCTION:

1. The word "sound" is a proper, scriptural term.
 - a. "Sound doctrine" (I Tim. 1:10, II Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9, 2:1).
 - b. Same word (Hugiaino) used in I Tim. 6:3, but translated "wholesome" (KJV).
 - c. ASV has "sound" in I Tim. 6:3. Marginal reading says "healthful".
 - d. "Sounds words" (II Tim. 1:13).
 - e. "Sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13).
2. For our use, sound shall be defined as that which is "stable, safe, secure, whole, firm, healthy."
3. The word "sound" has been greedy misused and abused.
 - a. It is used to describe any individual or church that opposes societies and unscriptural cooperative arrangements.
 - (1.) This is a "glittering generality" of the highest order!
 - (2.) Some churches may oppose the innovation of human institutions but be "run" by a Pastor, or overrun with worldliness. This is not soundness.
 - b. It is sometimes used to distinguish a party movement.
 - (1.) Sound is anyone who agrees with me on the covering question, war question, etc.
 - (2.) Sound is anyone who agrees with "us" on who should be fellowshipped.

I. The subject considered negatively. A sound church is:

- A. Not necessarily one with a "name."
 1. Example of Sardis (Rev. 3:1).
 2. Example of Laodicea (Rev. 3:15-17).
 3. Example of Madison, Tennessee.
- B. Not necessarily sound because it is right in doctrine.
 1. Example of the Ephesian church.
 - a. Had benefit of Paul's teaching for nearly three years (Ax. 20:20, 26, 27, & 31).

- b. Later, Paul sent Timothy (I Tim. 1:3).
- c. Result? Sound in doctrine (Rev. 2:2).
- d. Yet, they were not a sound church (Rev. 2:3-5).
- 2. Example of "the church of God ... at Corinth."
 - a. Paul taught there with fruitful effect for IV2 years or better (Ax. 18:8 "many;" 18:10 "much people;" Ax. 18:11, 18).
 - b. Eloquent Apollos, "mighty in the scriptures" was there (Ax. 19:1).
 - c. They were "enriched" and came "behind in no gift" (I Cor. 1:5-7).
 - d. So, their faith stood in the gospel (I Cor. 15:1).
 - e. Yet, they were unsound (I Cor. 3:1-4; 5:1-11; 11:17-34).

II. The subject considered positively. A sound church is:

- A. One that seeks scriptural organization.
 - 1. Scripturally unorganized—no qualified men (Ax. 14:23).
 - 2. Scripturally organized—qualified men serving (Phil. 1:1).
 - 3. Unscripturally organized—unqualified men serving (III John 9).
 - 4. Unscripturally unorganized—qualified men not appointed (Titus 1:5).
- B. One where all members know their place.
 - 1. Importance of this manifested in the Old Testament.
 - a. Joshua 6:5, 20 (Certainly important!—Josh. 4:13).
 - b. Judges 7:15-21.
 - 2. Importance has not lessened in the Lord's army today.
 - a. *Elders* are not followers, nor are they deacons (I Pet. 5²).
 - b. Deacons are not semi-elders, nor are they merely men with a strong back, but a weak mind (I Tim. 3:9).
 - c. *Evangelists* are not errand boys, nor are they the "Pastor."
 - d. *Saints* should do more than "pass the buck" (I Cor. 15:58).
- C. One that demands plain, pungent preaching (Not one that apathetically tolerates it, but demands it!).
 - 1. Negative (II Tim. 4:2-4).
 - 2. Warn of dangerous trends.
 - a. Brethren call this type of preacher an "alarmist."
 - b. If so, that includes Paul, Peter, and John (Ax. 20:28-32; I Tim. 4:1-3; II Thess. 2:1-3; II Pet. 2:1; I John 4:1).
 - 3. Names must be called (I Tim. 1:19,20; II Tim. 2:16-18; 4¹⁰. 14; Titus 1:10-13; Matt. 23:27, 27, 33; John 8:44; III John 9).
- D. One that is not content. (ILLUSTRATION: Pet Milk says their milk is from contented cows. A competing dairy says, "Our cows are never contented; they are always trying to do better").
 - 1. Philippi praised (Phil. 1:3-5; 4:10-18), but exhorted (Phil. 3:13, 14).
 - 2. Colosse commended (Col. 1:3-6, 8), but exhorted (Col. 1:9, 10).
 - 3. Thessalonica thanked (I Thess. 1:2-4, 6-8), but exhorted (I Thess. 4:1,10).
 - 4. Hence, sound churches of today are not complacent, lethargic, lazy.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Every Christian has a function in the body, and each member, therefore, helps to determine the soundness of the church.
- 2. Let us all in order to be sound and saved endeavor to learn it and live it, and then teach it and preach it.

GOD'S PROMISES PRECIOUS

"Does your son in America never send you any money?" was asked of a poverty-stricken old Swedish woman. "Never!" was the bitter answer. "He writes often and speaks of sending money, but never a bit have I seen from him. I am getting old and poor and soon I must die or go to the poorhouse. Yet he is rich and prosperous. Such is the ingratitude of children!"

"Is there never anything in the letters?" asked the persistent visitor.

"Oh, yes, he always sends pictures; but I do not need pictures; I need money."

"Have you saved those pictures?"

"They are all pasted on the wall in my bedroom. Would you like to see them?"

"Certainly," answered the visitor. When she looked into the bare little room she saw pasted on the walls a small fortune in American paper money.

The Bible is full of pictures of saints and beautiful poetry, but it has much more. To the believing child of God these are drafts on God's bank to be honored in the time of need. Every promise is a "Pay bearer on demand" of real practical value if we have faith to present it at God's bank. But like the peasant woman, we call it a picture gallery and inveigh upon God's lack of care for us. (Unknown).

WHICH STATE ARE YOU IN?

A. C. GRIDER

INTRODUCTION:

Not talking about geographical location.

I. UNBELIEVER (Jno. 20:30-31).

A. Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:9-10; 10:17.

B. *Example:* The Jailer (Ax. 16:31-34).

II. BELIEVER (Lk. 13:3; Ax. 17:30; 2:38; 3:19).

III. PENITENT BELIEVER (One who believes and makes up mind to turn from sin, Mk. 16:16; Ax. 10:48; Matt. 28:19-20; Jno. 3:5; Ax. 22:16).

IV. BAPTIZED PENITENT BELIEVER (A Christian—A Child of God).

A. Study the Bible (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:15; 1 Pet 3:15).

B. Grow in the grace and knowledge (2 Pet. 2:1-2; 1:1-4; 3= 18).

C. Meet on the first day of the week (Ax. 20:7; Heb. 10:25).

D. Contribute as prospered (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

E. Abstain from appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22).

F. Go teach (Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15).

G. Run the race (Heb. 12:2).

H. Do the will of God (Matt. 7:21; Jas. 1:27; 2 Cor. 7:1).

I. Pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17).

J. Warn the wicked (1 Thess. 1:14).

K. Try the spirits (1 Jno. 4:1; Rev. 2:2).

L. Fight the good fight (1 Tim. 6:12).

- M. Walk worthy of vocation (Eph. 4:1).
- N. Contend for the faith (Jude 3).
- V. OVERTAKEN BELIEVER** (Child of God who fails to do above—It is sin).
 - A. Repent and pray (Ax. 6:22—Simon was in bad shape!!).
 - B. Confess faults (Jas. 5:16—take courage to do this, but it's the only way).
 - C. Be converted (Jas. 5:19).
 - D. Be restored (Gal. 6:1).
 - E. If we don't—Or unless we do (2 Pet. 2:21).

SPIRITUAL APPETITE

AMOS MILES

(Matt. 5:3-6)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Consider the text.
 - a. We need to have a spiritual appetite, and,
 - b. We need to thirst after spiritual things.
2. Christ showed that spiritual things are greater than physical (Matt. 4:1-3, ff). Man shall not live by bread alone, but by the word of God.
3. The Devil assaulted the Lord with all manner of human appetites (Matt. 4). Get thee hence, Satan,

I. ARE WE PREPARED TO RESIST THE ASSAULTS OF THE DEVIL?

- A. Paul told us how to prepare ourselves in the letter to the brethren at Ephesus (Eph. 6:1 ff).
 1. Consider the armor of God:
 - a. Breastplate of righteousness.
 - b. Feet properly shod.
 - c. Helmet of Salvation.
 - d. Loins gird with truth.
 - e. Shield of Faith.
 - f. Sword of Spirit
 2. With these weapons the Devil must be defeated.
- B. Paul told the Colossian brethren how they, too, might receive the power of God to resist the influence of the Devil (Col. 3:15-16).
 1. The peace of God ruling in our hearts.
 2. Called in one body for strength.
 3. Teaching and admonishing one another helps.
 4. Do all things in the name of Christ.
- C. Consider the proper attitude for the Lord (Psa. 19:9,10).
 1. Fear of the Lord is pure.
 2. Following God is more desired than following fleshly appetites.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We can receive strength to resist fleshly appetites only through following Christ.
- B. Let us replace the appetites of the flesh with Spiritual ones.

IT IS FINISHED!

LUTHER BLACKMON

(Jno. 19:30)

INTRODUCTION:

"It is finished"—not words of forlorn despair, but of supreme satisfaction in the accomplishment of a thing well done. This is one of the seven statements Jesus made while on the cross. There were many things finished at the cross:

- I. GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE IN THE TOTAL REDEMPTION OF MAN** (Acts 2:23; 3:18; Eph. 3:1-11; II Tim. 1:8-9; I Pet. 1:9-12; 18-21).
- II. THE LAW** (Gal. 3:23-25; Col. 2:14; Rom. 7:1-7).
- III. ANIMAL SACRIFICES** (Heb. 7:26-27; 9:24-25; 10:11-12).
- IV. WAY INTO HEAVEN** (Mk. 15:38; Heb. 10:19-20).
- V. DISTINCTION OF RACES** (Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:14-16).
- VI. LOVE**—Finished in the sense that LOVE here reached its greatest manifestation and expression (Rom. 5:7-8; Jn. 15:13; Eph. 3:14-15).
- VII. Obedience**—Here, like in love, we see the perfect example of obedience (Phil. 2:5-7; Heb. 5:8-9).

CONCLUSION:

All this will avail nothing to the person who refuses to take advantage of it. Medicine will not cure the man who refuses to take it. The surgeon cannot help the man who will not submit to an operation.

PUTTING THE PREACHER IN HIS PLACE

WELDON E. WARNOCK

(I Cor. 4)

INTRODUCTION:

Preachers have their place in the body of Christ. They have responsibilities and obligations to discharge. In their work, however, men are not to think of them too highly. This was the trouble with the Corinthians.

I. How Men Are To Think of Preachers (vs. 1-2).

- A. Should think of them as ministers (servants, helpers, attendants) of Christ. Not as Lords.
 1. Preachers are not over churches. They are not "clergymen." They are not the "official interpreters" of the Bible. They are not better than other faithful brethren (Cf. Mt. 23:11-12).
- B. Stewards of the mysteries of God . . . Not masters.
 1. A "steward" is a caretaker of another's goods or property. Preachers are caretakers of the gospel.
 2. In this they must be faithful (v. 2). Not necessarily eloquent, "polished," or enticing, but faithful.
 - a. Must take heed to doctrine (I Tim. 4:16).
 - b. Preach the Word (2 Tim. 4:2).
 - c. Declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27).

II. Preacher Stand Before Three Great Tribunals (vs. 3-5).

- A. They stand before men or public opinion (v. 3).
 - 1. Preachers should consider this a very small thing. Such was the attitude of Paul toward the Corinthians.
 - 2. The condemnation or vindication of men is generally the result of prejudice or emotions. It really means very little as a man can only gain earthly glory for the present.
 - 3. Preachers who succumb to such are foolish (Cf. Gal. 1:10).
- B. The second tribunal is that of self or conscience (v. 4).
 - 1. A person shouldn't violate his conscience. Live with a clear conscience.
 - 2. Yet, one's conscience cannot acquit him. He may have a good conscience, and still be guilty before God.
- C. Christ is the third and final tribunal before whom we must stand (v. 5).
 - 1. He will bring out the hidden things of darkness and will reveal the counsels of our hearts. Jesus knows why we preach the things that we preach.

III. Preachers Are Not To Be Elevated Above That Which Is Written (v. 6).

- A. Preachers have their places in the scheme of things and are to be respected and admired for their work's sake, but that which is written prohibits partisan strife and party devotion.
- B. That which written says:
 - 1. Men are ministers through whom people believe (I Cor. 3:5).
 - 2. They are planters, waterers, but God gives the increase (I Cor. 3:6).
 - 3. Following men is carnal and divisive (I Cor. 3:3).
- C. Men may be followed, but only as they follow the Lord (Cf. I Cor. 4:16-17).
 - 1. God's Word is to have precedence in all things.

IV. Preachers Should Be Willing To Suffer (vs. 9-13).

- A. Notice the experiences of the apostles in these verses. Aren't their examples worthy of our emulation?

V. Circumstances and Conditions Determine How To Preach (v. 21).

- A. Paul was either coming with a rod or in love and the spirit of meekness.

CONCLUSION:

In our work as preachers, let us be counted as "faithful stewards."

EXACTNESS

ALVIS BROWN

(Mt. 7:21-27)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Disrespect for authority is prevalent in our nation.
 - a. This is seen in our schools, homes, and societies.
 - b. This is seen in religion.
 - (1.) Some say we have no law (Rom. 8:1,2; I Jno. 3:4).
 - (2.) Some admit that God has a law, but that it does not have to be fully obeyed.
2. Although God's laws have been different, he has always demanded exactness.

I. God's Exactness Is Seen in the Old Testament.

- A. Noah's obedience shows that God is exacting.
 1. God specified how the ark was to be built (Gen. 6:14-16).
 2. Noah did as God commanded (Gen. 6:22).
 3. Those in the ark were saved (I Pet. 3:20).
- B. Nadab and Abihu met God's exactness.
 1. Strange fire was not to be offered on the altar (Ex. 30:9).
 2. These two offered strange fire on the altar (Lev. 10:1).
 3. God took their lives (Lev. 10:2).
- C. Uzzah's death shows that God is exacting.
 1. God had told how to carry the ark.
 - a. Staves and rings were to be on the ark for carrying (Ex. 25:10-15,27:1-7).
 - b. Sons of Kohath were to bear it (Num. 4:15).
 - c. They were to bear it on their shoulders (Num. 7:9).
 2. Uzzah did not do exactly as God said (II Sam. 6:1-7).
- D. Jeroboam neglected the exactness of God (I Kings 12:26-31).
 1. God's people were to worship in a selected place (Deut. 12:5-6).
 2. God's people were to worship only Him (Ex. 20:4-5).
 3. Levites were to be priests (Num. 3:9-10).

II. We Bead of God's Exactness in the New Testament.

- A. Mary's son was to be called Jesus (Mt. 1:21).
- B. The son of Zacharias was to be called John (Lk. 1:5-63).

III. God Demands Exactness of People Today (I Pet. 4:11; II Jno. 9; Rev. 22; 18-19).

- A. We are to be exact in obedience to the gospel (Rom. 10:17; Ax. 2:38; Rom. 10:10; I Pet. 3:21).
- B. We are to be exact in our life as a Christian (Phil. 1:27; Rom. 12:1,2; II Pet. 1:5-8,3:18).

CONCLUSION:

1. We have no margin to play on (I Pet. 4:17. 18).
2. Do you respect God's exactness?

CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNMENT WITHOUT ELDERS

BILLY MURRELL

God has given a pattern for everything in the church—2 Peter 1:3.

I. A church may be acceptable to the Lord without elders.

- A. The churches Paul and Barnabas planted on their journey were churches for a period of time before elders were appointed (Acts 14:23). McGarvey estimates that this journey occupied four years—hence, some of these churches were in existence a period of months—perhaps years—before Paul and Barnabas ordained elders.
- B. Titus left in Crete to appoint elders "in every city" (Titus 1:5).
- C. Very likely no elders in Corinth when Paul wrote I & II Corinthians.
- D. A church should desire elders and work to the end of having them—this is God's will.
- E. But it is *not* God's will to appoint men as elders who are not qualified—or when things have not been set in order.

II. How to carry on Work of church in absence of elders.

- A. The work given to elders must be done even when there are no elders. Who is to do it?
 1. Pastor, feed—Evangelists, teachers.
 2. Watch in behalf of souls — (Gal. 6:1). The spiritual.
 3. Oversee — Here is the problem.
- B. NT principles to guide us in making decisions for the church. Not much on oversight — but much on "submitting."
 1. Younger be subject unto the elder — (I Pet. 5:5).
 2. Be subject one to another — (I Pet. 5:5; Eph. 5:21).
 3. Be in subjection to "such" — (I Cor. 16:15-16).
 4. Woman to be in subjection to man — (I Tim. 2:11-12).
- C. Summary of these principles plus others gives us the following:
 1. Some called "spiritual."
 2. A distinction between babes and experienced — (Heb. 5:12ff).
 3. The younger to give respect to the older.
 4. All to have a spirit of humility — not striving to be "rulers" as the Gentiles — (Lie. 22:24-25; Mt. 20:25-28).
 5. Consider weak brother — (Rom. 14:1).
 6. Follow things which make for peace — (Rom. 14:19).
- D. With the spirit described above, a congregation without elders can carry out its affairs without politicking, pressuring, steamrolling, etc. With love for one another, God's work can be done.
- E. The foregoing does NOT describe majority rule. It describes the desire to help one another—not to rule. We are to submit to the judgment of others, unless we believe this judgment contrary to the scriptures. Helpful when *many* come to discuss these things. The more who come *in the proper spirit*, the stronger will be the church, the better the work will be done.

III. Some further questions:

- A. Can a church select certain men to perform certain work?
 1. Churches selected messengers to carry money and letter (I Cor. 16:1; II Cor. 8:16).
 2. Church at Jerusalem selected 7 to take care of the widows.

3. We can select trustees, but they must always remain the *servants* of the church — They cannot become the rulers.
- B. What about "leaders"? They have no specified task to take care of—the congregation becomes subject to them—therefore they are unscriptural.
- C. What about the evangelist? He is to teach the word—not oversee. In direct relationship to how spiritual, mature, and loving he is, his influence will be felt and his advice considered.

THINGS MONEY CANNOT BUY

T. T. CARNEY

INTRODUCTION:

I Tim. 6:17

- a. Men measure their wealth by size of their cash accounts, etc.
- b. Never occurs to them true measure of wealth not measured by these things.
- c. Failing to learn this message some erred from the faith (I Tim. 6:9-10).
- d. In spite of all treasures men may lay up—some things money cannot buy.

I. THE CHURCH:

- A. Acts 20:28.
 1. Building and its contents money can buy.
 - a. Not the Church (Acts 20:28).
- B. Salvation a gift (Eph. 2:8).
 1. Obtained by obedience to truth (I Pet. 1:22).

II. ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM:

- A. Entrance into many things obtained by money.
 1. Not into the kingdom of God (Jno. 3:5).

III. CONFIDENCE OF PEOPLE:

- A. Needed in every day transactions (Prov. 22:1).
- B. Confidence of others needed in spiritual matters.
 1. Its helps in leading people to obey the gospel.
 - a. We obtain their confidence not by money but by right lives.

IV. OPEN EARS FOR THE TRUTH:

- A. If riches are the only way, Christ would have never been heard.
 1. He was poor.
- B. Idea of some elaborate building will attract people to listen.
 1. Sincere seekers cannot be attracted that way. It will take godly living and interest in saving lost souls.

CONCLUSION:

1. Contributing money alone will not develop us into a Christ-like person.
2. Some things that cannot be bought nor inherited, one need cultivate them:
 - a. Pity and sympathy for the suffering.

LOVE AND ITS REWARD

JERRY PARKER

(Ruth 1:16-17)

INTRODUCTION:

Discuss the economic condition at this time and the historical background. Ruth illustrates what true love and devotion is and gives each Christian the principle for happiness today. Consider the following traits in the life of this great woman.

I. RUTH HAD THE QUALITY OF KINDNESS:

- A. This was expressed toward her husband and mother-in-law (Ruth 1:8).
 - 1. Death of a loved one brings hearts of sorrow together. Death is the unwelcome guest to all in time.
- B. Many are not thoughtful of others and their feelings (Eph. 4:32).
- C. Kindness is consideration of the other person. Example of the good Samaritan.

II. RUTH EXEMPLIFIED WISDOM BY THE WORDS SHE SPOKE:

- A. Words are but an expression of one's heart (Matt. 15:19; Eph. 4:29). A rash or unkind word has wounded many hearts (Prov. 15:1-2; 25:11).
- B. Ruth expressed her willingness to follow Naomi all the way.
- C. Every Christian's life should be a pattern of good for others to follow (Matt. 5:14-16).
- D. Ruth left an old life behind— Moab for Judah; old friends for new friends and a hope for something better. We should be willing to leave the old life behind and become a part of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; 10-11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Phil. 3:7-8; Col. 3:1-2).
- E. Many are like Orpah, the other daughter-in-law, that was contented to stay in Moab (Ruth 1:14-15). We will not leave our gods of ease, pleasure and sin (Joshua 24:15; Matt. 6:21, 24; Lk. 12:20-21).
- F. Others start with Christ and turn back (Lk. 8:13; 9:62; 2 Tim. 2:4; 4:10; 2 Pet. 2:21-22).

III. RUTH INDICATED HER WILLINGNESS TO TAKE A HUMBLE TASK:

- A. Her request to the owner of the field was to gather that which remained after the harvest.
 - 1. There are tasks for everybody to do in the kingdom of Christ whether they be great or small (Eccl. 9:10; Gal. 6:9).
- B. She shared what she had gleaned with Naomi (Ruth 2:18, 23).
 - 1. There should be the willingness on every Christian's part to share with those who are in need (Matt. 25:34-40; Jas. 1:27; Gal. 6:10).

IV. THE END RESULT OF THE LIFE OF THIS GREAT WOMAN:

- A. Boaz takes Ruth for his wife.
- B. Ruth has her reward in that the son born to this union is in the lineage of David and the story of her life is recorded on the inspired pages (Ruth 4:17).

CONCLUSION:

Ruth followed Naomi into a far country and gave up her old life. Will you give up your old life of sin and follow Jesus today (Matt. 16:24-26; Romans 6:6)?

THE BIBLE: A TEACHER TRAINING MANUAL

MARTIN BROADWELL

INTRODUCTION:

1. Bible *words* are inspired (Jno. 14:26).
2. We forget that *actions* of Godly men reflect the same wisdom, sometimes the same inspiration.
3. Christ *spoke* as God; did he not also teach as God?
4. Can learn how to teach better by studying Bible examples.

I. EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS SAY WE LEARN BY "ASSOCIATION."

- A. We understand quicker if associate with that which is like something we already know.
- B. Parables are good example (Matt. 13, and others).
- C. There are other "association" examples, "like unto" (Matt. 7:24-27; James 1:22-25).

II. SAME SPECIALISTS SAY WE MUST LEARN FROM WHERE WE ARE NOW.

- A. Go from known to unknown by building on *known* facts . . .
 1. Philip and Eunuch, " . . . began at same scripture . . ." (Acts 8).
 2. Peter on Pentecost, "... as ye yourself also know . . ." (Acts 2:22).
 3. Stephen's sermon (Acts 7).

III. WE LEARN BECAUSE WE NEED TO FULFILL A DESIRE OR NEED (Avoid punishment or get reward).

- A. Sales training teaches that customer buys for same reasons.
 1. Must first see he has problem (hence a need to be satisfied).
 2. The solution offered must solve the problem, meet the need.
 3. Solution must be better than the present solution.
- B. Bible examples of selling the Gospel follow this exactly.
 1. Pentecostians (Acts 2).
 - a. Problem: "crucified the Son of God."
 - b. Solution: "repent and be baptized."
 - c. Result of buying: "remission of sins."
 2. Peter and John (Acts 3).
 - a. Problem: "chose murderer of Son of God", (vs. 14).
 - b. Solution: "repent... be converted" (vs. 19).
 - c. Result of buying: "sins blotted out" (vs. 19).

IV. WE GET INVOLVEMENT BY APPEALING TO SPECIAL INTERESTS EXPERTS SAY.

- A. Must first get attention before we can teach anyone.
 1. Appeal to things that are familiar to learner.
 2. Appeal to things they would be "hooked" by.
- B. Bible examples of teaching follow this.
 1. Woman at well (John 4), coming to well every day was a task that she did and one that was distasteful to her. She couldn't help but get hooked by Jesus' use of example of water that would "make you not to be thirsty."
 2. Paul on Mars Hill (Acts 17), speaking to those who worried about missing some God—but considered themselves experts on subject. Bound to be hooked at thought of finding out who this God was.

CONCLUSION-First teach what Bible says (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Then teach way Bible demonstrates teaching (2 Tim. 2:2). Let God do the rest (1 Cor. 3:6).

FACTS ABOUT JOHN 10:1-16

W. L. WHARTON, JR.

(An Exegesis)

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is important that one notice the context of the sermon, It, the sermon, resulted from the cure the Lord effected upon the man blind from birth.
2. The miracle as performed led to the abiding faith of the man (See; John 9:35-38), and the open rejection of Christ by the "blind" Pharisees (John 9:39-41).
3. Review carefully the story in chapter nine taking care to present the story accurately and with patience.
4. Now, take note of the audience.
 - a. The seeing blind (Cf. Matt. 13:14, 15), the Pharisees.
 - b. The blind man who could clearly see.
5. Read the text, taking note of the three most salient facts.

I. JESUS THE LOVING SHEPHERD (The Messiah). (John 10:2,11)

- A. The "shepherd" of God's flock comes through the line of Jesse (See; Isa. 11:1-5).
- B. He is lumped among pretenders but is clearly distinguished from them (John 10:1-2,5).
 1. Who might the pretenders be? It doesn't say, however, one might consider Theudas and Judas (Acts 5:35-38).
 - a. Consider the text.
 - b. Theudas gave himself out to "be somebody."
 2. False Christ's in future ages as well (Matt. 24:24).
- C. Identifying marks of the Messiah.
 1. Entered through the door (vs. 2). What is the door? Not specifically stated but the idea gleaned from scripture is that the door is that "way" prepared by the prophets.
 2. The door opened by the "porter." Again, no specific identification given. Likely is John the Baptist (Cf Mal. 3:1).
 - a. The obvious significance of the question raised in Matt. 21:25.
 - b. The sought after conclusion was that if John's authority were accepted why reject the one of whom he testified?
 3. In a different vein, Jesus is the "door" (vs. 7).
 - a. This was not a part of the first parable but an enlargement upon it. Don't confuse the door of this verse with that of verse 2.
 - b. Through the door one receives both salvation and sustenance.
 4. He was the good shepherd who laid down his life.
 - a. The false shepherd flees rather than die. Christ died willingly.

II. THE SHEEP, THOSE WHO RECEIVE JESUS.

- A. The "sheep" were not necessarily those of Israel, but those who heard and recognized the voice of the shepherd (vs. 3, 4, 5).

- B. The emphasis is upon those who accept readily the "voice" (teachings) of the "good shepherd." Consider again those who "stop their ears" (Matt. 13:14,15).
- C. If any will not hear the word there is no point in trying to "force feed them" (Cf. Matt. 7:6).
 - 1. Why give to the dog that which is Holy? Can it appreciate the value of the sacred thing?
 - 2. Can a swine honor the pearls?
 - 3. Likewise, if any honor not the truth nor understand its nature there is no point in giving it to them.
- D. If any will not receive the truth willingly keep your peace. This lesson taught the wife of the unbeliever (1 Pet. 3:1,2).
- E. Christ's sheep are those who are open to the truth of God.

III. THE TWO FOLDS (John 10:16).

- A. Made up of those sheep who are anxious to hear the voice of the Son of God (vs. 16).
- B. The Pharisees certainly were not part of the Lord's fold, they would not "hear" and "receive" the voice. Consider at the same time that they were still Jews.
- C. Many today who consider themselves Christians are not part of the "One Fold" because they, likewise, refuse to hear his voice.
- D. The second fold was those Gentiles who "heard and recognized" the voice of the Shepherd.
- E. Those receptive Jews and Gentiles then made up a new united fold under the one Shepherd (vs. 16; Cf. Eph. 2:11-22).

CONCLUSION: To be a part of Christ's fold, or flock, one must humbly submit himself to the Shepherd of the Sheep. Extend invitation.

NEARSIGHTED CHRISTIANS

Author Unknown

(2 Pet. 1:5-9; 1 Jⁿo - 2:9-11)

INTRODUCTION: We would like to call your attention to the law of Moses.

- 1. The case of Jacob, Isaac, and Esau (Gen. 25:29-34).
 - a. Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.
 - b. He did this because he was "nearsighted". He did not look to the future to see the consequences of his act.
- 2. He was to regret with tears his act (Cf. Heb. 12:16-17).
- 3. Consider the case of Achan also (Josh. 7:22-26).
 - a. He looked only to the present and what was in it for him.
 - b. Israel was brought to ruin for this sinful deed.
- 4. Consider also what these Old Testament examples are for us (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11-12).

I. ANNANIAS AND SAPHIRA WERE NEARSIGHTED CHRISTIANS.

- A. They saw the others bringing gifts and to their credit did likewise.
- B. However, they sought to lie to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11).
- C. They did not take into consideration eternity.
 - 1. They died for their sins.

II. THOSE WHO FOLLOW AFTER FALSE TEACHERS ARE NEARSIGHTED.

- A. Men have always thought of the present and neglected the future.
- B. By so doing, they are nearsighted.
- C. God does not desire his people to be like the world.
- D. We are often blinded by false teachers (Cf. 2 Cor. 4:1-4; 2 Jno. 9-11).
Yet whosoever transgresseth has not God.

III. SIMON THE SORCEROR WAS A NEARSIGHTED CHRISTIAN.

- A. Simon thought the gift of God was for sale for use in this life (Acts 8:9-24).
- B. Peter told him he had no part nor lot in this matter.
- C. Simon's thoughts were wholly on this life.

CONCLUSION:

May we use the examples listed as a warning for us to consider the future in our dealings with God and man.

MANY FORMS OF SIN

BOB G. NEALY

(Psalms 106:6-39)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Discuss the text.
 - a. David speaks of the sins of Israel as they journeyed through the wilderness.
 - b. He also speaks of their life in Egypt and in Canaan.
- 2. Their mistakes in their life can be of help to us today (Rom. 15:4).
- 3. We sin in the same ways today as they did in their time.

I. A SINFUL FAILURE TO UNDERSTAND THE WORKS OF GOD (Psa. 106:7).

A.' The plagues:

- 1. Why did God turn water to blood in Egypt?
- 2. Why the lice . . . flies . . . locusts . . . death of first-born? (Ex. 6-15).

B. We can be in the same condition today.

- 1. Many fail to understand that only good things come from God . . . (James 1:16-17).
- 2. Many fail to understand the plan of salvation . . . and for this reason substitute their own plans.
- 3. Many brethren fail to understand the church and its work.

II. A SINFUL FAILURE TO REMEMBER GOD AND HIS MERCY: (Psa. 106:7,21,22).

A. "Remember not the multitude of thy mercies."

B. ISRAEL:

- 1. God opened the Red Sea . . . (Ex. 14:10-12).
- 2. Three days later complained . . . Waters of Marah . . . (Ex. 15:23-25).
- 3. Forty-five days later . . . FOOD . . . Wilderness of Zin . . . (Ex. 16:1-4).

C. TODAY:

1. When obey the Gospel . . . confess Jesus as Lord . . . (Rom. 10:9-10) yet refuse to obey His commands . . . (Luke 6:46).
2. Fail to grow as He commands . . . (2 Pet. 1:3-9).
3. We fail to change our lives, hence, are conformed to this world . . . (Rom. 12:1-2).

III. THE SIN OF FITFULNESS OR FICKLENESS: (Psa. 106:12-13).

- A. Israel praised God for their deliverance . . . (Ex. 15:1-19). . . yet three days later they forgot God . . . Waters of Marah . . . (Ex. 15:23- 25).
- B. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TIME CONSIDER PETER . . . (John 13:36-38, 18:10-11, 15-18, and 25-27).

C. TODAY:

1. When we are with Christians we serve faithfully and act godly.
2. We fight against sin in the church if it doesn't affect our families.
3. Our attitude depends on who and what is under consideration.

IV. THE SIN OF UNRESTRAINED APPETITE (Psa. 106:14):

- A. While Israel was in the Wilderness they wanted what God had not given them.
- B. When Israel went in the Land of Canaan they wanted a King. (I Sam. 8:1-5, 10-12, Hos. 13:11).
- C. David's son, Amnon wanted his sister, Tamar, because he loved her . . . (II Sam. 13:1-15).
- D. Ahab desired Naboth's vineyard . . . (I Kings 21).

V. IN THE TIME OF CHRIST:

- A. Judas wanted riches . . . (Matt. 26:47-49, 27:3-10).
- B. The rich fool wanted riches and ease . . . (Luke 12:16-21(20)).

VI. TODAY MEN DESIRE:

- A. Riches . . . (I Tim. 6:6-10).
- B. Drunkness . . . (Gal. 5:19-21, Prov. 23:29-35).
- C. Fornication and adultery . . . (Matt. 5:27-28,32; Gal. 5:19; I Cor. 6:15-18).

VII. NOTE. WHEN ONE FALLS IN THIS CATEGORY HE IS NEVER SATISFIED AS SEEN BY THE EXAMPLES ABOVE. HE IS LIKE THE BOY WHO STOLE AN APPLE ... THEN A HUBCAP ... THEN THE CAR.

CONCLUSION:

1. Truly, the sins of Israel which kept them from entering the land of Canaan can be our sins and keep us from entering heaven.
2. May we ever recognize the dangers of sin and strive to overcome them.

OUTLINE OF BAPTISM

EDWARD FUDGE

- I. THE POWER OF IT:** God, through Christ. (Ax. 2:32-36; Eph. 1:19,20; Eph. 2:1,5,6; I Pet. 3:20-22).

II. THE MOTIVE FOR IT: Obedient submission of faith to Christ as Lord. (Matt. 18:18,19; Ax. 16:31,33; Ax. 22:16; Gal. 3:26,27; Col. 2:8,9,12; I Pet. 3:21,22).

III. THE MEANING OF IT: A death and resurrection with Christ.

A. Christ identified with man and bore his guilt (Isa. 53:4-6; Matt. 3:13-17; II Cor. 5:18-21; I Pet. 2:24).

B. Man identifies in baptism with Christ and the redemption which He accomplished for us (Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:26,27; Col. 2:12).

IV. THE BENEFITS OF IT: Varied.

A. Remission of sins (Ax. 2:38, I Pet. 3:21).

B. Incorporation into the body of Christ—(the church) (I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3). Hence a spiritual unity with other saints (I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:5).

C. Gift of the Holy Spirit (Ax. 2:38; Tit. 3:5; Ax. 5:32; Rom. 8:11, 16, 23; Eph. 1:13,14).

V. OBLIGATIONS OF IT: Toward God and each other.

A. To serve God and righteousness, not sin and flesh (Rom. 6:3ff).

B. To maintain the unity of the church, of which baptism is the sign and seal (I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 4:4-6).

AN ANTIDOTE

There grows in the West Indies a tree of surpassing beauty. Its fruit which resembles a golden apple, emits the most delicious fragrance. Strangers, ignorant of its true character and deceived by its tempting appearance, sometimes pluck and eat this fruit whose juice is deadly poisonous. This tree, however, called the "manchineel", is always found beside a white wood or fig tree, the sap of either of which if applied is a sovereign antidote to the evil it occasions. Sin, like the poisonous apple, is pleasant to the eye, but when tasted it brings death to the soul. But a remedy has been graciously provided by God against it, for where "sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

THE WRATH OF GOD

JIM PUTERBAUGH

(Rom. 1:18)

INTRODUCTION:

A. Why do we need the power of God unto salvation (Review Rom. 1:14-17)?

1. That we might escape the wrath of God (Rom. 1:18).

2. They who practise sin are "worthy of death" (Rom. 1:32; 6:23).

B. God must show wrath against sin for it destroys what was created in His image.

1. Love for a thing demands hate for that which destroys it, cancer for instance (Cf. Prov. 6:16).

I. "THE WRATH OF GOD IS REVEALED" (Rom. 1:18).

A. God has made known the consequences of sin by revelation of the written word and by demonstration of punishment (e.g. the flood, etc.).

- B. Both Jew and Gentile saw the wrath (Cf. Num. 16:1-50; 25:1-5; Isa. 13:9-13; Jer. 50:13).
- C. Consider the N.T. (Rom. 1:18; 2:8; 3:5; 5:9; 12:19; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; 2 Thess. 1:10).

II. THE WRATH AND PUNISHMENT.

- A. Wrath and indignation (Rom. 2:8).
 - 1. Define "wrath" (Thayer, p. 452). (Cf. John 3:36; Rom. 1:18).
 - 2. Define "indignation" (Thayer, p. 293; Murray, Com. on Romans p. 66).
- B. Tribulation and anguish (Rom. 2:8).
 - 1. Define "tribulation" (Wuest, Romans, p. 42).
 - 2. Define "anguish" (Wuest, Romans, p. 42).
 - 3. Tribulation and anguish (See Murray, Com. on Rom., p. 66).

III. JUDGEMENT IN TERMS OF THE WINEPRESS.

- A. O. T. examples (Lam. 1:15; Isa. 63:3).
- B. N. T. examples (Rev. 14:9-12; 19; 19:15).

IV. PUNISHMENT AND JUSTICE.

- A. The word that is translated "punishment" in (2 Thess. 1:9; Jude 7) is translated "justice" in (Acts 28:4).
 - 1. Thus, Paul and Jude are actually saying that some would receive the "justice" of eternal fire.

V. WRATH OF GOD IS USED TO MOTIVATE MAN TO REPENT.

- A. (Cf. Matt. 3:7; Luke 13:3; 17:26-33; Acts 24:25; Rom. 2:8).

CONCLUSION: (Prov. 1:26-29).

CHOOSING A CHRISTIAN COMPANION

HAROLD GRIFFIN

INTRODUCTION: I believe God teaches Christians to marry Christians.

- A. Consider what Paul said of those under the law (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).
- B. What do we learn from Samson, Solomon, and others in light of subject?
 - 1. (Cf. 2 Cor. 6:14).
 - 2. These obviously married before conversion (1 Cor. 7:12-13).
- C. I want to be able to bid my wife Godspeed (1 Cor. 9:5; 7:39; 2 Jno. 9).

I. MARRIAGE PARTNERS WERE FORMERLY CHOSEN FOR US BY PARENTS.

(We have privilege of choosing own mates; this necessitates preparation).

- A. Have an ideal (know what you are looking for).
- B. Most likely will choose from those whom we know best.
- C. Be honest with every date—may be a prospective marriage partner.
 - 1. Do not say or do anything *to* leave the wrong impression.
 - 2. That is unfair and unChristian.
- D. Take time—become well acquainted.
 - 1. Make unexpected calls.
 - 2. Visit the sick, your folks and others.
 - 3. Of course, you will attend church together.

- E. Take account of finances.
 - 1. If you are a girl, will he be able to provide?
 - 2. If you are a boy, will she live within your means?
 - F. Take account of occupation.
 - 1. Girl not content to live on a farm should not marry a fanner. It probably would not be too wise to ask him to change jobs.
 - 2. Is the wife expected to work—how long?
 - G. Religious status—he may have been baptized, but is he really interested and will he permit you to do what you should?
 - H. Social status—will he/she fit in with your parents and friends?
 - I. Educational status—the man is the head of the house, it is difficult to subject yourself to a person you believe to be inferior to you.
 - J. Think of the things you have in common:
 - 1. Do you enjoy the same books, sports, recreation, etc.
 - 2. Can you laugh together, weep together, and work together?
 - 3. Do you find it pleasant just being together? Remember you will be together an awful lot.
 - K. Look into the future—will he or she make a suitable parent for your children? Will there be children?
 - L. Is he or she faithful now—what is the purpose of the courtship?
 - M. Can you be proud of this companion as you go through life? Can you point with pride and say this is the person I married?
 - N. Remember this is for life. Have no other thought.
 - O. God forbids adulterous marriages. Make sure this is not.
- II. THIS HAS NOT BEEN EXTENSIVE BY ANY MEANS.**
- A. If these few simple thoughts are followed by all there would be a great decrease in sorrow and broken homes across the country.
 - B. The person supposed to be in love that is not drawn closer to God may well ask himself if he is indeed in love. The ability to love is one of our most Godlike characteristics. If we are in love we must draw closer to Him.

DANGERS FACING THE CHURCH

KENNETH FRAZIER

(2 Tim. 3:1; 2 Cor. 11:3; I Cor. 10:12)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. What is the church?
 - 1. Those called out of the world by obedience to the gospel (Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13).
- B. What is the function of the church?
 - 1. Preach the gospel (Eph. 3:10).
 - 2. Edify the members (Eph. 4:11-12).
 - 3. Relieve those in need (2 Cor. 8:4).
- C. How long? Till the Lord comes (Luke 19:13).
- D. What is the goal? Eternal life (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

I. TWO POSSIBLE AREAS OF DANGER. (Consider: Such a lesson would be foolish if man could not fall. Why speak of danger.)

- A. Physical danger (Acts 9:1).
 - 1. Jesus' Teaching (Matt. 10:28).
 - 2. Apostle's teaching (Acts 14:22).
 - 3. Fear of physical harm or death should not move us (Acts 5:40; 20:24).
- B. Spiritual danger.
 - 1. Jesus' Teaching (Matt. 16:26).
 - 2. Paul's Teaching (2 Thess. 2:10-12).
 - 3. Neglect of the gospel will bring eternal consequences (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

II. TWO AVENUES OF THE APPROACH OF DANGER.

- A. Without.
 - 1. The church must keep separate from the world in faith and in practice (John 17:14; 1 Jno. 2:15-17).
 - 2. The world hated Jesus, how does the church fare in the world today?
- B. Within (Acts 20:28-31).
 - 1. (Cf. 1 Cor. 5:1-7) Illus. I saw a man in a science show use a glass flask to drive a nail into a board showing the external resistance to force. But he dropped a small lead shot into the flask and it shattered; broken from within.
 - 2. Dead limbs, corrupt members must be purged (John 15:6).
 - 3. Christians have been called out of the world. Must not love the things of the world (James 4:4).

III. LET'S KEEP THE CHURCH PURE (Eph. 5:25-27).

- A. By shunning evil (Rom. 12:9).
- B. By being busy in the Lord's vineyard (1 Cor. 15:58).
 - 1. Preaching the word.
 - 2. Edifying members.
 - 3. Visiting sick and needy members.
- C. By training our children to love the Lord and His church. To walk in the way of Christ (2 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 6:4).

WOMEN—GOD'S GIFT TO MAN

HAYES RENEAU

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Much is said of women—Good—&—Bad (Gen. 2:18 is proper view). May be best this side of Heaven or worst this side of perdition.
- B. Of all the good & bad man has said or written on the subject we realize that man can err in judgment.
- C. God, however, is always right. Give consideration to His remarks and description.

- I. SOLOMON DESCRIBES A RARE JEWEL** (Prov. 31:10-31; Cf. Gen. 2:21, 22).
- A. Above rubies (vs. 10).
 - 1. Ruth described as "virtuous" (Ruth 3:11).
 - 2. Women can make themselves "cheap bottle glass" or priceless jewels.
 - 3. Beginning of greatness is godliness (2 Pet. 1:6, 7; 1 Tim. 4:7).
 - B. An Husband's stay and confidence (vs. 11-12).
 - 1. She is true to marriage vows (Col. 3:18-19; Eph. 5:24-25).
 - 2. Will do him good and not evil (vs. 12; James 3:11).
 - C. Willingness toward industry, not lazy (vs. 13-15).
 - 1. Whatever we accomplish; it is while we are awake (cf. Prov. 20:13; 24:30-34).
 - D. Worries over family's comfort and protection (vs. 16-21).
 - 1. "Nature's loving proxy, the watchful mother." —Geo. Edward Bulwer, English novelist of the early 1800's.
 - E. Husband sits as magistrate or one who offers counsel (vs. 22-23).
 - 1. Not only noted for wisdom, but as the husband of such a woman (Cf. Tit. 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:1-5).
 - 2. Note first trip here to investigate work. Suppose wife came in wearing false eyelashes and fingernails; a miniskirt and go-go boots? OK for some?
 - F. Idle words like idle hours, come to no profit (vs. 24-26).
 - 1. The virtuous, priceless wife and mother is wise, and in kindness gives godly instruction (Cf. 2 Tim. 1:2-5; 3:14-15).
 - G. First concern of such a one would be the spiritual welfare of her household (vs. 27).
 - 1. She will see if her children have Bible lessons.
 - 2. In all things she sets the example of a faithful one. Not, "Do like I say," But, "Do like I do."
 - H. Her family will praise her (But not nearly enough, vs. 28-29).
 - 1. To the ones she cherishes—she **SHOULD BE CONSIDERED: "MOST EXCELLENT OF ALL."**
 - 2. Have you told her lately?

CONCLUSION:

- A. "Favor is deceitful." None of these great feats and attitudes of heart were done through or for vainglory or praise of man (vs. 30-31; Cf. Matt. 6:1-5; Eph. 6:5-7).
- B. "Beauty is vanity." Outward appearance means little to God and Godly women (as compared to righteousness, Cf. 1 Pet. 3:3-4).
- C. Seems in the form of a prayer. God will reward the faithful (vs. 31; 1 Jno. 2:25; Rom. 14:10-11).

FUNERAL ORATION

A. C. GRIDER

INTRODUCTION: Gathered in memory of. .. (Read obituary).

1. Funerals are common place—occur daily.
2. This should remind us of the brevity of life.
3. Yet they are always sad, solemn, serious occasions.
4. Their frequency does not alter their nature.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING: We can do nothing to change the destiny of the departed (2 Cor. 5:10).

1. Could not help if we would.
2. Would not harm if we could.
3. Hence, we are left so helpless, so at a loss for words.

I. CONSIDER THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS AT THE TOMB OF LAZARUS (John 11:32-34).

- A. He spoke to the living.
- B. Jesus wept.
 1. Not as one who was ignorant of the power of God.
 2. But in tender sympathy for those who loved Lazarus, or,
 3. Out of grief for their unbelief.
- C. He spoke of faith (John 11:40).
- D. And the "glory of God in his ability to raise the dead" (vs. 40).
- E. We too, shall address ourselves to these two matters.

II. FAITH IN GOD AND IN CHRIST.

- A. Comes by hearing his word (Rom. 10:17; J^{no}, 20:30-31).
- B. We are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:8-9).
- C. Not an empty faith but a living one (Jas. 2:24).
- D. Impossible to please God without it (Heb. 11:6).

III. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

- A. Christ Himself arose victorious over death (Acts 17:3).
- B. The resurrection of the dead will accompany his return (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).
- C. There will be a separation (Matt. 25:31-32; John 5:28-29).
- D. Then the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

CLOSING PRAYER.

FACING THE FUTURE

via MCCORMICK

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Two things are certain, DEATH and JUDGEMENT (Heb. 9:27).
- B. Two possible destinies, HEAVEN and HELL (Matt. 25:46).
 1. Death and judgement are in the hands of God.
 2. Your destiny is in your hands and can be changed NOW.
- C. Where are you headed?

I. TOOLS COMMON TO ALL:

- A. Word of God (Rom. 1:16; John 17:17).
- B. Time (James 4:14, John 9:4).
- C. Talent of God, as able to use (Matt. 25:14).
- D. Opportunity (Phil. 4:10; James 4:17; Heb. 11:13-16).

II. REQUIRED OF ALL:

- A. Dedication (Josh. 24:15; II Cor. 12:15).
- B. Study (John 7:17; II Tim. 2:15).
- C. Talents (II Tim. 4:2, Col. 1:25, 28, Heb. 13:15).
- D. Serve (Rom. 6:16).
- E. Results:
 - 1. Faithful servants, lead others to Lord, edify the church, evangelize the world.
 - 2. Or will drift into the snare of Satan (2 Tim. 2:26; Heb. 2:1).

III. WHERE ARE YOU? ALL MUST KNOW:

- A. If not dead to world, in sin, no hope, DEAD to Lord. MUST be bom anew.
- B. If in Christ, good. BUT MUST, press on (Phil. 3:14; not drift, Heb. 3:13).
- C. If a prodigal in far country—serving wrong kingdom—sold inheritance for pleasures. MUST, repent and pray.
- D. Will you face the facts, NOW. Will you spend for the saving of your soul OY bury this time and opportunity in the sands of indifference?

CONCLUSION:

If YOU take this OPPORTUNITY, to use your time and spend your talent (in obedience) you will gain 100 fold, and your future is Heaven. How much wiser to so spend and gain, than to bury and lose, to face the wrath of God.

HOW DO WE HONOR PARENTS?

DONALD R. GIVENS

(Eph. 6:1-3)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. This lesson good for young and old.
- 2. This duty of HONORING parents never ceases—as does the duty to obey.
- 3. Note the benefits derived from HONORING them.
- 4. More respect for elders is badly needed in our time.

I. SOME OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES REGARDING HONORING PARENTS.

- A. The law as recorded in the fifth commandment (Ex. 20:12).
 - 1. Children derive moral training and knowledge from parents.
 - 2. This comm. prohibits acts of injury, irreverence, unkind speech.
 - 3. It enforces kindness, respect, and obedience.
- B. If parents are old and needy, the child will supply their needs.
- C. God strictly requires the child to honor his parents (Ex. 21:17; Lev. 19:3; Deut. 5:16).

- D. Consider the gems of wisdom from the writer of Proverbs (Prov. 10:1, 13:1; and 20:20). Consider, too, Christ was quoting O. T. (Matt. 15:4).
- H. SOME NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES REGARDING HONORING PARENTS.**
- A. Honoring parents contributes to soberness, temperance, and industry (Eph. 6:2,3).
1. If God regards a falling sparrow, He will not be unmindful of an obedient parent honoring child (Cf. Matt. 5:29).
- B. Define the meaning of HONOR.
1. Consider also (Col. 3:20).
 - a. The example of Jesus (Luke 2:40, 51, 52).
- C. Concerning the care of needy parents (1 Tim. 5:4, 8, 16).
1. According to verse eight if any with ability refuse to provide for destitute parents, then he is guilty of crime in God's sight.

CONCLUSION:

- A. To honor parents is to:
1. Respect them.
 2. Show gratitude to them.
 3. Take care of them if they are in need.
 4. Esteem them as dear.
- B. But if anyone (parent, loved-one, or friend) should desire you to forsake the Lord, Christ says this is the 'division' that must be (Cf. Matt. 10:34-49).
- C. Honor your Heavenly Father above all.

THE BIBLE IS RELEVANT

KENNETH MARRS

(2 Pet. 1:1-4)

INTRODUCTION: Some contend the Bible is not relevant today. See text. ALL leaves out nothing. LIFE includes things pertaining to physical life. GODLINESS pertains to our spiritual life and needs. The Bible is relevant. It simply remains for men to go to the Bible and learn of that relevance and apply it.

I. THE RELEVANCE OF THE GOSPEL TO GREAT SOCIAL ISSUES TODAY.

- A. Racism (Mark 16:15; Col. 3:11; Matt. 23:8).
- B. Rights, solved by "golden rule" and love (Matt. 7:12; 5:44; 22:39; Rom. 13:10).
- C. Freedom, equality of all in Christ (1 Cor. 7:22; 9:19; Cf. 1 Pet. 2:16).
- D. Security, a constant concern for all.
1. Civil security—afforded by the state (Rom. 13:1-4).
 2. Social security—a security in society afforded by the home from the cradle to the grave (Eph. 5:25,28,33; 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 5:4,8,16).
 3. Material security—promised the faithful (Matt. 6:33; Heb. 13:5).
 4. Spiritual security—in Christ (Eph. 1:3; Jno. 10:27-28; 2 Tim. 1:12).

- E. Labor and management (Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-4:1; 1 Tim. 6:1, 2).
- F. Jobs and Housing. These issues resolved combining previous points.
- G. Crime (Rom. 13:3-4; Gen. g:6; Eccl. 8:11). When rulers are a terror to evil works crime diminishes.
- H. Broken Homes (Rom. 7:1-3; Matt. 19:5-9).
- I. Alcoholism (Eph. 5:18; Rom. 14:21; 1 Thess. 5:22). How many problems in life this alone would solve. How relevant!
- J. Morals (1 Cor. 6:18-20; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 1 Thess. 4:3-7).
- K. Mental Health (Phil. 4:6-7).

If there is any relation between these problems and their solution then the Bible HAS to be the most relevant of all things to life today. The real purpose of the Bible to supply our spiritual needs, and this it does (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

II. THE GOSPEL IS ESPECIALLY RELEVANT TO OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE.

- A. Reveals our purpose in being (Rev. 4:11).
- B. Provides for our forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
- C. Clears our conscience (1 Pet. 3:21).
- D. Provides food to grow on (1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14).
- E. Stabilizes our life and faith (1 Thess. 3:2-3; 2 Pet. 1:12; Rom. 16:25).
- F. Gives us a joy in living (1 Pet. 1:8-9).
- G. Gives us comfort in sorrow (1 Thess. 4:18; 2 Cor. 1:3-4).
- H. Gives us hope in death (Tit. 1:2).

CONCLUSION: Man has a physical life, and he has a spiritual life. Through God and His Word we understand and are furnished everything necessary to our whole life. How much more relevant could anything be? Don't leave God and His Word out of your life.

WIVES, WIN YOUR HUSBANDS TO CHRIST

JIMMY TUTEN

(2 Peter 3:1-4)

INTRODUCTION:

1. While human law surrounds marriage with sanctions because it is viewed as a civil contract, it is God Who instituted it. It is He Who gives it the school of love and discipline of sweet self-denials.
2. Stress society's view toward marriage in Peter's day:
 - a. Divorce was frequent.
 - b. The marriage itself was regarded by Greeks in such a way that the wife was looked upon as a mistress in her husband's house, the mother to his children and the partner of *his* cares. She was not looked upon as a helpmeet, nor sharer of his joys.
 - c. This depreciation of women, when contrasted with God's view toward marriage, shows that it is still Christianity (as revealed in the Bible) that gives sweet sanctities to wedded life and quiet happiness in the house.

3. "Christian" wives and unbelieving husbands afford a great difficulty:
 - a. Then and now her religion is scorned, her Saviour insulted, she is constantly reproached and sarcasms create hardships (1 Cor. 7:13-17).
 - b. But, here is nothing more calculated to strike unbelief more favorably than the power of Christianity expressing itself in holy conduct. Herein lies the importance of our text.
 - c. Even though divisions must come (Lk. 12:49-53), wives must be peace makers!

BODY:

I. NOW, LET'S TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THE PASSAGE:

- A. "Likewise" relates this text to previous instruction (2:13-15). Regardless of who you are, citizen, servant, obedient subjection even if mistreated.
- B. "The also may without the word be won by the conservation of the wives" (3:1b).
 1. "Be won" (KJV), "be gained" (ASV), Greek KERDAINO, "to gain," hence to win over, to embrace the gospel (1 Cor. 9:19-22).
 2. "Conversation" (KJV), "behaviour" (ASV, footnote verse sixteen, "or, manner of life"). Greek ANASTROPHE, "mode of life, conduct, deportment." Stress that the English "conversation" is too limited though it includes speech.
- C. What is the passage saying? Can one be converted without the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17). The meaning of this passage hinges on the use of "word." "If any obey not *the* word," definite article, while "without (the) word be won," does not have article in the original. Therefore should be translated, "that they may, without *a word*, be won," or "that they may be won over without argument through behaviour." "Without word" means without "word from the wives." Show that one cannot be converted, or won without the Word of God (Jno. 6:44-45; Rom. 10:10, 17; Heb. 11:6).
- D. The text demonstrates the importance of influence when argumentation fails. A wife's pleas may be considered contentious, but her meekness and quietness cannot be misunderstood. "Holy life is better than holy words," someone said. Certainly worth more than train loads of sermons from her lips.

II. WHAT PETER DOES NOT ADVISE:

- A. He does not advise the wife to leave the husband (1 Cor. 7:13, this text does not authorize separation without dissolution. Verses 2-3, 5 forbid separation. Only "IF" is the application of verse 11. Cf. with 1 John 2:1, "that ye sin not," but "*if* any man sin, we have an advocate . . ."
- B. He does not advise the wife to browbeat the husband (1 Pet. 3:1). This is forbidden by the context.
- C. He does not advise the wife to neglect her service to God. One cannot rationalize Ephesians 5:22 to the point of violating Hebrews 10:25 by going fishing, camping, etc. with him. Both responsibilities exist and must be harmonized. "Manner of life" (1 Pet. 3:2), certainly requires faithfulness (Heb. 6:1-6; 4:1-2, those who "stay at home with them" or attend his beer parties had better reconsider).

D. He does not advise her to be overly concerned with her outward appearance (1 Pet. 3:3). Attractiveness and cleanliness are essential (and, cannot be over-emphasized). Primary concern is with the heart (Cf. 1 Tim. 2:9-10, 4:8).

I. WHAT PETER DOES ADVISE:

- A. Be submissive (1 Pet. 3:1). Know what this means, and its limitations (Eph. 5:22-24). "submissive," present participle, "habitual voluntary submission." The adjective "your own" signifies duty.
 - 1. Consider the "I got rights" syndrome,
 - 2. Show importance of genuineness in submission.
- B. Be reverent (1 Pet. 3:2). close to Ephesians 5:22, "submit," i.e., anxious avoidance of anything that might interfere with conjugal rights and authority. Hold him in respect and awe!
- C. Be pure and chaste (1 Pet. 3:2). In her thoughts, speech and life. A vulgar woman is a disgust to her husband. The "inward man" (Rom. 7:22; 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16; Col. 3:16).
- D. Be gentle and quiet (1 Pet. 3:4). "A calm temper, a contented mind, a heart free from passion, pride, envy and irritability; a soul not subject to the agitations and vexations of those who live for a fashion, and who seek to be distinguished for external adorning" (Albert Barnes).
 - 1. Example, taking harsh words quietly without anger (1 Tim. 2:2).
 - 2. Accepting her role will cause her to be free from the character of the world (1 Pet. 3:5-6; Gal. 3:7; Rom. 4:11).

CONCLUSION:

The wise woman "then will first choose to persuade her husband to be her associate in what is conducive to happiness. And should that be found impractical, let her by herself earnestly aim at virtue, gaining her husband's consent in everything, so as to do anything against his will, with the exception of what is reckoned as contributing to virtue and salvation."

(Clement of Alexandria).

"MY MINISTER!"

I have a minister (writes Ibsan Icabod). Time was when he was to me a good minister. I pronounced him great. This I did because I liked him.

His sermons were wonderful—As long as I liked him.

His speech was passing fair—As long as I liked him.

He was a clean liver—As long as I liked him.

He was a hard worker—As long as I liked him.

He was the man for the job—As long as I liked him.

In fact, I was strong for him—As long as I liked him.

But my minister offended *me* one day. Whether he knew it or not, I do not know. Since that day my minister has ceased to be a good minister—He is just an ordinary one.

His sermons are not so wonderful—Since he offended me.

His speech is of no account—Since he offended me.

His faults are more prominent—Since he offended me.

He is not a hard worker—Since he offended me.
He's not the man for the job—Since he offended me.
In fact, I am trying to oust him—Since he offended me.

SAILING THE C's OF SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

BENNIE LEE FUDGE

INTRODUCTION: The adventures and dangers of the old mariners in sailing the seven seas. Dangers just as great await those setting out on the voyages of matrimony. Here we discuss the seven C's of Successful marriage.

I. COMMUNICATION (1 Pet. 3:7).

- A. With one another. "Dwell with them according to knowledge."
- B. Understand physical, mental and emotional differences.
- C. Always keep lines of communication open.
- D. Tell her you love her.

H. CONCERN.

- A. Husband's concern for his wife (Eph. 5:22-33).
- B. Wife's concern for husband (Tit. 2:4).

III. COOPERATION (1 Pet. 3:1-7; Eph. 5:22-25).

- A. Wife subject to husband.
- B. Husband assumes responsibility of headship. Many today will not.

IV. COMMITMENT (Matt. 19:3-6).

- A. Prevalence of divorce and adultery.
- B. Young people must enter marriage for life.

V. COURTSHIP (1 Cor. 7:32-34).

- A. Not the courtship before marriage here. Rather, the enduring courtship, seeking to please, showing love, growing deeper as the two grow older.

VI. COMPANIONSHIP (Gen. 2:18-24).

- A. Woman was created because it was not good for man to be alone,
 - 1- No animal could share his greatest joys or deepest sorrows.
 - 2- No angel could do so.
- B. In marriage the most intimate companionship is to be enjoyed (1 Cor. 7:1-9).

VII. CHILDREN.

- A. The father has primary responsibility for training them (Eph. 6:4).
- B. The mother must do her part (1 Tim. 5:14).

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

ROLAND W. FRITZ

(Gal. 5:1-15)

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Men of today speak of freedom.
- B. During war men are "dying for freedom."
- C. Consider the four freedoms America is based on.
 - 1. Speech.
 - 2. Press.
 - 3. Worship.
 - 4. Assembly.
- D. Freedom has been shouted from the very beginning of the nations of men.
- E. There is only *one* freedom; freedom from sin and from the errors of men.
 - 1. Jesus died to make men free (Gal. 5:1).

I. FREEDOM IN CHRIST.

- A. When Christ came the whole world was lying in the evil one.
 - 1. Jews in bondage to sin (John 8:31-36).
 - 2. Gentiles to them which were no gods (Gal. 4:8).
- B. Both made free by Christ of things they could not be made free of themselves.
 - 1. Made new in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17).

II. BE NOT ENTANGLED AGAIN IN A YOKE OF BONDAGE (Gal. 5:1-15).

- A. *The Danger.* Judaism presented threat to Galatians.
 - 1. False teachers sought to entangle them: days, circumcision, etc.
 - 2. Philosophy threatened the Christians in other sections (Col. 2:8-10).
 - 3. Human traditions threatened both, and any of the three threats are fatal (Col. 2:8-10).

III. THE DANGER TODAY.

- A. Judaism again threatens the church in the form of "dispensationalism," or more commonly called "pre-millennialism." Another modernism.
- B. Evolution, human philosophy, modernism, one the product of the other, sway the elect.
- C. The traditions of various pioneers, the fathers of many denominations over against that of freedom and liberty to do our own thinking.

IV. FREEDOM IS NOT A LICENSE.

- A. Christians were then and are now in danger of the world. The things studied above can lead to it.
 - 1. Freedom is maintained in doing right (Gal. 5:13-16).
 - 2. The greatest threat today is that of the world. That of living after the flesh and not after the spirit.
 - 3. In biting and devouring all are consumed.

CONCLUSION.

- A. God is only pleased with our doing right.
 - 1. The law added nothing to their completeness.
 - 2. Neither will it or any other but the grace of God add to our completeness.
- B. We are free men in Christ. This does not give us license to do wrong, for to live after the flesh is death (Rom. 8:12-13).

THE GOSPEL

STANLEY J. LOVETT

(Rom. 1:1-7)

INTRODUCTION: *The New Testament discusses the Gospel. The term "gospel" means "glad tidings," "good tidings," "good news," or "joyful news." Everyone likes good news; hence, let us study about the Good News of the N.T.*

I. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF GOD (Rom. 1:1).

- A. Man can bring good tidings; much more so God (1 Cor. 2:9).
- B. This glad tidings was promised by God in the scriptures (Rom. 1:2).
- C. Once a mystery it is now revealed (Eph. 6:19).
- D. It is the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24).
 - 1. How great and joyous must be the tidings from such a source!
- E. It is the gospel of the glory of the blessed God (1 Tim. 1:1).
- F. Thus, in the gospel God's glory may be beheld. Hence, it is good news of God's glory and grace (Cf. Heb. 1:3).

II. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF HIS SON (Rom 1:9).

- A. The glad tidings concern God's Son (Rom. 1:3).
 - 1. He was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4).
- B. The gospel of Jesus Christ and of the Lord Jesus (Cf. Mark 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:8-9).
 - 1. Thus, the Son is Jesus Christ the Lord.
 - 2. Jesus means "savior." Hence, the good news concerns something saved.
 - 3. Christ means "anointed." He is the anointed (Messiah) one that should come thru the line of David (Rom. 1:3).
 - 4- Lord means he is Ruler and Master of all (Eph. 1:20-23).
- C. Hence, it is good news of God's grace and glory exhibited in His Son who is the anointed Lord and Savior.

III. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION (Rom. 1:13).

- A. It is good news concerning salvation from sins.
- B. Jesus came to save from sins (Matt. 1:21).
 - 1. He died for men's sins (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

IV. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF PEACE (Eph. 6:15).

- A. It makes peace with God (Rom. 5:1).
- B. It makes peace between men (Eph. 2:15-18).
- C. It makes peace in the heart (John 14:27; Col. 3:15).

V. IT IS THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL (Acts 15:7).

- A. This *good news is conveyed through the medium of words.*
 - 1. It is the truth of the gospel (Col. 3:15).
 - 2. It has been fully revealed (Eph. 3:4-5).
 - 3- It is from God and not of man (Gal. 1:11-12).
- B. It must be preached (Acts 15:7).
- C. It must be believed (Mark 16a 5-16).
- D. It must be obeyed (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).

VI. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF HOPE.

- A. It promises eternal life (Tit. 1: i; 3:7).
- B. Eternal life is held in hope and promise now, which will be revealed in the life to come (Cf. Rom. 8:24; 1 Jno. 2:25).

VII. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM (Matt. 4:23).

- A. The gospel when preached and accepted produces a spiritual king-

dom which is the antithesis of the kingdom of Satan (Col. 1:13; Acts 8:12).

VIII. IT IS THE GOSPEL OF THE CIRCUMCISION AND THE UNCIRCUMCISION.

A. Thus, it is the universal gospel (Mark 16:15, 16).

IX. IT IS THE EVERLASTING GOOD TIDINGS (Rev. 14:6).

A. God wills that it be preached until the end of time (Matt. 28:20).

CROSS CENTERED RELIGION

R. E. CORNS

INTRODUCTION:

All of Christianity centers around the cross of Christ. Let us consider the importance of the cross.

I. THE CHURCH CENTERS AROUND THE CROSS.

A. The blood shed on the cross purchased the church (Acts 20:28).

1. If one can be saved outside of the church he can be saved without being "blood bought."

B. The Head of the church is he who died on cross (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23).

C. The gospel is that which grew out of the cross (1 Cor. 1:18). (Cf. 1 Tim. 3:15-16).

II. REDEMPTION CENTERS AROUND THE CROSS (John 3:14).

A. Redemption through his blood (Eph. 1:7), with reconciliation (Eph. 2:10).

B. Fellowship with Him and His blood (1 Jno. 1:7).

C. Reach salvation in His death through baptism (Cf. Rom. 6:3-4; Ax. 2:41; 22:16).

III. OBSERVANCE CENTERS AROUND THE CROSS (1 Cor. 11:26).

A. We do shew forth the Lord's death through the Lord's Supper.

B. Jesus could have set a cross on every corner but he did not, instead he gave this memorial.

IV. SEPARATION OF GOD'S COVENANTS CENTER AROUND THE CROSS.

A. Law of Moses died when Jesus died (Col. 2:14).

B. The Law was temporary (Gal. 3:19).

C. The N.T. could not go into effect until Christ died (Heb. 9:16-17).

1. We are to hear Jesus (Matt. 17:1-5).

V. SALVATION CENTERS AROUND THE CROSS.

A. Jesus died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3).

B. Jews made sacrifices for sins. Jesus was Lamb of God (John 1:29; Rom. 6:17, 18).

PRIVILEGES AND OBLIGATIONS

KEITH MAJOR

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Being children of God and joint-heirs with Christ carries certain privileges.
- B. However, there are certain obligations as well. Let us consider them both.

I. THE PRIVILEGES:

- A. God is our Father (Cf. Matt. 6:9).
 - 1. Consider the other relationships (2 Cor. 6:17, 18; Rom. 8:17).
- B. We may wear the proper name (Acts 11:26; Acts 4:12).
- C. Enjoy the protection of God (I Pet. 3:13, 14).
- D. We receive the proper provisions.
 - 1. Water unto eternal life (John 4:13-14).
 - 2. Bread of life (John 6:51).
- E. Enjoy the promises.
 - 1. Remission of past sins (Acts 2:38).
 - 2. Access through prayer and repentance (Acts 8:22; I Jno. 2:1, 2).

II. THE OBLIGATIONS:

- A. Must respect the authority of God.
 - 1. Consider Israel in the flesh (Ex. 20:3, 4).
 - 2. We today (Matt. 4:10; Matt. 28:18-20).
- B. We must honor the name (Jas. 2:7; Matt. 5:16).
- C. We must defend the cause (Phil. 1:17).
 - 1. Wear the armor of God (Eph. 6:17).
 - 2. Have respect for the word (Rom. 1:16).
- D. Be active accomplishers of Gods will (James 1:22).
- E. Obey the commands (Rev. 22:14).

BE NOT ANXIOUS

JERRY PARKER

(Matt. 6:34)

INTRODUCTION: We are not to be anxious for the things of tomorrow. We worry too much about what we are going to do in the future. Define anxiety.

I. ANXIETY INDICATES A LACK OF TRUST IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

- A. God takes care of the birds in Heaven (Matt. 6:26).
 - 1. We have his promise he will care for us (1 Pet. 5:7).
- B. Abraham was told "fear not" (Gen. 15:1).
- C. An aspect of faith is trusting in God (Phil. 4:6; Rom. 8:37-39).
- D. Make it our aim to seek spiritual things (Matt. 6:19-21; Col. 3:1-2).

II. ANXIETY CAN SHORTEN OUR LIFE ON THE EARTH.

- A. Acute worry (anxiety) curtails the function of mind and body.
 - 1. Many mental breakdowns because of uncertainty.

- B. It hinders our working for Jesus today (Luke 9:57-62).
- C. The Christian's life is to be used in His service (1 Cor. 6:19-20).
- D. Place our trust in God who will provide (Psa. 55:22; Rom. 8:31, Phil. 4:13).

III. ANXIETY IS A MARK OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD.

- A. Material goods are of a transitory nature (Matt. 6:31-32).
- B. Must be able to see beyond this life. Consider examples:
 - 1. Abraham (Heb. 11:9-10).
 - 2. Moses (Heb. 11:24-27).
- C. Time eventually takes its toll of everything (1 Jno. 2:15-17).
- D. Need to keep our thoughts and actions on nobler plane (Phil. 4:8).
- E. Life, work, labor today. The secret of contentment (Matt. 6:34).

IV. BE NOT ANXIOUS BUT SEEK FIRST HIS KINGDOM.

- A. Jesus said we are to love our enemies (Luke 6:27-28).
 - 1. Can hurt ourselves by hating others.
- B. Happiness is within, knowing you are striving for that which is eternal (Col. 3:1-2; Phil. 4:13-14).
- C. Each one has his own burdens and heartaches (Gal. 6:5; Jas. 1:2-4).
- D. Jesus will help us if we let him (Matt. 11:28-30).
 - 1. Consider song, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

CONCLUSION: The entrance into safety and contentment is in Jesus Christ. He stands at the door of your heart and desires to come in (Rev. 3:20). The door into Christ is the door into the church (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-5; Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38-41).

THE LORD'S SUPPER EVERY WEEK?

GUTHRIE DEAN

INTRODUCTION: Church History. Pliny in A. D. 107 mentions that the Christians met on a stated day and worshipped. Ignatius (108 A.D.) says that the day was the first day of the week, the Lord's day. Barnabas (120 A.D.) wrote: "Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day, also, on which Jesus rose again from the dead." Justin Martyr (140 A.D.): "Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead." Tertullian (204 A.D.), wrote: "The church of Christ composed of baptized believers, does meet each Lord's day to humn praise unto God and to partake of the Supper as was the custom of the Apostles." Dr. Mason says, (Church History for Busy People, p. 86), that "communion every Lord's day was universal, and was preserved in the Greek church till the seventh century." On the same page, 'Calvin says, 'Every week at least, the table of the Lord should have been spread for Christian assemblies.' John Wesley says, T also advise the elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's day.' A. Campbell writes, 'All antiquity concurs in evincing that, for the first three centuries, all the churches broke bread once a week.'" Pliny, in his Epistles, Book X., Justin Mar-

tyr, in his Second Apology for the Christians and Tertullian, De Oral, p. 135, testify that it was the universal practice in all the weekly assemblies of the brethren, after they had prayed and sung praises.

I. THE BIBLE AND THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

- A. The Lord's day is mentioned in prophecy and type in O.T. (Cf. Rev. 1:10).
 - 1. David, "This is the day the Lord hath made" (Psa. 118:22-24).
 - a. Compare fulfillment (Acts 4:10-11, Mark 16:9).
 - 2. Moses, "On the morrow after the Sabbath" (Lev. 23:10-11).
 - a. A type of Christ rising from the dead, and becoming the "first fruits of them that slept." When? What day? "On the morrow after the Sabbath" (Cf. 1 Cor. 15:20).

II. NOTICE THE FOLLOWING REFERENCES TO THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

- A. Christ was raised on this day (Mark 16:9).
- B. On this day Christ opened the scriptures to his disciples on the way to Emmaus.
- C. God began his creation on this day.
- D. The Jews met in Jerusalem to keep Pentecost on this day (Lev. 23:13-15).
- E. On the first day the Lord appeared to His disciples at least twice after the resurrection.
- F. On the first day the Lord's church was established and about 3,000 souls added to it (Cf. Acts 2:37-47; Acts 1:15; Luke 24:47).
- G. On this day the H. S. of promise descended on the saints (Acts 2:1-4).
- H. The gospel was first preached in FACT (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:22-37).
- I. Saints were to lay by in store on the first day (1 Cor. 16:1-3).

III. THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

- A. They continued steadfastly (Acts 2:42).
- B. Upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).
- C. Compare translations on the above verse.

IV. BLESSINGS INVOLVED IN THE TAKING OF THE SUPPER.

- A. We are obeying the commandment of Jesus (Matt. 26:26-28).
- B. We are remembering our Lord (1 Cor. 11:24-25).
- C. We show forth His death till he returns (1 Cor. 11:26).
- D. We discern the benefits of His death (1 Cor. 11:29).
- E. An improper observance brings a curse (1 Cor. 11:30). Therefore, a proper observance would bring a blessing.
- F. We enjoy the open communion of His body and blood (1 Cor. 10:16).
- G. Read the following (John 6:53-56), see Johnson's New Testament With Notes; and the Fourfold Gospel by McGarvey, p. 389.

WOMEN TEACHERS

KENNETH HIRSHEY

INTRODUCTION: In today's religious bodies women hold various positions of authority. What does the Bible teach on this subject?

I. WOMAN'S DUTIES IN MARRIAGE, FAMILY, AND IN THE HOME.

- A. She is to bear and bring up children (I Tim. 5:10).
- B. She is to bear children and guide the house (I Tim. 5:14).
- C. Woman cannot neglect her marital duties and be saved (I Tim. 2:13-15; I Cor. 7:3).
- D. A Woman has a responsibility to teach, guide and train her children in knowledge of God and his word (II Tim. 1:5; 3:15; Ax. 16:1).
- E. Wife has a responsibility to her husband (I Pet. 3:1-2).

II. WOMAN'S DUTIES OUTSIDE THE HOME.

- A. In early times, women prophesied (Ax. 2:18; 21:9; I Cor. 14:3, 31).
- B. Women teach other women (Titus 2:3-5).
- C. In her God-given position, woman may teach men (Ax. 18:26; Col. 3:16). Note: The text restricts woman, in her teaching of men, to a position of subjection.

III. RESTRICTIONS PLACED UPON WOMAN IN I TIM. 2:11-12

- A. Woman is to *Learn* in silence and to be in *silence*.
 1. The meaning is not absence of all sound, else woman could not obey (Eph. 5:19), sing (Matt. 10:32), confess (Rom. 10:9-10).
 2. The silence is qualified and the qualifications must be determined by study of other teaching on this subject. Note: The same word translated as silence in I Tim. 2:11-12 is translated quietness in II Thess. 3:12 (KJV). In the ASV it appears as quietness in both places.
- B. Woman is not permitted to teach nor usurp authority over man.
 1. Does this mean she is not to teach at all?
 - a. Ax. 16:1; II Tim. 1:5; 3:15; —Teaching her children.
 - b. I Pet. 3:1-2; —Wives "by conversation" teach husband.
 - c. Titus 3:3-5; —Women teaching younger women.
 - d. Acts 18:26 and Col. 3:16; —teaching by joint singing.
 2. We must conclude that this "suffer not a woman to teach" is not absolute, but is qualified by other teaching on the subject.
 - a. Must be in subjection to man—(I Tim. 2:13-14).
 - b. She must sing in the public assembly (Col. 3:16; I Tim. 2:11-12). Singing and participating in discussion publically is within woman's subjective role, yet she cannot lead same.
- C. I Tim. 2:11-12 applies to woman both in and outside the assembly, just as does I Tim. 2:9-10. If we accept the complete silence and the abstinence from teaching, woman could not teach her children nor could she speak while learning, but she would need to be mute.

V. RESTRICTIONS PLACED UPON WOMAN IN I COR. 14:34-35.

- A. Who are the "your women"? The 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of I Corinthians deal with spiritual gifts, verses 29 through 33 speak to prophets. Paul addresses prophets in verse 34 when he says "your women" and in verse 35 "let them ask their husbands at home."
- B. "let your women keep Silence . . . For it is not permitted unto them to speak."

- i. Silence from greek "sigao"—means not a sound.
2. Speak means: "make vocal utterance, to talk."
3. It is apparent that in certain assemblies women could not utter a sound while in others she was commanded to sing, confess, etc.

CONCLUSION: Woman must be in subjection to man, in keeping with her proper position.

TIME TO AWAKE

BOB G. NEALY

(Eph. 5:14-17)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Paul was writing to the Ephesians.
2. This was a problem in church in latter days . . . (Rev. 2:4).
3. This is problem of many Christians today:
 - a. Real zealous when first obey gospel.
 - b. Real zealous in a New Work.

I. THE BODY:

- A. Time for Christians to AWAKE to RESPONSIBILITIES.
 1. Many don't realize any responsibility.
 - a. Christian in name.
 - b. Offer lip service only.
 2. Need to realize responsibility because:
 - a. We are purchased by Christ... (I Cor. 1:19-20; Rom. 2:1-2).
 - b. We are to serve in His Kingdom . . . (Phil. 2:12; Tit. 1:16; Rev. 3:2).
- B. Time to AWAKE because of THE LOST WORLD.
 1. More people dying in sin than ever before.
 2. Men are lost and need a saviour . . . (I Tim. 1:15).
 3. Christians- need to teach man about sin . . . (I Tim. 4:12-16).
 - a. Sin is of Satan . . . (I John 3:8).
 - b. Sin is deceptive . . . (2 Tim. 3:13).
 - c. False teachers . . . (I John 4:1; 2 Cor. 11:13-15).
- C. Need to AWAKE to STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH.
 1. Large attendance doesn't make strong church.
 2. Wealth doesn't make strong church.
 3. An AWAKE, CONVERTED membership makes strong church.
 - a. These will work.
 - b. They will sacrifice time and money.
 - c. RESULT . . . a growing church.
- D. Time to AWAKE people concerning the JUDGMENT.
 1. Some think no judgment... (2 Pet. 3:4-7).
 2. The certainty of the judgment.
 - a. A Judge . . . (John 5:22, 27-29).
 - b. A time for the judgment. . . (Ax. 17:30-31).
 - c. The way of judgment determined . . . (Rev. 20:11-15).

CONCLUSION:

It is time to AWAKE and prepare for Heaven if we are ever to do so.

THE DANGERS TO THE SOUL

WILLIAM C. SEXTON

INTRODUCTION: See Vine's Dictionary for definition of soul.

1. The soul is the most important part of a man (Matt. 10:28).
2. Let us notice three distinct dangers facing the soul.
3. We are always mindful of dangers in this life: Driving, Health, etc.

I. INFORMATIONAL: Doctrines (Gal. 1:5-9; 5:7; Jno. 8:32).

- A. Contrary to many, doctrine is important; we must be informed.
 1. In life we see the need for correct information. Children are taught before allowed to practice.
 2. Truth works in the believer (1 Thess. 2:13).
 3. Inspired scriptures are profitable for doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16).
 4. Belief of truth is part of process of selection (2 Thess. 2:13).
 5. Necessity of abiding within that doctrine (2 Jno. 9).
- B. False doctrine is one of MAJOR dangers (Gal. 1:5-9).
 1. Ignorance of truth is disastrous (2 Thess. 2:12; Rom. 10:1-3).
 2. Misinformed poses a threat (Matt. 24:4, 12; 24:28; 1 Tim. 4:1-3, 2 Tim. 4:1-3; Col. 2:22; Tit. 1:9; 1:11-14; 2 Jno. 9:11).
 3. Israel was led away by false teachers (Isa. 29:13; Jer. 2:13).
- C. Yet, denominationalists believe that doctrine is not important.

II. BEHAVIORISTIC: Conduct.

- A. Conduct, contrary to many, is significant.
 1. Conversion, change is essential (Acts 3:19).
 - a. Enlightenment of the understanding (Acts 15:9; 26:18).
 - b. Repentance, sorrow for sin, determination to act correctly, lead to change (Matt. 21:28-29).
 - c. Includes a changed relationship (Rom. 6:18).
 2. Holy upright life is required (Heb. 12:14).
 3. Grace of God teaches both negative and positive action (Tit. 2:1 iff).
- B. Many temptations (Jas. 1:13-15).
 1. Consider acts which exclude all from Heaven (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19-20).
 2. Some things socially acceptable are wrong in God's eyes.
 3. God's word is the standard (2 Tim. 3:16; 3:1-6).
- C. Some members apparently think that conduct is unimportant.
 1. Have a form of Godliness but deny the *power* (2 Tim. 3:5).
 2. Profess to know but in works deny Him (Tit. 1:16; 1 Jno. 2:3).

III. EMOTIONAL: Concerns, Attitude, Indifference.

- A. As a man THINKS in his heart, so is he (Prov. 23:7).
 1. Love of God and truth must be above all else (Matt. 22:37-39).
 2. The result of appreciating truth (Prov. 23:23; Jno. 8:32).
- B. Indifference—lukewarmness is a real danger (Rev. 3:15-19).
 1. It is better to be hostile to truth than to be lukewarm.
 2. If one believes the truth he will show it by his actions.
- C. Many suffer from this malady.
 1. Unwilling to investigate matters and act on them.
 2. Just pass the teaching by, without sufficient interest.

CONCLUSION: Let us beware of the listed dangers and guard against them. There are others as well, we should be equally alert.

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

JACK GIBBERT

INTRODUCTION: Thoroughly define the term. Note that we do not strictly oppose social reform, but that it is our view that the church is not a social institution.

I. SOCIAL GOSPELISM IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

- A. The money changers in the temple (Jno. 2:13-17).
 - 1. Why did Jesus do the things he did?
 - 2. Was he "anti" money changer or animal merchant?
 - 3. Or, was it the perversion of spiritual things at the temple?
- B. Paul bore record of these people (Rom. 10:1-3).
 - 1. In their zeal they had made God's house a "house of merchandise" (See the above passage).
 - 2. Their zeal was the type without knowledge.
 - 3. In failing to understand God's purposes it would be easy to pervert the worship and work of the Lord.
- C. In the above light, consider some children of God today.
 - 1. Christ upon entering modern meeting houses would have to overthrow coffee pots, break up the stoves, and throw out the refrigerators. In so doing he would be branded "anti" coffee, food, etc.
 - 2. Christ's rebuke would be, "Make not my Father's house a place of common meals and entertainment.
- D. Such people are lovers of self and pleasures (See, 2 Tim. 3:1-7).

II. PAUL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SUCH INVOLVEMENT ON THE PART OF THE CHURCH.

- A. Notice Paul's attitude toward perverting spiritual things to the pleasure of carnal appetites (1 Cor. 11:20-22).
 - 1. Some argue that Paul had the communion under consideration and not "fellowship" halls. Agreed, but notice. . . . The thing condemned is turning the gatherings of the saints into an occasion for a common meal (1 Cor. 11:20-22; 11:34).
 - 2. Refer to the above case of the Jews. Could they not have conducted their business before going to the temple?
 - 3. Likewise today. Brethren need to conduct social affairs in those places where it is proper to conduct such.

III. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR "FELLOWSHIP" DINNERS, AND SUCH LIKE.

- A. Brethren proudly point to their increased attendance due to such affairs.
- B. This amounts to saying, "We can give you Christ and Him crucified, and if that is not enough we will give you coffee and doughnuts as well."
- C. Paul forbade the use of such inducements when he stated the ONLY thing which can convert (See, 1 Cor. 2:1-5).
 - 1. What kind of people are gained by any other method?
 - 2. The kind that left the Lord when the food was stopped (Cf. Jno. 6:26, 27; and vs. 66).
- D. When their bellies are full they will quit that which converted them.

CONCLUSION: Let us consider the lofty purposes the Lord gave for the church and return unto them (1 Pet. 3:12-17, 4:12-19).

STANDING BETWEEN WOE AND GO

COY PERKINS

(1 Cor. 9:16)

INTRODUCTION: Christ gave the great commission (Matt. 28:19, 20, Mark 16:15).

1. Woe unto me if I go and preach not the gospel (Text).
2. We know the gospel is God's power to save (Gal. 1:6-9; Rom. 1:16). Note the danger of perverting the power of God to save.
3. We see there is no hope for the man who hears the power of God to save and rejects it.
4. It is good to see so many apparently strong in the Gospel, yet I fear many of us are weak on the GO.

I. GO AND PREACH THE GOSPEL.

- A. This is certainly to the preacher.
 1. But, if I am able to go and do not, have I violated God's word?
 2. I find condemnation to those who pervert (Gal. 1:7).
 3. They who do not obey are condemned (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 4. What about us who go not to preach the word?
- B. Many depend on our preaching the word for salvation (Rom. 10:14).
 1. The church is the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim. 3:15).
 2. The truth is needed in order to be set free (Jno. 8:32)
 3. Thus, going is as important to saints as baptism is for non saints.
- C. All living things reproduce themselves.
 1. How are we reproducing spiritually?
 2. In how many hearts has the seed been planted that brings faith (See; Rom. 10:17)?
 3. One of the purposes of the word was to bring faith (Jno. 20:30-31).
 4. The Devil knows how growth is produced (Cf. Luke 8:12).

II. MEN CANNOT BE DRAWN TO GOD APART FROM BEING TAUGHT OF HIM.

- A. It is impossible to have gospel fruit without first sowing the seed of the kingdom. (Matt. 13:3-8).
- B. The Father draws sinners unto Christ thru the word (Jno. 6:44, 45).
- C. Christ places it first in the system of conversion (Read Matt. 13).
 1. Teaching gives,
 2. Understanding, which leads to,
 3. Turning or conversion, and,
 4. Healing or forgiveness.
 5. Take away the teaching and what follows?

III. THE LORD'S WORK IS THE BEGETTING POWER IN THE PROCESS OF THE NEW BIRTH.

- A. Physical birth requires begetting power, likewise spiritual (1 Pet. 1:23).
- B. Where there is no preaching, there is no salvation (Rom. 10:13-14).

IV. INCONSISTENCY OF SOME SECTS TODAY WITH REFERENCE TO THIS POINT.

- A. Contends for direct operation of Holy Spirit, —but conduct campaigns, missionary programs, etc., when there would be no need.

CONCLUSION: Let us feel our responsibilities in this matter and carry them out.

THE GOSPEL IN DAILY LIFE

WALTON WEAVER

(I Cor. 15:1-4)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Define "gospel:" *eu*, meaning well, and *aggelos*, meaning messenger. Commonly rendered "glad tidings" or "good news" in the N.T. (Lk. 1:19; 2:10; 8:1; Acts 15:7; 20:24; Rom. 10:15).
- B. In the N.T. the gospel is described as follows:
 1. The gospel *of God* (I Thess. 2:2; 9; I Tim. 1:11), because God is the ultimate source of it.
 2. The gospel *of Christ* (Rom. 15:19; I Cor. 9:12; Gal. 1:7), because Christ is the subject, object, and very life of it.
 3. The gospel *of the grace of God* (Acts 20:24), because it is the medium of God's grace to man.
 4. The gospel *of peace* (Eph. 6:15), because through it man makes peace with both God and self.
 5. The gospel *of your salvation* (Eph. 1:13), because it brings salvation home to us.

I. THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE GOSPEL

- A. The case of Saul.
 1. Note his condition before the gospel was preached to him?
 - a. Though he was right (Acts 26:9).
 - b. Had a good conscience (Acts 24:16).
 - c. Gloried in his race (Phil. 3:4ff.).
 - d. Persecuted the church (Acts 26:10-11).
 - e. Unfavorable state of mind (Acts 8:3; 9:13).
 - z. The change: "And *straightway* in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20).
- B. The Corinthians (I Cor. 15:1-4 with 6:9-11).

II. THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORD OF GOD.

- A. The christian life is one filled with and motivated by the word of God.
 1. To dwell in our hearts (Col. 3:16).
 2. To abide in us (Jno. 15:7).
- B. When must the christian life be filled with the word of God?
 1. All day long (Psa. 119:97).
 2. Day and night (Psa. 1:2).
 3. Day by day: take up cross daily (Lk. 9:23); die daily (I Cor. 15:31); exhort daily (Heb. 3:13).

CONCLUSION:

- A. One knows the word of God is abiding in him by whether he is abiding in the word.
 - x. By this we know we are Christ's disciples (Jno. 8:31-32).
 2. By this (our abiding in His word) we know we know Him (1 Jno. 2:3-4), and God's love has been perfected in us (1 Jno. 2:5). Only then do we know we are in Him (1 Jno. 2:5-6).
- B. As His seed abides in us we cannot practice sinning (1 Jno. 3:6, 9).

THREE GREAT TESTS

LLOYD MOYER

INTRODUCTION:

- A. There is wisdom in testing things—autos, planes, foods, etc.
- B. Jesus was "tried" or tested (Cf. Isa. 28:16; 1 Pet. 2:4-6; Abraham, Gen. 22:16).
- C. Many such tests brought upon Christians (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12).
 - 1. Hence the necessity of God's people being prepared.
 - 2. God has so designed the plan of salvation that we will be properly tested so as to be prepared to serve faithfully.

I. TEST NUMBER ONE. FAITH IN JESUS AS THE SON OF GOD.

- A. Required (Mtt. 10:32-33; 16:16; Jno. 8:24; 20:30-31; Rom. 1:4; 10:10; Acts 8:37; Phil. 1:11).
- B. This firm conviction given one victory over world (1 Jno. 5:5; 9-13).
 - 1. The testimony (Luke 1:26-38; Matt. 1:18-25).
- C. Jesus was Divine, Diety, Superhuman (not just a man).
- D. Born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14).
 - 1. Contrary to nature, but must be believed (This is the test).
- E. Those who believe this are not apt to falter at anything else he is required to believe or do (Note: Since one would HAVE to know the facts of life before he could intelligently make this confession: this might determine WHEN one is old enough to obey the gospel).

II. TEST NUMBER TWO. REPENTANCE DEMANDS A FEELING OF GUILT.

- A. (Cf. 2 Cor. 7:8-10; Acts 17:30).
- B. Worldly wisdom contrary. Should never have "guilt complex." Repentance demands that the natural "urges" be controlled, while the world says, "No, let every urge be satisfied."
- C. Repentance produces a drastic change in one's life.
 - 1. May affect our financial standing.
 - 2. Our social life (1 Pet. 4:4).
 - 3. Our associates (1 Cor. 15:33).
 - 4. Our family and loved ones (Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26).

III. TEST NUMBER THREE. BAPTISM IN WATER. (Cf. Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12-13; 1 Pet. 3:21).

- A. This is a very foolish thing to the worldly minded.
- B. God has chosen the foolish things (1 Cor. 1:18-29).
 - 1. Cf. Naaman, Noah, Gideon's army, capture of Jericho, etc.
 - 2. All these foolish in the eyes of the world.

CONCLUSION: The three things God demands of one to become a Christian are, indeed, tests. When properly obeyed they prepare one for the life to be lived in God's service.

A TENDER HEART FOR TRUTH

LARRY R. DEVORE

INTRODUCTION: Josiah (640-608 B. C; 2 Kings 22).

- A. He was one of the few kings that was praised by the writer (vs. 1-2).
- B. Josiah's mother is mentioned in the account. This shows us the importance of the mother-child relationship (Cf. Prov. 22:6).

I. JOSIAH'S FAITHFULNESS (vs. 2).

- A. He was faithful. Can we be less faithful? (Cf. Matt. 7:13-14).
- B. Israel was indifferent to God's way. They departed from the temple worship and were worshipping Baal.
- C. Today's "permissive society" very similar, "free love," etc.

H. JOSIAH REPAIRS THE TEMPLE (vs. 3-7).

- A. He was faithful to God and wanted the temple worship restored.
- B. The church also should correct decay and indifference. Not only maintain building but turn back to God (Matt. 5:8; James 4:8).

III. DEALING FAITHFULLY (vs. 7).

- A. No need to call for an accounting because they DEALT FAITHFULLY.
- B. Christians who love God will faithfully do God's work (1 Cor. 4:2).
- C. At the judgment we ALL will have to account (2 Cor. 5:10).

IV. LAW FOUND IN THE TEMPLE (vs. 8).

- A. The Bible itself lost in the Lord's house!
- B. This was the trouble with Israel. They disregarded the Word (Hos. 4:)
- C. Folks today never open nor study the Bible (2 Tim. 2:15).

V. JOSIAH'S REACTION (vs. 11-13).

- A. He recognized the value of this Book. He realized the destitute spiritual condition of Israel and had Godly sorrow for their sins (vs. 11).
- B. He desired more light—more truth (vs. 12).
- C. We should be seekers for God's truth (John 17:17; Acts 17:11).
- D. God's mercy was extended to Josiah (vs. 19-20). This is the KEY verse. If we would be found well-pleasing in God's sight we MUST be likeminded (Jas. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:5-7; 2 Chron. 7:14).

VI. JOSIAH SHARED THE TRUTH WITH OTHERS (2 Kings 23:1-3).

- A. He recognized its value—wanted to share it with others.
 - 1. He read the Law in their hearing—All, both small and great.
- B. They all agreed to subscribe to it. "stood in the covenant."
- C. Josiah instituted many reforms (Chapter 23).
 - 1. Outwardly corrected but were not converted in their hearts.
 - 2. After his death the people returned to idolatry.
- D. His death fulfilled the prophecy that he should not see all the evil that was to come to Israel (vs. 28-30).

CONCLUSION:

- A. Is your heart tender for hearing the truth?
- B. Will you do the Father's will (Jas. 1:21; Matt. 7:21).

BE NOT PARTAKER OF OTHER'S SINS

HIRAM HUTTO

(I Tim. 5:17-22)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Sin, its nature, spread consequences, and punishment.
- B. The Bible principle of "partaking" (1 Sam. 30:24; Matt. 10:40-42).

I. WAYS OF PARTAKING OF OTHER MEN'S SINS.

- A. Commit a sin together (Cf. Ananias and Saphira, Acts 5).
 - 1. (Prov. 1:1-15).
- B. Commit the same sin separately.
 - 1. Recall the refrain, "sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin."
 - 2. "As your fathers ..." (Acts 7:51; Cf. Matt. 23:29-31, Eph. 5:3-7).

II. DON'T ACTUALLY COMMIT THE SIN, BUT CONSENT WITH THOSE WHO DO.

- A. Saul of Tarsus (Acts 8:1; 22:30).
- B. Some argue that they don't do it, but endorse those who do.
 - 1. Cf. "Conservative" churches recognizing "Liberal" ones.
 - 2. Some don't drink but argue for it in doubt.

III. KNOW ANOTHER'S GUILT BUT FAIL TO ACT, REBUKE, AND EXPOSE.

- A. All that is needed for evil to prosper is for good men to do nothing.
 - 1. Ezekial's responsibility (Ez. 3:17-21; Eli's, 1 Sam. 3:13).
- B. Certain preachers "believe the truth" but keep quiet.
- C. Churches which refuse to withdraw from the disorderly (1 Cor. 5).

IV. BY EXAMPLE AND INFLUENCE.

- A. Embolden the weak (1 Cor. 8:10-12).
- B. Encourage the wicked (Ez. 13:22). May need to investigate situation.

V. IMPROPER ASSOCIATION.

- A. Encourages him or causes us to sin (James 4:1-4; Eph. 5:1-7).

VI. ENDORSING THE UNFAITHFUL AS ELDERS (1 Tim. 5:17-22).

- A. There is a good possibility that the text has specific reference to the appointment of men to be elders who don't deserve such.

VII. TEACHING THAT RESULTS IN SIN.

- A. Teaching "once saved, always saved" does result in acting like it.
- B. (Cf. Jer. 23:14).

VIII. FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING ERROR.

- A. (2 Jno. 10).
- B. A good side to this principle (Phil. 4:15-16; 1:3).

CONCLUSION:

- A. Both those who sin and those who partake are guilty and will suffer unless they repent.
- B. Don't partake with evil, rather imitate the good (3 Jno. 11).

TRUE KNOWLEDGE AND ITS EFFECT

FERRELL JENKINS

INTRODUCTION:

1. Paul prays that brethren at Colossae be filled with the knowledge of His will. Note other similar admonitions:
 - a. Let word of Christ dwell in you richly (Col. 3:16).
 - b. Knowledge must be added to faith (2 Pet, 1:5).
 - c. Grow in knowledge (2 Pet. 3:18).
 2. This is to be in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.
 3. True knowledge should result in RIGHT CONDUCT. Paul mentions three characteristics of life that should follow.
- I. A LIFE OF SERVICE** (vs. 10).
- A. Walk worthily—what a challenge!
 1. Of the calling (of God, Acts 2:39; Cf. Eph- 4:1).
 2. Worthy of gospel (Phil. 1:27), there is a standard.
 - B. Bearing fruit—in every good work.
 1. We are raised to bear fruit (Rom. 7:4).
 2. Every branch must bear fruit (Jno. 15:1-8).
 3. Ready to every good work (Tit. 3:1, 8, 14| Cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - C. Increasing in (ASV footnote says "by") the knowledge.
 1. All spiritual growth depends on. the knowledge of God's, will. Not by hum. philosophy, social gospel, recreation, (Col. 2:8-10).
- II. A LIFE OF STRENGTH** (vs. 11).
- A. Christians need to know that power and to have it (Eph. 1:19-20).
 - B. Know him and the power of His resurrection (Phil. 3:10).
 - C. As we work for Him, God works in us (Phil. 2:12-13)
 - D. Can do all through him (Phil. 4:13).
 - E. Result: Unto patience (steadfastness) and longsuffering with Joy. (See; Mat. 5:10-12; Acts 5:41).
- III. A LIFE OF PRAISE** (vs. 12).
- A. Praise to the Father (denotes children) for His blessings.
 1. Made us "meet"—denotes privilege, position, right. Fit or suitable.
 2. Partakers of inheritance of saints in light.
 - a. Once in darkness, now in light (Eph. 5:8).
 - b. Sons of Light (1 Thess. 5:5).
 - c. Must continue in light (1 Jno. 1:7).
 3. Delivered us—translated us (vs. 13-14).
 - a. Love of God involved.
 - b. Redemption.
 - B. How grateful we should be that God provided, gospel was preached, we responded.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Each should be encouraged to study God's will—to develope.
- B. This passage provides a good goal for a meeting, Bible study classes, regular work together, etc. We need to gain a better knowledge. The result should be a Life of Service, Strength, and Praise.

"THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD"

PRYDE HINTON

(Isa. 2:1-4)

I. THE PROPHET DID NOT SAY "THE LORD'S HOUSE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED," ETC., HE SAID: THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOUSE."

- A. The New Testament teaches that we, God's children, are the house of God, the church of the living God (I Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:1-6; I Pet. 4:17-18).
 - 1. The "we" and "us" are the house of God. We have not been *exalted* but we will in due time (I Pet. 5:6).
- B. I need only to turn to Psalms 2:6-7 and Daniel 2:44-45 to see that the "mountain" in the Bible stood for the head of government, whether earthly or heavenly.
- C. Ephesians 1:18-23 explains in detail how Christ was raised from the dead, exalted and given the place of supreme authority.

II. ACTS 2:22-35 GIVES THE ACCOUNT OF THE RAISING AND EXALTATION OF JESUS. ACTS 2:36 SHOWS THE HOW AND WHEN OF THIS EXALTATION.

- A. His resurrection from the dead (Ax. 2:24-28).
- B. His exaltation to God's right hand, to David's Throne (Ax. 2:29-35). Cf. Psalms 89:35-37.
- C. Peter's climax—he did not tell them what to do to be saved until they asked him (Ax. 2:36).

III. LET US NOT NOTICE HOW EPHESIANS (1:18-23) IS FULFILLED ALONG WITH ISAIAH 2:1-4. ALL IN ACTS 2.

- A. "The Mountain of the Lord's House," the Lord and Christ is exalted at that time.
- B. "All Nations" were represented there—"Every nation under heaven" (Ax. 2:5).
- C. When the speaking in the tongues and other miracles were "noised abroad" they went up to the mountain of the Lord's House (Ax. 2:6-8).
- D. They walked in God's paths too, about three thousand of them (Ax. 2:36-42).

THE WORK OF ELDERS

HOYT H. HOUCHEN

(Acts 20:17-28)

INTRODUCTION: God arranged for each congregation to have elders.

- 1. Elders become such upon the basis of qualifications set forth by the Holy Spirit (See, I Tim. 3; Tit. 1).
- 2. Elders have tremendous responsibilities. Reason for qualifications.
- 3. Elders become such by appointment (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5).

- a. Word "kathistemi," see Vine's Dictionary, Vol. 2, p. 67.
- 4. Two things floating about which are too large for me to swallow.
 - a. Elders just become such by growth and development.
 - b. Elders rule only by example and teaching.
- 5. Several terms for same office; Bishop, Overseer, Pastor, Shepherd,
 - a. Terms are used interchangeably (Acts 20:17-28; Tit. 1:5-7).

I. DUTIES OF ELDERS.

- A. Their office not an honorary position, but a work (1 Tim. 3:1; Acts 20:28; Tit. 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3).
 - 1. Contended by some there is no office (See YOUNG'S, p. 712).
- B. Their work to oversee.
 - 1. If there are those to be overseen, there must be an overseer.
 - 2. Three terms which describe their work.
 - a. Elder (Define with lexicon: Not a novice, mature).
 - b. Bishop (Define).
 - c. Pastor (See W. E. Vine, Vol. 3, p. 167).
 - 3. Elders have no legislative authority (2 Jno. 9).
- C. Since overseers, there is involved some kind of authority.
 - 1. Their work to rule (Heb. 13:17).
 - a. "Obey them," (Define obey).
 - b. If to be obeyed only when they speak the word of God, as some contend, then why would not the admonition apply to women as well as men?
 - c. If rule of elders limited only to their example and teaching, in what way would their rule be different from any other Christian, MAN OR WOMAN?
 - 2. To rule their own house (1 Tim. 3:4, 5).
 - a. "Rule" (proistemi), see Thayer, p. 539.
 - b. A man does not rule his own house only by teaching and example.
 - c. Some decisions to be made.

II. HOW DO ELDERS RULE OR OVERSEE?

- A. By leading congregation into truest and most reverential worship possible.
- B. By seeing that congregation is taught sound doctrine.
- C. Encourage weak and fallen (Gal. 6:1).
- D. Consider problems and act in interest of church (Acts 15:6).
- E. Take lead in disciplining unruly members (2 Thess. 3:6, 11, 14; 1 Cor. 5:11; Tit. 3:9-11).
- F. Stop error from being taught (Tit. 1:10, 11).
- G. Make decisions in realm of judgment.

CONCLUSION: May we respect elders (1 Thess. 5:12, 13).

IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE

NORMAN E. SEWELL

(Titus 1:2)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. What goals have you set for yourself in this life? What about the life yet to come?
- B. In what does the child of God hope? Why?

I. THE CHRISTIANS HOPE

- A. A hope of eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7).
- B. A hope of salvation (I Thess. 5:8; Rom. 8:24-25).
- C. A hope laid up in the heavens (Col. 1:5).
- D. A hope of resurrection from the dead (Acts 23:6).

II. WHY DO WE HOPE?

- A. Because God, who cannot lie, promised it (Titus 1:2).
- B. God interposed with an oath (Heb. 6:17-19).
- C. Because of the resurrection of Jesus we hope for the resurrection also (I Peter 1:3; I Cor. 15:12-19).

III. WHO CAN HAVE THIS HOPE?

- A. Those IN Christ can have hope (I Thess. 4:13-14).
 - 1. Those out of Christ have no hope.
 - 2. We are baptized INTO Christ (Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3).
- B. Those begotten (I Peter 1:3).
 - 1. We are born of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5).
- C. Those who are justified (Titus 3:7).
 - 1. Justified by faith (Gal. 3:24).
 - 2. Justified by Jesus blood (Rom. 5:9).
 - a. Must be baptized to reach his blood.

IV. THOSE WHO HAVE THIS HOPE MUST:

- A. Purify themselves (I John 3:3).
- B. Rejoice in their hope (Rom. 12:12).
- C. Lay hold on it (Heb. 6:18).
- D. Be ready to answer regarding their hope (I Peter 3:15).
 - 1. Be bold to speak (II Cor. 3:12).

CONCLUSION:

- A. God has promised eternal life to those who live faithfully IN Jesus Christ.
- B. Those outside of Jesus have NO HOPE.
- C. Christians, those already in Christ, and those who do have hope, must purify themselves, and lay hold on eternal life.

HELL ... AND I'M AFRAID

R. L. MORRISON

INTRODUCTION: This is a serious Bible subject. NOT something devised by preachers to scare people. Let us consider some things the Bible teaches about Hell. Perhaps make you fear it also, and want to avoid it. I am afraid of Hell because:

- I. IT IS ETERNAL** (Matt. 25:46; Rom. 16:26; Heb. 9:14; 1 Tim. 1:17).
- II. IT IS A PLACE OF DARKNESS** (2 Pet. 2:4; June 13; Matt. 25:30); Cf. James 1:17; 1 Jno. 1:5, a contrast shown. God has removed Himself from this place.
- III. IT IS A PLACE OF FIRE**, not a contradiction with darkness (Matt. 13:42; 25:41; Mark 9=44-45; Rev. 20:10; 20:15).
 - A. Be prepared for quibbles, i.e., How can it be darkness and fire, etc. Bible uses figures: Christ a door, a Shepherd, a vine. These help us to understand what He taught. So do these figures help us to understand what Hell is like.
- IV. IT IS A PLACE OF ETERNAL PAIN** (Matt. 25:30; Luke 16:28, Hadean World).
- V. THERE IS NO RELIEF THERE** (Mark 9=44-45).
- VI. THERE IS NO HOPE THERE** (Matt. 25:46). It is everlasting.
 - A. How long is eternity? Use appropriate figure.
- VII. I'M ALSO AFRAID OF HELL BECAUSE SOME CHURCH MEMBERS MAY GO THERE.**
 - A. This is also frightening to me. Consider why.
 - B. Those who practice certain things will not inherit eternal kingdom of God. Some brethren practice such things (Gal. 5:19-21).
 - C. Some do these things, but the wrath will come (Col. 3:5-9).
 - D. Certain characteristics must be developed in the lives of faithful Christians. Some do not grow, they will be lost (Cf. 2 Pet. 1:5-8).
 - E. We are to love one another. Some do not. Those who do not will go to Hell (1 Jno. 4:7-10).
 - 1. Consider gossip, angry remarks, indifference toward others: Those who exhibit such will go to Hell unless they repent.
 - F. A command (Heb. 10:25): FORSAKE NOT ... YET, some here will do it and apparently think nothing of it. (Cf. Heb. 10:26-27). Result, Hell.

CONSEQUENCES OF FALSE DOCTRINE

(Regarding The Establishment of The Church Before Pentecost)

E. C. KOLTENBAH

I. AS TO OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY.

- A. Isaiah and Micah would have been wrong about the place where the gospel first went forth (Isa. 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-3; Acts 2).
- B. Jeremiah would have been wrong about God finding fault with the Old Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8; 10:9).
- C. Daniel would have been wrong (Dan. 7:13-14; Acts 1:9).
- D. Joel would have been wrong (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:1-4; i6ff).
- E. Zechariah would have been wrong about Jesus (Zech. 6:13; Heb. 8:4).

II. AS TO THE GOSPEL AND ACTS.

- A. Two laws in force at same time (Cf. Matt. 5:17-18).
- B. Kingdom texts are rendered untrue (Matt. 2:2; Mk. 1:15; 9:1; Ax. 1:8-2:4).

- C. Jewish limitations are placed upon the gospel (Matt. 5:18).
- D. Jesus made wrong about the establishment of church (Mart. 16:18).
- E. Peter could not use the keys (Matt. 16:19; Acts 2; 10; 15:7-8).
- F. Luke and Jesus wrong about Christ's kingdom (Luke 19-12-15).
- G. The apostles are rendered false witnesses (Acts 1:8).
- H. The Lord is made the corner-stone too late (Acts 4:10-12).
- I. The church would exist without the price of sins being paid (Matt. 16:20).
- J. The kingdom would be without the Spirit (Jno. 7:39; Jas. 2:26).
- K. There would be no "new birth" (Jno. 3:5; 7:39; Acts 19:2).
- L. It would have been without power (Mark 9:1).
- M. It would have been without fulfilling the law and the prophets (Matt. 5:17-19; Luke 24:44).

IU. AS TO THE EPISTLES.

- A. It would have made us guilty of spiritual adultery (Rom. 7:1-4).
- B. It would have been an unredeemed church (Gal. 3:13).
- C. It would have been outside of Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3).
- D. It would have been of the old creation (Eph. 2:14ff).
- E. It would not have heard the great salvation (Heb. 2:1-4; Acts 7:37; Matt. 28:16-20).
- F. It would have been without a perfect savior (Heb. 2:10).
- G. It would not have had a high priest (Heb. 8:4).
- H. It would have been without a law (Heb. 7:12).
- I. It would have had no will or covenant (Heb. 9:16 17).
- J. It would have been in sin (Rev. 1:6).
- K. It would have been without a living hope (1 Pet. 1:3ff).
- L. It would not have belonged to Goa(Rev. 5:9-10).
- M. It would have been before Jesus had the keys of death and Hades (Rev. 1:8).

Denominational friends, we urge you to obey the true gospel of Christ that He may add you to His own and only true church.

DAWN AND SUNSET

Of the whole circle of the sun's path the most beautiful moments come at dawn and sunset. In the early hours of morning there comes a pause as if the whole earth were intent on beholding the eastern skies put on their robes of purple and gold to greet the lord of the day; and in the evening, when the glory of the sunset lingers in the west, before the stars are lighted in the darkening sky, again the round of hours sings their vast, compelling song of wonder and praise.

So it is with the seasons also; the loveliest comes at the beginning and the close of the year. In the promise of early springtime with its budding trees, and in the glory of the flaming foliage of the last days of fall, nature reveals herself in her most gracious and her most glorious of moods.

And so also it is with the round of life. It is ushered in with the tender beauty

of infancy; it draws to its close in the peace of old age. In the late afternoon of life there comes a pause like the lingering of the light at the close of day, the time when a life, well lived approaches evening. Then again the soft melody which was heard at the beginning is resumed, and the circle of the year is completed in the same peace and splendor which accompanied its beginning. It departs in the glory like that of the sunset, token of the fairer dawn beyond.
(Bowie.)

THE CHURCH

EDGAR C. WALKER

INTRODUCTION. The church of our Lord is not the idea of man. 300 different churches came from men. We will study only the one that came from God.

I. THE CHURCH IS CHRIST'S. Not man's or any group of men.

A. Revealed in prophecy (Isa. 2:2--3; Isa. 28:14-17; Dan. 2:44).

B. Promised by Christ (Matt. 16:18; Mark 9:1; Luke 24:45-49).

C. Promises fulfilled by Christ (Acts 2:1-4; 20:28; Eph. 5:25-28).

II. THE CREED OF THE CHURCH. Every group has some sort of creed.

A. The Creed is the N. T. (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:3; Jno. 12:48; Rev. 20:11-12).

III. THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT TO CHRIST IN ALL THINGS.

A. Christ having all authority (Matt. 28:18-20; Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22).

IV. THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IS COMPOSED OF:

A. The called out (Col. 1:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:9).

B. The obedient (Acts 2:36-41; 47).

C. New Creatures (John 3:5; Rom. 6:1-5; 2 Cor. 5:17).

D. Lively stones (1 Pet. 2:5).

V. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH.

A. No organization given for universal church, All given is for local.

B. Evangelists to preach (2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Cor. 1:21).

C. Saints, all Christians are saints (1 Cor. 1:1-4; Phil. 1:1).

D. Bishops or elders to oversee the work (1 Tim. 3:1; Acts 20:28).

VI. THE WORSHIP MUST BE IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.

A. In the proper spirit and as Truth directs (John 4:23-24).

B. Five items of worship. Two of these confined to the Lord's day only.

1. Preaching (Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18—20; 2 Tim. 4:1-4).

2. Singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; These do not include instruments).

3. The Lord's supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-29).

4. Praying and giving of thanks (Jas. 5:16; Luke 18:1).

5. Giving of ones means (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7).

VII. THE WORK OF THE CHURCH.

A. Preach the truth (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).

B. Help the poor saints (Acts 11:29-30; 1 Tim. 5:3-11).

C. Edify the saints (Eph. 4:11-12).

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PETER AND POPES

GARRETH CLAIR

I. IDENTIFYING MARKS OF PETER.

- A. Peter was a married man (Mark 1:30; 1 Cor. 9:5).
- B. He refused the homage of man (Acts 10:25-26).
- C. Peter taught people to wear Christ's name, Christian, (Acts 4:12; 1 Pet. 4:16).
- D. Peter claimed no infallibility (Gal. 2:11).
- E. Peter taught that Christ, not himself, was the head of the church (Acts 2:29-36).
- F. He never wore such names as Holy Father, Pope, etc. The Bible condemns such (Matt. 23:9).

II. IDENTIFYING MARKS OF THE POPES.

- A. Practices celibacy.
- B. Demands the homage and praise of man.
- C. Demands that his subjects wear the name, Roman Catholic.
- D. Claims infallibility (Vatican Council of 1870).
- E. Claims that he is the head of the church on earth.
- F. Wears all names of secular honor, Pope, Father, Lord God, The Pope, Holy Father, etc.

GETTING TO KNOW THE UNKNOWN GOD

EDWARD O. BRAGWELL

(Acts 17:22-31)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The altar "To the Unknown God" was a part of Athens' Religious climate.
 1. The city was wholly given to idolatry (vs. 16).
 2. The city had a synagogue of the Jews (vs. 17).
 3. The city was eager to hear any new doctrine (vs. 21).
- B. The altar gave Paul the opportunity to tell of the True God.
 1. Paul did not shun religious controversy (vs. 17-18).
 2. The God Paul preached is still an "unknown God" today.
- C. The sermon there declared three fundamental facts about God,

I. THE POWER OF GOD IS SO GREAT!

- A. His power created "the world and all things therein" (vs. 24).
 1. His creation includes man (vs. 26)—man did not evolve.
- B. His creation declares his power universally (Rom. 1:20; Psa. 19:1-3).
- C. His power controls and sustains His creation (vs. 25,28).
 1. The elements are subject to Him (Matt. 5:45; 8:27; 2 Pet. 3:6).
 2. The universe is kept in store by His power (2 Pet. 3:7).
- D. His power is self-sustaining (vs. 25)—we need Him, not He us.

II. THE PRESENCE OF GOD IS UNLIMITED.

- A. He is not limited by space (vs. 24; Cf. 1 Kings 8:27; 2 Chron. 2:6).
 - 1. His presence is not confined to any locality (Isa. 66:1-2; Acts 7:48-49).
 - a. His presence cannot be escaped by us (Psa. 139:1-10; Jonah 1:3-4).
 - a. Can escape Him in sense of fellowship and approval (2 Jno. 9-ii; Cf. Eph. 2:13,17; Jas. 4:8). No evil hidden from Him.
- B. He is not limited by time (Isa. 57:15; Psa. 90:2; 2 Pet. 3:8).

III. THE PLAN OF GOD IS FOR ALL MANKIND.

- A. He has a present plan for *all* men (vs. 30).
 - 1. All nations to have repentance and remission preached (Luke 24:47, with Acts 2:38).
 - 2. All men are accepted on the same basis (Acts 10:34,35).
 - 3. All men are accepted (reconciled to Him) in one body (Eph. 2:16; Acts 2:47).
- B. He has a future plan for all men—the judgement (vs. 31).

CONCLUSIONS How much do you really respect:

- A. God's power—enough to place complete confidence in Him?
- B. God's presence—enough to never feel alone? Enough to deter "secret sin"?
- C. God's plan—enough to humbly obey it?

THIS IS YOUR LIFE

GLEN SHAVER

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. The Ralph Edwards Television Show.
- 2. The Bible likewise reveals our *life*.

I. THIS IS YOUR LIFE—STATE AT BIRTH.

- A. The Bible teaches:
 - 1. Man made in God's image and likeness and is very good (Gen. 1:26,27).
 - 2. God is Father of Spirits (Heb. 12:6-9).
 - 3. Man is the offspring of God (Acts 17:29).
 - 4. Must become "as" little children (Matt. 18:3; 19:4).
 - 5. Children have no knowledge of good or evil (Deut. 1:39).
- B. The doctrines of men teach:
 - 1. Babies born in sin (See Psa. 51:5).
 - a. Perhaps referring to the incest of his ancestor Tamar.
 - 1) 10 generations are bastards (Deut. 23:2).
 - 2) Judah and Tamar (Gen. 38).
 - 3) David was the tenth generation (1 Chron. 2:3-15).
- C. Wicked are estranged from the womb (Psa. 58:3).
 - 1. Consider, these from the womb go astray, speak lies, and have "great teeth".
 - 2. Are these little infants? Of course not.

II. THIS IS YOUR LIFE—THE AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY.

- A. Enter the worldly state, kingdom of Devil.
- B. How you became a sinner.
 - 1. Sin entered into the world (Rom. 5:12).
 - 2. Drawn away by our lust (Jas. 1:13-15).
 - 3. Yield yourself (Rom. 6:16).
 - 4. Break God's commands (Rom. 7:7-9; 1 Jno. 3:4).
- C. Result of sin.
 - 1. Separated from God (Isa. 59:1,2).
 - 2. Enter the kingdom of Darkness (Col. 1:13; Eph. 5:8; 2:1-3; Acts 26:18; 1 Pet. 2:9).

III. THIS IS YOUR UFE—WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE FOR YOU.

- A. God so loved he gave (Jno. 3:16).
 - 1. Redemption through his blood (Eph. 1:7; Heb. 2:9).
 - 2. Reconciled by blood (Eph. 2:11-17; Rom. 6:1-4; 1 Cor. 12:13).
 - 3. Preach the cross, Christ crucified (1 Cor. 1:17-24; 2:1-5).

IV. THIS IS YOUR LIFE—WHEN SAVED (Enter the Faithful state).

- A. How one is cleansed:
 - 1. By the blood (Isa. 1:18; Rev. 1:5; 7:14; 1 Jno. 1:7).
 - 2. Born again (Jno. 3:3-5; Tit. 3:5).
 - a. Washing of water (Eph. 5:26; Acts 22:16; Cf. Mark 16:16).
 - 3. Obey from the heart (Rom. 6:17,18).
 - 4. Must be faithful (Rev. 2:10).

V. THIS IS YOUR UFE—WHEN YOU RETURN TO CORRUPTION (The fallen state).

- A. One can fall, become an unbeliever.
 - 1. Take heed lest you fall (1 Cor. 10:12).
 - 2. Ye are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4-6).
 - 3. Depart from God thru unbelief (Heb. 3:12; Rom. 11:20).
- B. Such become:
 - 1. Spots and blemishes (1 Pet. 2:13-22).
- C. Such will be gathered out (Matt. 13:41).

VI. THIS IS YOUR LIFE—WHEN RESTORED.

- A. God's law of restoration to fallen children.
 - 1. Repent (Acts 8:13-24).
 - 2. Confess (Jas. 5:16; 1 Jno. 1:7-9).
 - 3. Pray (Acts 8; Jas. 5:16).
- B. Consider the Prodigal son (Luke 15:2iff).

CONCLUSION: Extend invitation.

THINGS THAT ARE VAIN

MAX BRADFORD

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Define "vain"—"Without value, empty, useless, void, worthless."
- 2. Illustration: An old rusty can or a 1969 calendar.

3. Priceless or valuable items can become vain or worthless, damaged to the point of worthlessness.

THINGS THAT ARE VALUABLE THAT BECOME VAIN:

I. CHRIST—

1. As a Saviour (Matt. 1:21).
2. As a sacrifice (Heb. 10:5-10).
3. As a peacemaker between God and man (Rom. 5:1).
4. As an Author of salvation (Heb. 5:8-9).
5. He is only valuable to those who accept him, to others he is vain (Gal. 5=4).

II. THE BLOOD—

- A. Matt. 26:28; Rev. 1:5; Heb. 9:11-12,22; 10:4; 9:23.
 1. Valuable only to those who apply it in obedience. To all others the blood is vain.

III. THE CHURCH—

- A. It is made up of the saved (Ax. 2:47).
- B. Christ purchased the church (Ax. 20:28).
- C. It glorifies God (Eph. 3:21).
 1. Valuable only to those who are a part of it and loyal to Christ. Those who reject the church and abuse it, cause it to become vain.

IV. PREACHING—

- A. The power of God to Save (I Cor. 1:18). Cf. Rom. 10:13-15; Mark 16:15-16.
 1. Preaching is valuable only to those who love and obey truth (I Cor. 1:18-29). Those who reject it cause it to become worthless to them (Matt. 15:6-9).

CONCLUSION:

1. Only Christ can save.
2. And that only by his blood.
3. With which the church was purchased.
4. To which the saved are added.
5. Upon obedience to the gospel preached.
6. Say friend, how valuable are these to you??

THE HARDENED HEART

RONALD V. LEHDE

(Acts 19:8-9)

INTRODUCTION:

The people in our text who spoke evil of the Way are certainly still with us today. These have not died out in the past two thousand years because the condition which caused them to act this way will always be with us ... a heart that is hard toward God. The Bible begins early to speak of men who hardened their hearts, even back in the time of Moses. And the trouble with this condition is that anyone can become affected by it. Therefore, let us study this spiritual malady and its consequences.

I. A HARDENED HEART IS ONE THAT IS SET AGAINST GOD.

- A. Moses records the "hardening of Pharaoh's heart" (Ex. 4:21).
 - 1. Here was an absolute monarch who felt that he was on a par with gods and refused to recognize the Almighty Jehovah (Ex. 5:1-2).
 - 2. But after the tenth plague this miserable king was only too glad to let the children of Israel go.
 - 3. God made use of Pharaoh and his hard heart to make His name and power known throughout the world (Ex. 7:3-5; Joshua 2:9-10).
- B. The enemies of Jesus had hard hearts (Mk. 3:1-6).
 - 1. Jesus "came unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" which included these people in this passage (Matt. 15:24).
 - 2. But these "that were His own would not receive Him." (John 1:11).
 - 3. This was because He didn't come as they wanted, so they hardened their hearts toward Him (Mk. 3:5).
- C. So today reprobate men have hardened their hearts (Rom. 1:28).
 - 1. These people had known the truth of God at one time according to Paul.
 - 2. But their "vile passions" were greater than their love of God (Rom. 1:25-28).

II. BUT GOD HIMSELF DOES NOT WITHDRAW HIS GRACE TO PRODUCE THIS HARDNESS OF HEART.

- A. No one is divinely placed in a situation where he is forced to sin (I Cor. 10:13; James 1:13).
 - 1. James goes on to point out that temptation occurs when a man is drawn away by his own lusts (James 1:14).
 - 2. But these lusts are things which are of the world and not of the Father (I John 2:16).
- B. A hardened heart is one that has been so long in sin that it has become seared (I Tim. 4:1-2).
 - 1. This passage speaks of those that proclaim and perpetuate "doctrines of demons" without a thought of misgiving.
 - 2. They are able to do so because they have self-cauterized consciences.
 - 3. Hence, they have a hardened (seared) heart (conscience).

III. RATHER THIS HARDNESS OF HEART IF ACHIEVED BY THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN (Heb. 3:13).

- A. The pleasure of sin is a mask of spiritual opium that hides present and future conditions.
 - 1. Moses "had it made" but chose instead reality (Heb. 11:24-25).
 - 2. It would be nice if the spiritual "narcotic dream world" of hedonism were true so that we could indulge our desires, but it's not (Rom. 7:11).
 - 3. It would be nice if certain religious beliefs today, such as: Salvation by faith only; Once saved, always saved; and, If you are sincere, it does not matter what you believe; were true. But they are not (Ax. 2:38; 8:21-22; II John 9).
- B. It is more pleasant to follow what sin holds out to us (Eph. 4:22; I John 2:16).
 - 1. Peace of mind comes easier if we just go along with the desires of the flesh (Rom. 7:18-23).

2. But Paul recognized the tragic ending if he gave into these desires of the flesh (I Cor. 9:25-27).
3. We need to also recognize what Paul did if we are to escape that dreadful condition, the hardness of our hearts, and the consequences it bears.

VICTORY WITHOUT WEIGHTS

CARROLL W. PUCKETT

(Hebrews 12:1-2)

INTRODUCTION: Illustration: Track Practice—Running with weights.

1. Church Today—Too Many Weights.
2. Need to lay aside every weight—That we might be saved (Win the Victory).
3. Today we will discuss some weights that are holding us back from progress, success in the Lord's Work.

I. Weights

- A. Worldliness—Caring too much, for the interests and pleasures of this world (I Jno. 2:15-17; Jas. 4:4; MatL 12:130; Tit. 2:11,12; Rom. 12:1-2).
 1. Worldly Attitude Manifests Itself in What One Does.
 - a. Drunkenness (Gal. 5:19-21).
 - b. Dancing (Matt. 5:28).
 - c. Immodest Dress (I Cor. 5; Gal. 5:19-21).
 - d. Love for Material Things (Matt. 6:19).
- B. Whispers—A slanderer, Speaking Evil, Campaign of spreading rumors; Discredit a person's character, etc. (Rom. 1:29; II Cor. 12:20).

II. weights

- A. Envy—Implies resentment; jealousy, or even hatred directed toward another (Jas. 3:14; I Pet. 2:1; Rom. 1:29; Rom. 13:13; I Cor. 3:3; II Cor. 12:20).
- B. Excuses—To make apology for failure to perform; try to clear oneself of blame (Gen. 3:12,13; Ex. 4:1; Lk. 9:59-62; 14:18-20; Ax. 24:25; Rom. 12:1).

III. weights

- A. Ignorance—(II Tim. 2:15; Hos. 4:6; I Pet. 3:15; Heb. 5:12).
- B. Impenitence—Lack of any sorrow or regret in doing wrong (Matt. 13:15-18; Ax. 7:51; Rev. 2:5; Rom. 2:4; II Cor. 12:21; Heb. 12:17).
- C. Indifference—Idleness—(Rev. 3:15-17; Prov. 6:6; 18:9; I Tim. 5:13).
- D. Immorality—(I Cor. 5:1-13; I Cor. 6:9; I Cor. 10:8; Gal. 5:19-21).

IV. weights

- A. Grumbling—To complain in a bad-tempered way; A murmur of discontent. (Numbers 13)—Ten Spies; (Num. 14:26-37; I Cor. 10:10; Phil. 2:14; Jude 16).
- B. Greed—Syn. Covetous, cupidity, avarice, selfishness; (Matt. 16:26; Lk. 12:15; Matt. 6:19,20; I Cor. 5:11; Eph. 5:3; Rom. 1:29; II Cor. 9=6,7).

V. weigh H ts

- A. Hypocrisy—(Matt. 23:25-28; Gal. 2:13; Rev. 3:1; II Cor. 6:6; I Pet. 1:22; I Tim. 1:5; II Tim. 1:5; Matt. 15:7; Mk. 6:7; I Tim. 4:2).
- B. Highmindedness—(Mk. 12:38; Rom. 12:2; Gal. 6:3; Phil. 2:3; Jas. 3:1, Rev. 3:17).

VI. weigh T s

- A. Temper—Anger; Malice; Self-Control (I Cor. 9:25; Phil. 4:5; I Thess. 5=6).
- ^D Temptation (Gen. 3:1; Matt. 4:1-11; I Jno. 2:15-17; I Cor. 10:13; Jas. 1:2-15).
- A. Self-Delusion (Psa. 49:18; 30:6; Hos. 12:8; Lk. 12:17-19; II Thess. 2:10,11; Prov. 14:12; Lk. 18:11; Rev. 3:17; II Pet. 3:4; Jas. 4:13; Matt. 7:23; I Thess. 5:3).
- B. Self-Righteousness (Prov. 12:15; 14:12; 16:2; Matt. 23:29-31; Lk. 10:25-37; Rom. 10:3; II Cor. 10:17; Gal. 6:3; Rev. 3:17,18).

CONCLUSION: By overcoming these and other weights, we will be able to run the race and win the crown of life (eternal life).

HOW THE EVANGELIST MUST SPEAK

CECIL WILLIS

(Eph. 6: 19,20--"As I Ought To Speak")

INTRODUCTION:

1. There is a work that belongs to an evangelist (II Tim. 4:5; II Tim. 4:2; I Cor. 1:21).
2. There is a prescribed manner in which this work must be done (II Tim. 4:2; Ax. 4:29-31; 28:31).
3. Christ was the only perfect preacher (Heb. 1:1,2; 4:14,15). All others have short-comings.
 - a. He never preached a false doctrine (Jno. 17:17; 8:32).
 - b. He never left anything unsaid that needed to be said.
 - c. He never misjudged an audience (Jno. 2:25).
 - d. He never said or did anything to hinder a sinner's salvation (Lk. 19:10; cf. I Tim. 4:16).

I. BODY: THE WORD MUST BE PREACHED:

- A. FAITHFULLY (II Tim. 2:2; I Cor. 4:2; I Pet. 4:10,11).
 1. Christ our example did his Father's will (Jno. 8:29; 4:34; 6:38).
 2. Paul sought to please God (Gal. 1:10; II Tim. 2:4).
 3. The evangelist must speak the word (the message is prescribed) "in season; out of season," (II Tim. 4:2; Jonah 3:2; Ax. 4:20).
 - a. There is a real temptation to be well-received (Lk. 6:26).
 - b. To compromise is to sell out to the enemy (Mt. 12:30).
 - c. There is little praise for the faithful preacher, but God will supply ample blessing (II Cor. 12:9).
 4. The preacher must therefore avoid hobbles, obscurities, oddities, intricacies, speculations and pointless eloquence (I Cor. 2:1-5).

- B. FULLY (Ax. 20:20,27; Rom. 15:19).
1. This is a frightening thought when one considers the many subjects in the Bible.
 2. One must be careful lest he inadvertently fail to speak on some Bible theme. "Every scripture ... is profitable" (II Tim. 3:16). Often while we stress one Bible principle, we overlook others.
 3. This entails an enormous amount of study (II Tim. 2:15; I Tim. 4:i3).
 4. One must preach about God, Christ, Holy Spirit, church, sin, discipline, heaven, hell, etc., etc. "Meat" and "milk" must be provided (Heb. 5:11-14).
- C. FORCEFULLY (Ax. 14:15; 18:4,5; H Cor. 5:11; Isa. 58:1,2; I Thess. 1:9,10).
1. The power is of God (I Cor. 2:5).
 2. Should seek to effect a change in belief, status, and life in those who hear.
 3. N. T. preaching cut to the heart (Ax. 2:37; 5:33; 7:54).
 4. Preaching must become personal, since sin and damnation are personal.
 5. Preaching must blast people out of their deadly complacency.
- D. FERVENTLY (II Cor. 5:20,21; Rom. 12:11).
1. Should preach as fervently as if you were the only one telling the old, old story. "Fervent" means "to be hot, to boil." (Vine, *Word Studies*, II, p. 91).
 2. One must be "urgent" in one's preaching (II Tim. 4:2).
 3. Recognition of the ultimate issues involved certainly should give one fervor (Heb. 10:31; 12:29).
 4. Preaching is a rare privilege (Eph. 3:8).
 5. There is no excuse for one telling the good news of salvation as dryly as if he were reading from a catalog.
- E. FEARLESSLY (Rev. 21:8; Mt. 10:28; II Tim. 1:7).
1. King Saul sinned because "he feared the people and obeyed their voice" (I Sam. 15:24; cf. Jno. 9:22).
 2. Faithful preachers will be pelted on every side, but they must not be deterred.
- F. FEARFULLY (Eccl. 12:13; I Pet. 3:15).

CONCLUSION:

1. We must encourage more men to become faithful evangelists. This shortage of faithful preachers is possibly the most critical problem we face.
2. There is something handsome in Paul's statement, "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15).
3. There is something awesome in Paul's statement, "woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." (I Cor. 9:16).

This outline is based on an article from THE VOICE OF EVANGELISM, (April, 1966).

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SAINTS

BRYAN VINSON

INTRODUCTION: Fellowship denotes partnership, co-partnery, joint participation. It is experienced throughout the fabric of human relations, because man is a social creature. The character and quality of any given fellowship rests on the nature of the association involved and the design and character of such.

Examples—Labor Unions, Political Parties, Fraternal and Civic Institutions.

One who is a Christian may have fellowship with those who aren't Christians within other spheres, where there exists a common interest, and in pursuance thereof there is formed a relationship between them. Religion, however, holds the highest interest and embraces the greatest aims of man, and therefore embodies a quality of fellowship between those thus related which is distinct, peculiar and superior to all other forms of fellowship.

I. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SAINTS:

A. Restricted to Saints.

1. Fellowcitizens—suggests government. Whose? The Government of the Christ. Further—"fellow" implies equality as citizens; hence no hierarchical order in the Kingdom of Heaven.
2. (II Cor. 6:14-7:1)—This passage has to do with being and acting together in those things of a religious nature, and thus antagonistic to the truth. It is a severe and summary prohibition against Christians participating in acts of service and worship with those who aren't in covenant relation with God. Hence, all denominational affiliations, and fraternal orders which have an element of religious character to them, such as the Masonic Order.
It has no contemplation of marriage within its context, as evidenced by the teaching in I Cor. chapter 7.
3. No fellowship With the Unfruitful Works of Darkness—(Eph. 5:11). Darkness is a synonym for evil, both moral and spiritual.

II. FELLOWSHIP VIEWED AS A RELATIONSHIP.

- A. There are those who are contending that this is the whole import of fellowship. From this premise they reason that all who believe in the Christ and are immersed, regardless of any subsequent errors in teaching or practice are in the fellowship and thus to be fellowshipped! The immersion is regarded as thus valid apart from any acceptance of the expressed design, the remission of sins. Too they reason that the gospel is related to fellowship, whereas doctrine and practice are not. Such leads, practically, to full fellowship with all denominations who practice immersion.
- B. Fellowship is a matter of relationship, but not exclusively so. We are called into the fellowship of his son (I Cor. 1:9). This has to do with the relationship thus established. Being in fellowship is basic to having fellowship. We cannot have this without that; we can, with qualifications, have that while not experiencing this.

III. FELLOWSHIP VIEWED AS INVOLVING JOINT ACTION.

- A. Christians can and are in fellowship with one another in the practice of the truth, the work of the church and the worship of God, even though in some particulars they act apart from fellowship; that is, individual actions performed as individual duties. In this area, one may fellowship another, in the sense of being in the fellowship with, while not engaging with such an one in a given action, even regarding it to be an act of error.

GOD'S REVELATION & MAN'S RESPONSE

EUGENE BRITNELL

(Psalm 19)

INTRODUCTION: One serves to provoke the other. If man accepts God and His power, he will respect and obey Him. Nature reveals that there is a God; the Bible reveals His characteristics and will for man.

I. REVELATION THROUGH NATURE (verses 1-6)

Note greatness of universe. The following illustrates this:

The magnitude of the knowable universe and perfection with which it moves, staggers the imagination. This earth is one of the smaller planets that make up our solar system. There are nine of them and they all revolve around the sun. Jupiter is 1,300 times larger than earth and has 12 moons. Four of them revolve from east to west; eight revolve from west to east. But they never collide. Saturn has 9, of which Titan is the largest. Another of Saturn's moons is Phoebe. Phoebe is eight million miles from Saturn. Phoebe revolves from east to west and the others all go from west to east. Uranus has 5 that are visible, and they all revolve from east to west. Neptune has 2 that have been found. One revolves from east to west, the other from west to east. Pluto, Mercury and Venus have no moons.

The earth has only one moon and it is 240,000 miles from earth. The sun is so large that if it were hollow like a coconut with a wall 100,000 miles thick, there would still be room inside for both the earth and the moon, 240,000 miles apart. If this seems like a lot of matter, look at this one: Although our sun is 1,300,000 times larger than the earth, there is one star in the constellation of Orion, Betelgeuse, that is 248 times larger than the sun. Antares in the constellation of Scorpio is 4,000,000,000 miles in diameter. So large that if it were hollow, both the earth and the sun could be put inside at 93,000,000 miles apart. Our Sun with its nine planets is only ONE solar system. They tell us there are more than 300,000,000 solar systems. (Unable to document this, Jimmy Tuten).

The annual journey of the earth is also interesting. It travels 292 million miles at about 70,000 miles an hour. It takes it 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 45.51 seconds. Does anyone believe that such accuracy is an accident?

Other Scriptures: Psalm 8; Heb. 11:3; Rom. 1:19,20; Rev. 4:11; Job 14; I Cor. 15; Luke 8:5-15; Gal. 6:7,8 (Appeals to nature).

Inanimate objects speak (vs. 3). So does the flag, Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, Statue of Liberty (Heb. 11:4; 12:24).

Nature is a universal language (vs. 4,5; Heb. 4:13; Psalm 14:1). Nature is the source of life (vs. 6).

II. REVELATION BY LAW (verses 7,8).

Nature only declares that God is. God's laws perfect in nature and revelation (James 1:25; II Tim. 3:16,17).

Note what all the law does: converts, makes wise, enlightens, etc. God's "testimony" is His law (Cf. Ex. 25:16, 21, 22).

What divine law taught:

1. His manifold errors—secret and open.
2. Often an ignorant transgressor; self-deception and through ignorance.
3. To pray for deliverance from temptations to deliberate sins.

HI. MAN'S RESPONSE (verses 9-14).

Verse 9—It is right to fear God (Eccles. 12:13. Such power; judgment!).

Verse 10—Live by the word (Matt. 4:4); Attitude of modern man.

Verse 11—Many warnings; reward for obedience (Matt. 7:24,25; Rev. 22:14).

Verse 12—Man may not know all of his sins; some hidden, overlooked, ignorance.

Verse 13—Deut. 18:22; II Peter 2:10

Verse 14—A good description of a controlled life; words and thoughts under control, the actions will be acceptable in God's sight.

ONE MORE SERMON TO PREACH

BILL MURRELL

INTRODUCTION:

I have preached over 500 sermons from one pulpit. One more to go and maybe never again. WHAT? Hard decision to make. What MOST needed? Depends on audience.

BODY: WOULD IT BE

I. Like Peter's first sermon on Pentecost?

A. What to do to be saved .. .

B. D.B.R. B.R.&B. = R. of S. (Sal.).

C. "And with many other words ... " (v. 40).

II. Like Joshua's last sermon? (Joshua 24:14-15).

III. Like Paul's letters to Corinth & Galatia?

A. Sin in the church (I Cor. 1:10-, 3:3
ch. 5 & 11 etc. Gal. 1:6-, 5:4).

IV. Like Paul's letters to Ephesus & Philippi?

A. Greatness of the church.

B. Love for the church at Philippi.

V. Like James lesson on the misuse and abuse of the tongue? (James 3).

A. This sin hurts the growth of the church as much as any—bad example...

VI. Like Peter & Paul's many warnings against apostasy?

A. (II Pet. 2 & 3, II Thess. 2:1-12, I Tim. 4:1-4, Acts 20:29).

VII. Like Paul's last letter to Timothy?

A. Great encouragement.

VIII. Or would it be like Solomon's last book at the close of his life, Ecclesiastes (thus saith the preacher)? (Eccl. 2:1-11, 17, 18, & 23; Eccl. 12:1, 8, 13-14).

A. We have one life to live; how are we living it?

THE RELIGION OF JEROBOAM

JERRY F. BASSETT

INTRODUCTION: (I Kings 12:25-33).

1. Background of the text:
 - a. Jeroboam had been promised rulership of ten tribes while Solomon yet lived; would prosper if faithful to God's law. (I Kings **11:26-40**).
 - b. Solomon died, his son Rehoboam reigned in his stead.
 - c. The people asked Rehoboam to lighten the yoke Solomon had placed upon them.
 - d. Rehoboam refused, threatened to increase it instead.
 - e. Consequently, ten tribes revolted, followed Jeroboam.
2. Jeroboam was not content to trust God's promise by keeping the law but chose instead to modify it to suit his own purposes.

I. THE RELIGION OF JEROBOAM.

- A. Its source—human wisdom.
 1. "Jeroboam ordained a feast... in the month which he had devised of his own heart" (vss. 31-33).
 2. So also is the case with false religions now (Col. 2:18-23; Acts 26:9; Matt. 7:21-23).
 - B. Its motive—to make personal followers of the people.
 1. Jeroboam was afraid to let the people go to Jerusalem to worship as God ordained for fear of losing their devotion to Rehoboam (vss. **26-27**).
 2. The same motive underlies much of the false teaching done now (Acts 20:28-30; II Pet. 2:1-3).
 - C. Its appeal—convenience, make worship easier for the people.
 1. Jeroboam said Jerusalem was too far to go (God's word to the contrary being ignored, vs. 28).
 2. False teaching uses the same appeal now (II Tim. 4:2-4; Jude 4). Teachers, and hearers, need to consider Gal. 1:10.
 - D. Its appearance—similar to the truth.
 1. Jeroboam's feast was "like unto the feast that is in Judah" (vs. 32).
 2. False teachers contive things in the same way now, make error palatable by giving it the appearance of truth (II Cor. 11:12-15).
 - E. Its effect—progressive degeneracy.
 1. Jeroboam started with changing the place of worship, two calves of gold, a different feast, and appointing unqualified priests, but his people wound up like this (II Kings 17:9-12, 16-17).
 2. So do false religions now; the path from God always leads downhill (II Tim. 3:13).
- (Notice the antidote for the poison of this wickedness (II Tim. 3:14-17).
- F. Its result—perdition.
 1. National perdition for Israel (II Kings 17:18).
 2. Eternal spiritual perdition eventually for all false worshippers (Matt. 7:21-23; 13:42-43).

CONCLUSION: The religion of Jeroboam is as false now as it was then. Let us refuse it and worship God in spirit and in truth (Jno. 4:23-24).

PREPARING FOR THE SABBATH

MIKE GRUSHON

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Texts: (Mk. 15:42; Ex. 16:5, 22-24).
2. Preparation:
 - a. A making ready, equipping.
 - b. In the New Testament in a Jewish sense, the day of preparation on which the Jews made the necessary preparation to celebrate a sabbath or a feast (Mt. 27:61; Lk. 23:54; Jn. 19:31).
3. In this lesson we want to observe the nature of the Jewish day of preparation and apply what lessons may be learned to us as Christians today.

I. The Jewish "Day of Preparation."

- A. The passover (Ex. 12).
 1. The lamb was prepared.
 2. The lintels were painted.
 3. The people awaited the coming of the angel dressed and ready for the journey. They were prepared.
- B. The sabbath (Ex. 16:5, 22-24).
 1. They had to prepare for the absence of manna on the sabbath.
 2. Under the law of Moses (Ex. 20:10) they had to prepare for the day since no work could be done.
- C. Why was there a "day of preparation?"
 1. It enabled the people to be ready at the Lord's beckoning.
 2. It facilitated obedience to His commands.

II. The Parallel for Today.

- A. We are commanded to assemble and we have examples of the early church doing so for communion, teaching, singing, and prayer (Heb. 10:25; Ax. 20:7).
- B. The New Testament does not command a "day of preparation," but there are many signs which indicate that we are often unprepared for worship at the assembly.
 1. People fail to prepare properly for class and are not edified.
 2. People who are late because they were not prepared to attend services also disrupt the service for others.
 3. People who are not physically prepared because of Saturday night find it difficult to profit by attending services on Sunday morning.

III. An analysis of what this lack of preparation could cause.

- A. This may be the reason that so many of the young children are so hard to handle. If they had proper rest they might not be so easily upset.
- B. Ill-preparation on the listeners' part may be one of the reasons so many complain that they do not enjoy the classes and sermons.
- C. Ill-preparation leads to a destruction of the proper attitude for worship. A family that is upset because of ill-preparation of clothing etc. will have a hard time calming down enough for profitable worship.
- D. Habitual ill-preparation will destroy our influence upon others because it is evident that we are putting some lesser matter before God.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Jews had a day of preparation in order to aid them in observing the days that were dedicated to special service to God.
2. The Bible does not command such a day for Christians.
3. From what we have observed however we can conclude that many of the problems which hamper our worship and service to God could be solved if we took more time to prepare ourselves to serve him.

TWO SADDEST AND TWO HAPPIEST DAYS

OWEN MCGEE

I. Saddest Day in History—Not destruction of Temple, etc.

- A. Crucifixion.
 1. Mock trial.
 2. Before Pilate.
 3. Hearing mob cry for blood.
 4. Abandoned by Father.
 5. (Luke 23:34-49).
- B. Hope—cold in death.

II. Happiest day in History—not end of flood, etc.

- A. (Matt. 28:1-18).
- B. (Acts 2:26-28).
- C. Our hope (I Cor. 6:14).
- D. (Rev. 1:18).
- E. Foundation of Christ.

III. Happiest day in future—not any temporal thing.

- A. Judgment for the prepared.
 1. (2 Thess. 1:7).
 2. (Rom. 2:26-28).
 3. (Matt. 25:34).
- B. To be with Him.

IV. Saddest day in future—not temporal.

- A. Judgment for the unprepared.
 1. (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 2. (Rom. 2:5-9).
 3. (Matt. 25:41).

V. Look at another day—today.

- A. Could be a happy day for you (Acts 8:39).
- B. Salvation from past sins.

CONTRASTING HEARERS

Acts 17:1-15

In these verses two classes of hearers are brought before us: The hearers of Thessalonica and the hearers of Berea—the former were the ignoble, the latter the noble. In verse 11 the contrast is sharply drawn between them.

The Ignoble

1. They allowed jealousy to blind them to the gospel truth (Verse 5).
2. They persecuted the gospel preachers (Verse 5).
3. They perverted the words of the apostle Paul (Verses 6, 7).
4. They did not believe the message of the apostle Paul.

The Noble

1. They gave the gospel truth a candid consideration (Verse 11a).
2. They treated the gospel preachers with kind consideration.
3. They gave the words of the apostle an impartial trial (Verse 11b).
4. They believed the message of the man of God (Verse 11).

The Master said, "Take heed what ye hear" (Mark 4:24). He also said, "Take heed how ye hear" (Luke 8:18). We may listen to the right thing in the wrong way. Mental attitude is very important. We should hear discerningly, sympathetically, gladly. Proper hearing must precede conversion (Acts 28:27). And without conversion, there can be no salvation.

THE SPIRIT OF DIOTROPHES

DALE SMELSER

INTRODUCTION:

1. **III** John written to Gaius to receive, provide for, and encourage "workers for truth" as they came.
2. Necessary because Diotrophes rejected them and those who would receive them.
3. Because he "loveth to have the pre-eminence"—superiority, distinction.

I. FOLLOWING THE GOSPEL AND SEEKING PRE-EMINENCE ARE ANTIPODAL, CONTRADICTORY.

- A. Mt. 25:5-12; called to service rather than position.
- B. Lk. 22:24,27 and Jn. 13:1-17; disciples' misunderstanding corrected by Jesus' example.
- C. Mt. 20:25-28.
 1. Denominational hierarchy and organization thus proscribed.
 2. As also the gathering of informal personal power (I Cor. 1:12; 3:6; 4:6).
- D. Even overseers are shepherds (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2; Lk. 15:4).
 1. But warn sheep against trying to establish a democracy.
 2. Elders must find balance of overseeing as shepherds without being lords.

- E. If want position, power, authority, kingdom is wrong place to look; gospel provides no satisfaction for such ambitions there.
- II. PREDICTABLE CHARACTER & ACTIONS OF ONE WHO LOVES PRE-EMINENCE.**
- A. Envious and jealous—"Receiveth us not" (III Jn. 9; cf. Prov. 14:30).
- B. Slandrous—"Prating against us with wicked words" (III Jn. 10).
1. Seeks to build self up by destroying others (cf. Prov. 10:9).
 2. Emphasize vanity of—Jas. 1:26.
 3. BBbe careful of the man constantly full of bad news of someone else.
- C. Vindictive—"Casteth them out of the church" (III Jn. 10; contrast Gal. 6:1).
- D. Insensitive to authority of truth—"I wrote . . . Diotrophes receiveth us not" (III Jn. 9).
- III. VARIOUS TYPES OF PRE-EMINENCE SEEKERS.**
- A. Shall have principle esteem or destroy—Like Judas; Mt. 26:6-16 (esp. w. 13-14), Jn. 12:4-6.
- B. Those who relish controversy as means of being center of attention (I Tim. 6:4-5).
- C. Little men who swell because of deference given in spiritual oneness.
1. Danger of such self exaltation—Lk. 14:7-11.
 2. After such, often become contentious—Titus 3:10.
- D. The flatterer—Dan. 11:21; I Thess. 2:1-5.
- E. None such have seen God—III Jn. 11; Mt. 5:8.
- IV. SUCH WILL BE BROUGHT DOWN—III Jn. 10; Prov. 16:5,18; Mt. 23:12.**

RUINED SERMONS

PAUL M. CALDWELL, SR.

INTRODUCTION: Ruin: "To render void—make useless." Web.

Many ruin good sermons themselves and for others that are around them by:

1. Grab coats before invitation is finished.
2. Talking during worship.
3. Won't control their children.
4. Sleeping during service and etc.

Much of this is due to a lack of spirit in the worship of God.

GOOD SERMONS THAT WERE RUINED IN THE PAST ARE STILL BEING RUINED BY MANY TODAY (I Cor. 10:11-12). "Now all these things happened unto them for our ensamples and are written for OUR admonition__ Wherefore let him that thinketh he STANDETH take HEED LEST HE FALL.

I. SERMON FROM THE DEAD (Lk. 16:19-30). Lazarus and the rich man . . . "GO BACK AND TELL THEM" Would he listen?—No!!

II. SERMON ON FAITH (Heb. 11:4). "By faith Able offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain . . . By which he obtained a good report" (Rom.

io:i7). "Faith comes by hearing" (II Cor. 5:7). "For we walk by Faith not by sight."

III. ON FEAR (Heb. 11:7). Noah moved with fear and prepared the ark and saved himself and his house. **WOULD THE ARK HAVE FLOATED JUST AS WELL FROM SOME OTHER KIND OF WOOD?—NOAH WAS AFRAID TO TRY IT . . . WOULD YOU BE?** Without the fear of God and respect for His commands we are lost!

IV. SACRIFICE: When we mention sacrifice man expects to hear a call for them to give a few more dollars: The Lord requires more of us than the meager offering of dollars on Lord's day (Heb. 11:7). "Abraham, when he was tried, offered Issac" (Rom. 12:1-2). "Offer your bodies a living sacrifice."

V. SERMONS ON IGNORANCE.... ARE WE IGNORANT OF GOD'S SALVATION? (Acts 17:22-31). "At the times of this ignorance God winked at but now commandeth all men everywhere to REPENT" . . . because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." **ARE WE IGNORANT OF THIS FACT, BRETHREN?**

Jude 3—We are to earnestly contend for the (not a) faith once delivered to the saints. (Re) It is not fulfilled in having the preacher contend, it is fulfilled in obedience. **REMEMBER NOT EVERYONE THAT SAITH UNTO ME, LORD, LORD.**

VI. WILL YOU RUIN THIS SERMON?.... (Acts 10).

- A. The preacher can RUIN it!—Add to—Take away.
- B. The Christian can RUIN it! Not heed it.
- C. The erring brethren can RUIN it!
- D. The Sinner and the Devil can RUIN it!
- E. You WILL RUIN it if you do not obey it.

Don't Ruin Christ's Invitation—Obey it!!

JUDAS

LEO ROGOL

INTRODUCTION:

1. It was already in the foreknowledge of God that Jesus would be delivered into the hands of the enemy. Acts 2:22-23 delivered by the determined counsel—foreknowledge of God.
 - a. ". . . it was in accordance with God's preordained purpose that he was to be delivered into their power . . ." (J.W. McGarvey, *Commentary on Acts*).
 - b. He was "delivered—surrendered, or given over to.
 - c. I Peter 1:20—Foreordained before the foundation of the world.
2. It was already prophesied that Jesus would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:10-13).
 - a. Hence, it was according to God's divine purpose, not that God was unable to prevent Christ's death.

- b. The Jews were of that disposition of heart by which they were capable of doing such a terrible deed.

I. THE CHARACTER OF JUDAS

- A. *The name, JUDAS, is often used synonymously with TRAITOR.*
 1. Just what kind of person was the one who was fitted into God's plan that Christ would be betrayed?
 2. God often uses vile, corrupt people to carry out His divine plans.
 - a. Pharaoh—(Rom. 9:17).
 - b. God often worked through idolatrous, evil nations to punish His people.
 3. Such a person was even chosen to be one of His disciples.
- B. *He was selfish, greedy, covetous.*
John 12:3-6 cared not for the poor.
 1. Many people today are of the same character.
 2. Often give a pretence of good will merely to hide their evil character and gain their own selfish, greedy desires (I Tim. 6:10).
 3. This generation is full of people who will exploit the poor, the unfortunate for their own profit.
 4. Judas was not concerned for the poor. He was a thief—he was an embezzler. He wanted the funds for his own use.
 5. His covetousness for money proved to be his own downfall—he pierced himself through with many sorrows.
- C. *He was a hypocrite of the worst type.*
 1. Used a sign of sacred friendship and trust to carry out his shameful, deceitful act of betrayal.
 2. Matt. 26:14-16—betrayed a friend, his master for money. Mark 14:43-46—kiss, a token of betrayal.
 3. The kiss was an expression of love, respect, friendship. I Peter 5:14—“Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity.” I Cor. 16:20—“Greet ye one another with a holy kiss.”
 4. Matt. 16:47-50.
 - a. FRIEND—Not that Jesus did not know with what intention Judas kissed him.
 - b. But to make Judas fully aware of his abominable, deplorable act of treachery.
 - c. This was to make Judas aware of his self-condemnation by using a holy, sacred act to commit a vile deed.
 - d. He did not come as an open enemy, but disguised his enmity under the cloak of friendship.
 5. It is hardly possible to imagine any one more vicious and wicked than one who would betray a friend for personal gains or money.
 6. Only a vicious character as Judas could betray a friend through hypocrisy such as the kiss.
 7. Some people in business and politics are ready to betray friends for personal gains or profit.
 8. Some brethren in the church exploit their friendship with brethren for their personal ambitions.
 9. If they cannot gain their desires, or if they have by friendship, they readily turn against their friends.
 10. It is sad when people are not willing to stand by another for the sake of honor, truth, or right principle.
 11. Some people are always willing for others to take the rap, or blame, for their mis-deeds.

u. *tie was a coward.*

Matt. 27:1-5

1. When he saw that he was condemned.
2. Not concerned over the crime against Christ and against Heaven. Not concerned over the suffering Christ was subjected to because of his crime.
3. Did not repent of his sin, but because of his own condemnation.
4. "Repented himself."
 - a. Does not mean he had sorrow over sin that would lead him to salvation.
 - b. Merely a change from selfish satisfaction from personal profit *to fear of its consequences.*
 - c. It was not concern for the suffering of Christ, but that he found himself condemned.
5. He hanged himself—a weak, cowardly man, he did not have the courage to correct his life.
6. Matt. 17:4—Even the ones with whom he conspired had no use nor respect for him.
 - a. People with evil hearts cannot trust anyone, any more than they can be trusted themselves.
 - b. They only band together for the evil act, for which they are drawn together,
 - c. People who have no right principle to draw them together have no principle *at all* to hold them together in face of difficulty.
 - d. In the church—unless people are drawn together by sacred principles of the gospel, they will not preserve the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).
 - e. Being prompted by carnal desires and principles, they will be filled with envy, strife and division (I Cor. 3:3).

II. EXAMPLES AND LESSONS

- A. *God did not MAKE him do the evil, nor did God restrain him.*
 1. Some people ask, If this was the plan of God, did God arbitrarily make Judas commit this act?
 2. John 13:21-27
 - a. Jesus merely foretold, predicted what Judas would do. He allowed Judas to carry out his evil desires.
 - b. Jesus used no power, force, or influence to cause him to perform this evil.
 3. vs. 27-Satan entered into him. He was prompted by Satan's influence.
- B. *Neither did Jesus Prevent him from doing wrong.*
 1. Vs. 27 "That thou doest, do quickly.
 2. Jesus gave him no occasion to stumble.
 3. Judas had good opportunity to benefit from Christ's teachings and change his evil nature.
 4. But Jesus did not beg, plead, compromise, flatter him to refrain him from doing evil.
- C. Some brethren are so fearful of what an ungodly member may do that they pamper, baby him to avoid trouble.
 1. They are more afraid of offending the guilty than of the disturbance and harm he is creating by his ungodly life.

2. The lesson from this is that we should not fear the sinner, but rather bring his case to its ultimate conclusion.
- D. Our society is reaping the terrible fruit of pampering the lawless and burdening the law-abiding citizens.

JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS

HAYSE RENEAU

INTRODUCTION:

1. (Jn. 1:6), "There was a man sent from God whose name was John."
 - a. A very simple introduction for a short lived, yet prominent figure who is an important part of God's scheme of redemption for mankind—JOHN BAPTIST. What was his purpose? His work? Shall notice some of them. . . .
2. God's will, while yet with God, was a mystery to men (Eph. 3:8-9; I Cor. 2:9,10,11); Spirit revealed God's purposes through prophets and apostles (vs. 12).
 - a. So it was that the Father intended that one should pave the way for the Redeemer of the whole world. Man wouldn't have known except God chose to reveal such through the Prophet Isaiah. . . .
 - b. Prophesied, Isa. 40:3-11. . . . now.
 - c. Note how John Mark unfolds this prophecy into the Harbinger of Jesus Christ in the person of John The Immerser.

BODY:

- I. Mark 1:1-11** (About the author, Mark: Not one of the 12 apostles. Doesn't detract from truthfulness of his work. I believe Mark's gospel was written before AD 70. While Luke tells of John's parents and birth; Mark begins with his public ministry.) . . .by saying . . .
- A. (vss. 1-3) "*The beginning of the Gospel....*" Gospel means "Good news"—News concerning "Jesus Christ the Son of God."
 1. Things good or bad are not news until announced (Town Crier, of Old New England).—Thus the beginning of John's work (vs. 3), A Herald (KARUK).
 - B. *John's Call was divine*, Malachi 3:1.
 1. Things he spoke were not his own! (II Tim. 3:16a; II Pet. 1:20-21; cf. Luke 3:20).
 - C. *His work was preparatory* to Christ's public ministry and the establishment of the kingdom.
 1. "*He shall prepare the way before me . . .*" (Mal. 3:1a). *TO PRECEDE MESSIAH*: As we have seen pictures of "brush cutters" before a jungle party hacking out path in underbrush (cf. Matt. 3:2).

2. Prepare people for coming kingdom (Lk. 1:17; Matt. 3:1-2), "at hand" (near by), not yet established.
3. John, then, is sent to open a door in the hearts of men and women for the King to enter.
4. Lest one should think him to be the Anointed he said (Mk. 1:7-8; Jn. 3:27-30).

II. JOHN'S WORK AND THE RESULTS (vss. 4-5).

- A. *WHERE?* (vs. 3), "Wilderness" (Matt. 3:1), "Wilderness of Judea." (Luke 3:3), "Country about Jordan." *CONCLUSION:* John's work was in the Eastern section of the territory of Judea near Jordan river. Fits Isaiah's prophecy to a T (Isa. 40:3), "IN wilderness."
 1. *His dress also identified him* (Mk. 1:6). "To come in spirit and power of Elijah" (Lk. 1:17; cf. II Kings 1:8). (*footnote* says, Elijah "clothed in garment of hair").
- B. *WHAT WAS JOHN'S MESSAGE?* Jesus came first to his own people (John 1:11a). Jews were horribly corrupted spiritually and morally by perverted doctrines of Pharisees and other ungodly religious leaders. E.g. Sermon on the Mount aimed at exposing such (Cf. Mt. 6:21). (Jews were saying, you can treat a person as unmercifully as you like, just don't kill him!) **WRONG!**
 3. *There must be a reformation* if they are to receive the Saviour . . . John's message calculated to reform them—Mark 1:4, ". . . Baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."
 - a. "*Repentance*" is change of mind concerning wrongs. Godly sorrow for wrongs and the goodness of God brings people to repent and change lives (II Cor. 7:9-11; Rom. 2:4).
 - b. Repentance is a decision, a determination to quit sinning—a reformation must follow—or repentance is worthless!
 2. "*Baptism of repentance*" (?) Those immersed must be penitent. *CONCLUSION:* Two requisites unto remission of sins, "RE-**PENTANCE**" & "BAPTISM."
 - a. This is exactly what the apostles taught on Pentecost! (Ax. 2:38). *Only difference:* After death of Jesus, baptism is in the "Name of Jesus" & "Into the Kingdom." John's cap. was unto coming of Jesus and unto the coming of his kingdom, which he "purchased with His own blood" (Ax. 20:28).
 - b. "*All those who received John's word* and believed him were baptized for the remission of their sins.
 - c. All who received apostles words on Pentecost, *and now*, are baptized for the remission of their sins (Ax. 2:41).
 - d. *Many rejected baptism of John* (Luke 7:30), "Rejected God." Many today reject baptism of Christ—all in terrible condition (II Thess. 1:8).

III. JESUS BAPTIZED BY JOHN (vss. 9-11).

- A. *John is reluctant* (Matt. 3:13,14). His baptism was for "forgiveness of sin", he knew the Christ was sinless—(cf. vs. 15). God's seal & approval (vss. 16-17).
 1. Heb. 5:8-9 "Obedient" not only in baptism at the hands of John; but, Phil. 2:8.
- B. Since no one, other than himself, ever was, ever will be, sinless; Christ didn't commission apostles to teach "baptism to fulfill all things," but, Ax. 2:38, as John.

CONCLUSION:

1. With the exception of Jesus Christ, every account of baptism in N.T. was "for" (in order to obtain) remission of sins." (Ax. **22:16**).
2. "*Jn. 1:6*"—*John introduced the Holy One to mankind*. Those who were prepared to meet Him were those baptized for the remission of sins.
3. The King, Himself, says to you and I, all who will ever live (Mark **16:16**).
4. Have you obeyed Him yet?—COME!!!!

"THE JUDGMENT"

PAULKELSEY

(Rom. 2:1-11)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Judgment something to be concerned about in view of Rom. 14:12; Phil. 2:10-11; II Cor. 5:10; Ax. 17:30, 31.
2. God is not going to call us into judgment without a standard or basis of judgment. To do so is to remove all semblance of justice, and our God is a just God.
3. No better plan to properly evaluate the judgment, before all mankind, than the text.

I. FIRST BASIS OF JUDGMENT: "ACCORDING TO TRUTH" (vs. 2).

- A. Brings two things to mind.
 1. According as things really are and not as they appear from a superficial observation or prejudiced viewpoint. Goes to the very nature of things and our motives. Example: Paul misjudged by his countrymen in preaching Gospel to Gentiles.
 2. Brings question of Pilate to mind as found in John 18:38. Nothing more than philosophical dodge. Answer to question found in scriptures.
 - a. Jesus answers question in John 14:6 and John 17:17.
 - (1.) Thus it is the word personified in Christ.
 - (2.) Also it is the written as inspired by Holy Spirit (John 12:48).
Thus: The example of life of Christ AND the Bible given by revelation.
 3. This being true it is reasonable as to what is enjoined upon us (Cf. II Tim. 3:16,17; II Tim. 2:15).
 4. Thus to meet first requirement of judgment must know the truth of God's word.

II. SECOND BASIS OF JUDGMENT IS: "RENDER TO EVERYMAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS."

- A. The individuality of judgment seen.
 1. Some remonstrate saying conflict with Eph. 2:8, 9 and Rom. 5:1.
 - a. No conflict. Compare Heb. 11:30. These deeds accomplished by faith and work is that required by God (Cf. Josh. 6:2).
 - b. Consider: Grace wholly divine. Faith and works wholly human.

2. Necessity of accomplishing something substantiated by II Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:14; Matt. 25; Eccl. 12:13,14. Plus consider context of verse especially vs. 8 and 9.
3. In as much as this is true how it behooves us to be as Jesus (Cf. John 9:4). Do ALL we can while we can. If not then woe unto us.

III. THIRD BASIS: "NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD."

- A. These principles to be applied universally to all men (Cf. Ax. 10:34, 35; Psa. 119:172).
- B. Must be applied or God's judgment could not be just.
- C. Also must consider that ignorance is no excuse. It is not in man's imperfect systems of justice nor is it in God's perfect system. (Cf. Titus 2:11,12).

IV. APPLICATION OF THESE PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO THE BOOK OF ROMANS.

- A. Do you want to go to the judgment under a perfect legal system? I do not. I, as a sinner, under a perfect legal system will be condemned, Doomed.
- B. Paul is developing the System of Justification by Faith in Christ in this book and shows man is lost (Cf. Rom. 3:10,23).
- C. But blood of Christ satisfied divine justice, which demands our condemnation, and makes us justified (Cf. Rom. 5:1-8).
- D. Must come into contact with blood. Faith of man exercised in obedience (Heb. 2:9; Heb. 5:8,9).
- E. Have you obeyed? Have you applied blood of Christ? If not, do so! If you have then see the needs of patient continuance in well doing.

IS IT ESSENTIAL TO ASSEMBLE WITH THE CHURCH?

H.A. MOBLEY

(Heb. 10:25)

INTRODUCTION:

1. If it is, and the text says that it is, then how much is essential?
 - a. Some think Sunday morning only. But how about the other services?
2. Church attendance indicates spiritual health (Matt. 23:37).
 - a. Forsaking the assembly is a symptom of "heart trouble."
3. The problem has become so paramount with some that they use "gimmicks" to correct.
 - a. Denomination I know of gives away trading stamps to induce attendance.
 - b. God draws (Jno. 6:44-45) by the gospel (Rom. 1:16).
4. Commend those who faithfully attend—and explain "providential" absences.

I. WHY IS IT ESSENTIAL TO ATTEND THE SERVICES OF THE CHURCH?

- A. Commands are broken (Jno. 14:15).
 - 1. Command to assemble (Heb. 10:25). This is a negative command.
 - 2. Command to observe the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:23-26; Ax. 20:7; 2:42).
 - 3. Generally, the command to give is broken (I Cor. 16:1-2).
 - 4. Failing to do these things are sins of "omission" (Jas. 4:17).
- B. Essential for spiritual development (Rom. 14:19; I Thess. 5:11; Heb. 5:12).
 - 1. Spiritual development is not optional! (II Pet. 3:18).
- C. Essential for the proper functioning of the church (Eph. 4:12).
 - 1. How can this mission be accomplished unless we meet and work together?
 - 2. If one stays home, all can. God is no respecter of persons (Ax. 10:34).
 - 3. Have you observed that every parable of judgment taught by Jesus was in condemnation for failure to do, and not for wrong doing or immoral lives? Marriage Feast—Ten Virgins—Sheep & Goats—Rich Farmer, etc.
- D. Essential for a good influence (I Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7; Matt. 5:14-16).
 - 1. Regular church goers are respected and well spoken of.
 - 2. Non-attendance does not influence friends, children, sinners.

II. WHEN ARE CHRISTIANS TO ASSEMBLE?

- A. Most agree Sunday morning. Go that extra mile (Matt. 5:41).
 - 1. Even if this command just included Sunday, it would include Sunday evening!
 - 2. Some have turned Lord's day into Lord's hour.
- B. Feeding time (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2).
 - 1. When? An expedient time for majority.
 - 2. How? Shepherds get sheep together to feed them, doesn't seek out each sheep!
- C. When a good work is to be done (Heb. 10:24; Titus 3:1).
 - 1. Is Bible study, worship, gospel meetings good work? Better stop if not!
- D. What about teaching our children—here is another excellent opportunity (Eph. 6:4).
- E. Christians should desire to be with Christ (Matt. 18:20).
- F. Christians converted to Christ will have an attitude of "How Much," not "How Little."
- G. How about dropping out, then coming back without repenting and making confession? (Jas. 5:16).

III. EXCUSES SOMETIMES OFFERED FOR NOT ATTENDING.

- A. "Had a headache, etc." If God made some as sick as they say they are, they would die!
- B. "Don't like the preacher." Do not meet to worship the preacher, but God.
- C. "My clothes are not good enough." Go everywhere else. (I Sam. 16:7; Matt. 6:33).
- D. "Company came." Read again—did not say, "Except when company comes."

CONCLUSION:

1. Consider the purpose in coming together (Jno. 4:23-24).
2. (Psa. 122:1) Is this your attitude?
3. "Often when I pass the church I drop in for a visit, so that when I'm carried in the Lord won't say, "Who is it?"

ARE YOU MARRIED TO CHRIST?

PAUL M. CALDWELL, SR.

INTRODUCTION: Boy meets girl: The beginning of a beautiful association which may lead to Marriage. This first introduction is important. The "Where and how" one is introduced to "the one of their dreams" is important.

COURTSHIP: A mutual interest, a period called "courtship." This is really a time of getting better acquainted, allowing our interest and confidence to grow.

ENGAGEMENT: Many beautiful friendships have been terminated when one party pressed for a decision. When for the lack of interest, the response was never forthcoming. On the other hand, thousands of secret engagements have ended before they were ever announced publicly.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Announce it! Make it known! Let heaven and earth know a marriage is to take place! "Someone's name is to be changed." "Someone will assume a new bond which is to last for all futures."

CEREMONY: "All things are ready." The time has arrived. All necessary pre-conditions have been met. Up until now nothing has really changed. "No family relation has changed." Up until now all has been "good, honorable intentions" but the big moment of "I do" has come!

NEW STATUS: "Two are now as one." "A new name has been put on." "A new responsibility has been assumed," All that is inherent in the family name will be shared.

NOW LET US COMPARE OUR MARRIAGE TO CHRIST.

HEAR: Our first conscious introduction to Christ was by "hearing" of Him through the gospel. This is the work of every true Christian to introduce Christ to others. "Preach the gospel to every creature." (Matt. 16:18, Mk. 16:15-16).

BELIEVE: Upon hearing of Christ "who loves us" one may quickly decide to believe or reject Him. Whatever the case may be it does not change the truth of our relationship. We realize that in the marital life it takes more than belief which produces faith to make a marriage. However "Without faith we cannot please God" (Heb. 11:6).

REPENTANCE: Repentance from our past sin with intentions to enter the "new life" is a prerequisite to all who desire to "put on Christ." We must be prepared to "turn from" the old life to enter the new. So also those who enter the bonds of matrimony. By being engaged to Christ many false leaders encourage us to go on through life believing we are "married" and wearing the family name.

CONFESSION: I in reality announce my love, faith, and desire to be joined to **Christ**. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, shall be confessed before the angels of God."

BAPTISM: Don't stop with all your good intentions! Don't believe the false teachers of the world—"Put on Christ." Be joined to Christ. "Become a new creature." Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." It is here that "as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." It is here that the "marriage bond" is sealed. We now receive a new name.

NEW CREATURE: Paul said to the Corinthians: "... I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (II Cor. 11:2) "... Come hither, I will sit with you, and we will eat and drink, and I will betrothe you unto myself, as the church is betrothed unto myself, that I may sanctify her, having washed her with the word of water by the word, that I may present her to myself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; that she should be without spot, as she is without spot." In Acts 2 those who were baptized were "added to the church." They were then to "do all" in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12). They were members of "His body, the church." In Eph. 5, the husband and wife arrangement is compared to Christ and His church.

ARE YOU MARRIED TO CHRIST?

WHAT WAS JESUS LIKE?

H. A. MOBLEY

(Matt. 16:13-20)

INTRODUCTION:

1. We are on holy ground—Jesus is here! Not in flesh, but Spirit (Matt. 18:20).
2. Did you ever have a burning desire to see Jesus?
 - a. I would like to have walked and talked with Him.
 - b. Watched Him perform the miracles, hear Him preach the sermon on the mount.
3. It is impossible now to know what He looked like physically.
 - a. Photography was not known at that time. No artist drawing of Him available.
4. The Bible tells us what Jesus was like in many respects. Let us study.

I. JESUS WAS LIKE GOD (Jno. 14:9; I Jno. 4:12).

- A. Eternal (Jno. 1:1-2; Jno. 8:58). "Before Abraham was, I am."
- B. He is Immanuel (God with us—Matt. 1:23).
- C. Existed in form of God, took form of man (Phil. 2:5-8).
 1. Form (Gr. Morphe) "denotes the special or characteristic form or feature of a person or thing" (W.E. Vine).
 2. Form of God (Spirit—Jno. 4:24), form of man—(flesh).
- D. Proof of Jesus deity. Virgin birth (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25); mighty works (Jno. 10:37-38; 3:1-2; Acts 2:22); resurrection (Rom. 1:4; Col. 1:18); over 500 witnesses at one time (I Cor. 15:6).
- E. We, with Thomas, ought to say, "My Lord, and my God" (Jno. 20:28).

II. JESUS WAS LIKE MAN (Matt. 16:13).

- A. Why did Jesus become flesh? Only sacrifice God would accept (Rom. 6:23; Jno. 3:16).

- B. Christ emptied Himself (Phil. 2:7 ASV). "He did not empty Himself of Godhood. He did not cease to be what he essentially and eternally was" (W.E. Vine). Gave up riches and glory of heaven.
- C. "Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jno. 1:14; Heb. 10:5). Humanity and deity came together in the virgin birth (Matt. 1:18).
- D. Had human characteristics—grew; hunger; weary; slept; compassion; sorrow; etc. Subject to like temptations, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15).
- E. Because of His deity and humanity, He is the perfect mediator (I Tim. 2=5).

III. JESUS WAS LIKE JOHN THE BAPTIST (Matt. 16:14).

- A. Why did they say He was like John? They were cousins, may have looked alike.
- B. They preached alike. Repentance (Matt. 3:1-2; Mk. 1:15); kingdom at hand.
- C. Neither could stand hypocrisy (Matt. 3:7-8; 23:13).
- D. Both were men of self-denial.
 - 1. John ate locust and wild honey. Some diet! Didn't own a Hart Shaffner Marx suit.
 - 2. Jesus's maternity ward was a stable, his parents were poor. Birds have nests—had to catch fish to pay taxes (Matt. 17:24), borrowed tomb.

IV. JESUS WAS LIKE ELIJAH (Matt. 16:14).

- A. Elijah lived 800-850 yrs. before Christ came.
- B. Mal. 4:5-6 said that Elijah would come before the day of the Lord. God meant anti-type of Elijah. Jews thought literal.
- C. What kind of man was Elijah that made Jesus like him?
 - 1. Never died—taken up by whirlwind into heaven (II Kings 2:11; Ax. 1:11).
 - 2. "Why halt ye between two opinions?" (I Kings 18). Jesus said—(Matt. 6:24).

V. JESUS WAS LIKE JEREMIAH (Matt. 16:14).

- A. Jeremiah called the "weeping prophet." Read Lamentations and Jer. 3:22. Poured his heart out for lost Israel.
- B. Jesus was friend of sinners—pleaded with them to return to God (Matt. 23:37).
- C. Jews had been told that God would raise up a prophet (Deut. 18:15; Ax. 3:22).

CONCLUSION: One day we will stand before Him and see Him as He is (I Jno. 3:2).

AS SHINING LIGHTS

LEO ROGOL

(Matt. 5:14-16 "Ye are the light of the world.")

Matt. 5:14-16 "Ye are the light of the world."

I. HOW DO OUR LIGHTS SHINE?

- A. By manifesting good works.
 - 1. Many people do good works, hence we might think that anything that might be good, or ANYONE that is doing a good thing IS AS A SHINING LIGHT.
 - 2. The Temperance Movement of the early part of this century.
 - 3. Community, civic, or charitable works might be considered "good works" by some.
 - 4. The proverbial Boy Scout who leads an elderly woman across the street is doing a "good work." A Scout leader, Red Cross worker is going a "good work."
 - 5. Even the Atheist or infidel who does not believe in God would be considered as glorifying the God whom he denies by his "good work."
- B. Even Satan, the ruler of darkness, presents his works as a great light, a good work.
 - 1. Eph. 6:12, rulers of the darkness of this world.
 - 2. Col. 1:13, power of darkness.
 - 3. Jude 6, angels reserved in everlasting chains under darkness.
 - 4. II Cor. 11:13-15, transforming himself into an angel of light. This is Satan.
 - 5. Moses performed miracles before Pharaoh—Magicians performed miracles also.
 - 6. Apostles did signs and wonders by the name of Jesus (Ax. 4:30).
 - 7. Satan deceives by "power and signs and lying wonders" (II Thess. 2:9).
- C. Religious divisions, denominations are not based upon the word of God.
 - 1. As always, when God presents truth, Satan always presents false light.
 - 2. True religion, false religion; doctrine of Christ, doctrines of devils.
 - 3. Christ's church, human denominations.
- D. When God does not authorize a thing, the only place one can find his authority for it is "darkness," or the power of Satan.
- E. Good works.
 - 1. Matt. 5:6 May see your good works—glorify your Father.
 - 2. Matt. 7:20-23 many wonderful works, yet works of iniquity.
 - 3. Christ did not deny they did all these works.
 - a. Is it an evil work to "cast out devils?"
 - b. Can it be denied that many benefitted from the efforts of these "many" who did the "many wonderful works?"
 - 4. They were called "iniquity"—"without authority."
 - 5. II Tim. 3:17—Scriptures define and establish all "good works."
 - 6. Hence, though they did "many wonderful works," they were "without authority"—were not done by the inspired scriptures of God.

- F. Many do good works from different motives.
 1. Doing right from the wrong motive is just as wrong as doing wrong with the right motive.
 2. Matt. 6:1-3 pride, seeking honor, recognition, selfish ambitions.
 3. If we do it for personal glory, it is not pleasing to God.

II. THE LIGHT WE SHINE IS ONLY THE REFLECTION OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WILL OR AUTHORITY OF GOD.

- A. Only a child of God can be a light, let his light shine by good works (Eph. 5:5, 8, 11) Light in the Lord.
 1. One out of Christ is in darkness, he has no light to shine.
 2. One in Christ walks in the light, his walk should be as children of light.
- B. John 1:4-5, 9. Christ is the light of men, the light shined in darkness.
- C. Commanded the light to shine out of darkness.
 1. Sun is not the originator of light. It is the light container; it contains the light God created and placed in it.
 2. The apostles did not originate the light of the gospel, they only shine the reflection of the knowledge of God's truth that he originated and revealed unto them.
 3. Rev. 18:1, The earth was lightened with his glory.
 4. Ps. 119:105, Thy word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

III. LIGHT DISPELS DARKNESS.

- A. There is no darkness that light cannot penetrate as long as light shines.
 1. A dark room is lighted when the light is turned on.
 2. The light of the gospel will not dispel darkness unless it is shined.
- B. The early church, as long as it worked and preached with zeal the pure light of the gospel, dispelled the darkness of Judaism and heathenism.
- C. I John 1:5, God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.
 1. No power of darkness can veil the glory of God.
 2. One who walks in fellowship cannot be covered with darkness. We are to walk in the light.
 3. One who walks in the light has the means to dispel the darkness around him.
 4. He has what he needs, only he must let his light shine before men.

IV. LIGHT IS POWERFUL.

- A. Light rays, so minute, are being used to penetrate through thick metals, can cut completely through and disintegrate anything that crosses its path.
- B. Spiritual light, the truth of the gospel is powerful.
 1. Rom. 1:16, Gospel, the POWER of God unto salvation.
 - a. "Power"—from dynamo, or dynamite—it has great force, thrust, can cause great movement, agitation.
 - b. This is the power of the word of God, the gospel of Christ.
- C. The power of God's word was keenly felt in the lives of men.
 1. Heb. 4:12, The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword; it pierces even to the dividing assunder of soul and spirit; it is a discerner of the thoughts, the intents of the heart.
 2. Felix trembled when Paul preached concerning righteousness, temperance, and of judgment to come.
 - a. Did not tremble because he feared the people.

- b. He trembled in fear of God when He heard His word spoken to him.
- 3. Nebuchadnezzar, the mighty ruler of Babylon.
 - a. No earthly power or might could overthrow him.
 - b. Yet, the spoken word of God against him humbled him to the position of the brute beast of the field.
- 4. Jas. 2:19, Thou believest there is one God; thou doest well. The devils believe and tremble.
- D. Light must shine, else its power will not dispel darkness.
 - 1. A broken bulb is no good.
 - 2. A good bulb without shining will not dispel darkness.
 - 3. Example: I have a flashlight. I have the means of making clear a dark path at night. But if I don't shine the light, not only you will walk in darkness, but I will walk in darkness also.
 - 4. Hidden truth cannot enlighten and teach God's will. When man is afraid or unwilling to teach God's truth, he is as one who hides the light under a bushel.
 - 5. Hence, one who doesn't shine the light of truth is automatically in darkness himself, for only when light is shined will it dispel the darkness.
 - 6. A life without the truth of God radiating from within is a life swallowed up in darkness.
 - 7. A life that does not shine is a robber that steals from God the glory and honor that belong to him.
 - 8. Many times some feel that they should not cause trouble over differences and unscriptural practices.
 - a. False doctrines and practices are works of darkness.
 - b. We are to "reprove" the "unfruitful works of darkness."
 - c. Every time we yield to, or fail to reprove works of darkness we are allowing the bushel to hide the light of God's truth and automatically the light is covered from us.
 - 9. It is only to be determined where we want to be—in the light, or in darkness.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

CECIL WILLIS

INTRODUCTION:

1. This subject is perhaps the most neglected one in the Bible. Few preach on it, and fewer churches practice it.
2. It is inconsistent to insist on following the law for admission to the church (Ax. 2) and to ignore his laws for exclusion from fellowship.

I. BODY:

A. THE NECESSITY OF DISCIPLINE.

1. Where no penalty is attached to the violation of the law, there is neither respect for the law nor for the law-giver.

2. Juvenile delinquency results from no discipline (Prov. 13:24; Eph. 6:1-4).
 3. School teacher must have discipline in die classroom.
 4. Civil government requires punishment for evil doers (Rom. 13:1-4).
 5. God has never tolerated trifling with his laws.
 - a. Confusion would result without discipline (I Cor. 14:33).
 - b. Penalty imposed on Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:17).
 - c. God brought flood on ungodly (Gen. 6:1-7).
 - d. God punished Nadab's and Abihu's sin (Lev. 10).
 5. Similarly, there must be discipline in the church.
- B. THE SCRIPTURES COMMANDING DISCIPLINE (Matt. 18:15-17; Lk. 17:3; Rom. 16:17-20; I Cor. 5:1-13; Gal. 6:1; I Thess. 5:12-14; II Thess. 3:6-15; Jas. 5:19-20). We must obey or rebel!**
- C. THE DEFINITION OF DISCIPLINE.**
1. More people would be in favor of discipline if they understood its broad meaning.
 2. WEBSTER: a. The treatment suited to a discipline or a learner; education; development of the faculties by instruction and exercise; training, b. Training to act in accordance with established rules; accustoming to systematic and regular action; drill, c. Subjection to rule; submissiveness to order and control; state of discipline, d. Severe training, corrective of faults; instruction by means of misfortune, suffering, punishment, etc. e. Correction, chastisement; punishment inflicted by way of correction and training, f. . . . The enforcement of methods of correction against one guilty of ecclesiastical offenses; reformatory or penal action toward a church member."
 3. Summary: Discipline means "education," "development," "instruction," "exercise," "training," "drill," "correction," "chastisement," "punishment," "reformatory or penal action."
 4. Old Testament Usage:
 - a. O.T. equivalent of "discipline" is "musar" which comes from "yasar."
 - b. "Yasar" means "to bind, to tame; hence to correct, chastise, instruct, admonish."
 - c. "Yasar" is used concerning parental discipline (Prov. 3:11,12; 13:24; 22:15; 23:13).
 - d. "Yasar" is used of God's disciplinary action toward his people (Deut. 8:5; Job 5:17; Ps. 94:12).
 5. New Testament Usage:
 - a. Greek equivalent of "discipline" is "paideia."
 - b. "Paideia" means "to bring up, rear a child; to train and teach, educate; to chasten, discipline."
 - c. "Paideia" is used in reference to bringing up a child; "nurture" (Eph. 6:4).
 - d. Forms of this word occur 8 times in Heb. 12:5-11, showing necessity of discipline by earthly parents and by God.
 6. In O.T. (Hebrew) and in N.T. (Greek), "discipline" meant more
 7. **CHURCH DISCIPLINE INCLUDES INSTRUCTION, TRAINING, ADMONITION, CORRECTION, CHASTISEMENT, AND REFORMATORY OR PENAL ACTION.**

8. There are basically two kinds of disciplinary action.
 - a. *Instructive*: is preventive in nature. Prevention is better than cure.
 - b. *Corrective*: is punitive in nature.
- D. THE MEANS OF DISCIPLINE.
 1. *Public Instruction* (Heb. 10:25; Ax. 20:20; Ax. 20:7; I Cor. 14:26; II Tim. 2:2). Many sins are sins of ignorance.
 2. *Private instruction and exhortation* (Ax. 20:20; Ax. 18:26; Gal. 6:1; I Thess. 5:14).
 3. *Private rebuke and admonition* (Lk. 17:3; Matt. 18:15). Not wise to parade every sin before public gaze.
 4. *Public censure*. Action becomes progressively sterner. Gross and brazen sins merit public condemnation (II Pet. 2:13; Gal. 2:11-14; I Tim. 5:20; I Tim. 1:18-20; II Tim. 2:17; 4:10; III Jno. 9).
 5. Social Ostracism (Eph. 3:6; I Cor. 5:9-13; II Tim. 3:1-5). "turn away" (II Thess. 3:14,15). "have no company with them" (II Jno. 9-11). In order to obey this demand, the sinners involved must be publicly named. Objective of this is "to the end that he may be ashamed." Ultimate objective is that "his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."
- E. THE PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE.
 1. The purpose is not:
 - a. To take vengeance on anyone (Rom. 12:19).
 - b. Throw somebody out of the church. Still to be counted "as a brother" (II Thess. 3:15).
 2. Reasons why discipline is important:
 - a. To maintain the honor and authority of Christ (Eph. 1:22; Matt. 28:18; II Thess. 3:6; Lk. 6:46). Must do what he says.
 - b. To maintain the purity of the church. Church made up of "purified" souls (I Pet. 1:22; Rom. 6:17; Rev. 7:14). It must be kept pure (I Tim. 5:22; I Tim. 4:12; II Cor. 6:17,18; Eph. 5:25-27; I Cor. 15:24; II Pet. 2:13; I Cor. 5:13; I Cor. 5:6; Rev. 1:20; 2:5).
 - c. To maintain the respect of the world (Ax. 5:1-11; II Pet. 2:2; I Tim. 5:20). Increased respect would result if ungodliness were not tolerated.
 - d. To save the erring brother (Jas. 5:19,20; I Cor. 5:5). Evangelism to save the alien; corrective discipline to save the erring. Friends should require that corrective discipline be employed to try to save those whom they love.
- F. THE MANNER OF ACTION. Nearly anything can be done wrongly as well as rightly.
 1. In manner calculated to accomplish the objectives in view (Matt. 18:15; Jas. 5:20; I Cor. 5:5).
 - a. May require strong teaching, but should be done in "gentleness" (Gal. 6:1).
 - b. One can do much to gain his brother, if his heart is going in the same direction.
 2. In a spirit of kindness and love (Rom. 13:10; I Cor. 16:14; Col. 3:12-14; Jⁿ⁰, 13:34,35). Yet must "tell him his fault."
 3. Must be practiced according to the law of Christ (Gal. 6:1,2), but it must be done!
 4. Must be practiced steadily and constantly. Otherwise the "disor-

derly" accumulate. Should not wait to "clean house" until it becomes a stench to the nostrils and a reproach.

5. Must be taken with wisdom. Elders are to be discreet (I Tim. 3:1-6). They are proper ones to lead in such action.
 6. Must be practiced impartially, and without discrimination (I Tim. 5:21; Jas. 3:17). Rich, prominent, powerful should receive the same treatment as the poor, humble and quiet.
- G. THE SUBJECTS OF DISCIPLINE. "Those who need it." False teachers, indifferent, and those who corrupt themselves with the world.
1. Those who refuse to correct personal offenses (Matt. 18:15-17).
 2. Those who cause divisions contrary to the gospel (Rom. 16:17,18; Ps. 133:1; Prov. 6:16-19).
 3. Those who are factious or who teach heresy (Titus 3:10, II Pet. 2:1).
 4. Those who are guilty of the sins of the flesh (I Cor. 5:11).
 - a. Fornicators (I Cor. 5:9; 6:13-20; Gal. 5:19).
 - b. Adulterers (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 5:1-5).
 - c. Drunkards (Rom. 13:13; I Cor. 5:11; 6:10; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18).
 - d. Covetous (I Cor. 5:11; Eph. 5:5).
 - e. Idolaters (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5; II Tim. 3:24; 4:10).
 - f. Railers and revilers (I Cor. 5:11).
 - g. Extortioners (I Cor. 5:11).
 - h. Tale-bearers and idle (II Thess. 3:6-15; I Tim. 5:13).
 5. Those who are "disorderly" (II Thess. 3:6).
 - a. "Disorderly" means "out of ranks, irregular, inordinate, deviating from the prescribed order or rule" (Thayer, p.83).
 - b. "Disorderly" are impenitent, defiant, and show a disposition to continue in sin. Certainly includes those who habitually abuse the ⁶Tit ⁱⁿGITISGIVGSI
- H. OUR DUTY TOWARD THE DISFELLOWSHIPED.
1. *Publicly:*
 - a. Should not be used in the public services. Would make a sham of our action.
 - b. Give no recognition so as to imply endorsement as a faithful Christian. Instead must "mark" him (Rom. 16:17) and treat as a Gentile or publican (Matt. 18:17). Receive not into fellowship; publicize the disfellowshipping.
 2. *Privately:*
 - a. Even private association is restricted.
 - b. To keep no social engagements with such a person (I Cor. **5:11**; II Thess. 3:14). To make him feel ashamed (II Thess. 3:14).
 - c. Count them not as an enemy (II Thess. 3:15).
 - d. Admonish them as brethren (I Thess. 5:14).
 - e. Pray for them (I Jno. 5:16).
 - f. Convert them (Jas. 5:19,20); restore them (Gal. 6:1). If one feels insufficient effort was made to restore sinner, he is at liberty to make further effort.
 - g. When one repents, forgive him (Lk. 17:3; II Cor. 2:4-11).

CONCLUSION:

1. Brethren who are reluctant to apply these passages out of "love" (?) are like gloating parents who pamper their children (Prov. 13:24).

2. If really interested in saving the lost in the church, will follow God's plan for their salvation.
3. Passages have been shown that demand discipline, and that tell how it is to be administered. Now let us follow them!
4. When discipline is practiced by all churches as it ought to be, the authority of Christ will be honored and maintained, the church will be kept pure, the world will respect us, and the souls of sinful brethren will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. May it be so!

FEAR IN THE LIVES OF CHRISTIANS

DONBASSETT

(Rev. 21:8)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Fear is a significant factor in life:
 - a. Will cost some their souls (Rev. 21:8).
 - b. Examples: Mt 25:25-30; I Sam. 15:24; Jn. 9:22.
 - c. Anxiety (fear) plagues many of us night and day.
2. Text says it can damn (Rev. 21:8); but scriptures tell us to have it (Phil. 2:12; Heb. 12:28).
3. What place does fear have in lives of Christians, then?

I. DISCUSSION: FEAR IN THE LIVES OF CHRISTIANS.

- A. Necessary distinctions: Three basic words for fear.
 1. Cowering fear (all bad in N.T.) *deilia* (Rev. 21:8).
 2. General fear (good or bad in N.T. depending on context), *phobos* (Phil. 2:12).
 - a. Terror (I Pet. 3:14).
 - b. Fear of God (Phil. 2:12).
 - c. Fear of rulers (Rom. 13:1-7).
 3. Reverential fear (all good in N.T.) *eulabeia* (Heb. 12:28). Note: These all level down to two basic kinds of fear—cowardice and respect.
- B. What place does reverential fear have in our lives?
 1. The consequence of utter fearlessness (Jude 12)—(*aphobos*).
 2. Reverential fear is necessary (Prov. 1:7; I Cor. 2:3; Eph. 5:33; Rom. 13:7).
 3. Callousness precedes disaster (Prov. 28:14).
- C. What place does cowering fear have in our lives?
 1. Answer: None (Rev. 21:8; II Tim. 1:3-8).
 2. Specifies: Things not to be feared:
 - a. Death (Heb. 2:14-15; cf. I Cor. 3:20-23).
 - b. Persecutors (I Pet. 3:14-15; I Pet. 1:3-9)
 - c. Temptations to sin (I Cor. 10:12; Jas. 1:13-16).
 - d. suffering (Jas. 1:2-8; Heb. 12:1-13).
 - e. Destitution (Mt. 6:24-34; Psa. 37:25).
 - f. All things (I Pet. 5:6-10; Phil. 4:4-7).

3. How do I get rid of it? (Easier said than done).
 - a. Develop perfect love (I Jn. 4:18).
 - b. Develop practical wisdom from God's word (Prov. 1:33; Jas. 1:2-8).
 - c. Conduct yourself righteously (Prov. 28:1; Psa. 112:7).
 - d. Develop an accurate appraisal of the objects of fear—do not *over* estimate the Devil (Mt. 10:28; Heb. 13:5-6).
 - e. Trust in Jesus (Jn. 14:1-3).

CONCLUSION: Godly fear is needed, not terror; one saves; the other damns (Rev. 21:8).

THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER

H. A. MOBLEY

(II Tim. 2:1-4)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Consider the old battle-scarred warrior, Paul, writing these stirring words to the young soldier, Timothy (Gal. 6:17).
2. Enemies are the cause of war (I Pet. 5:8).
3. What type of warfare are Christians engaged in? (Eph. 6:12; II Cor. 10:4; I Pet. 2:11).
4. We have a good and capable Captain to lead us in the fight (Heb. 2:10; Matt. 28:18).
5. Comparing the carnal soldier with the Christian Soldier makes a profitable study.

I. ENLISTMENT OF THE SOLDIER.

- A. Voluntary—not by draft (Matt. 11:28-30).
- B. Enlistment is for life (Rev. 2:10; Matt. 10:22).
- C. Rules of enlistment, H.B.R.C.B. Can one enter U.S. Army and not meet terms?
- D. No pacifist! Either for or against (Matt. 12:30).

II. THE UNIFORM AND WEAPON OF THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER (Eph. 6:13-17).

- A. Girdle (vs. 14). Heavy leather belt supported his sword and clothing. Essential!
 1. Arming ourselves with truth is essential to spiritual warfare (Jno. 17:17; 8:32).
- B. Breastplate (vs. 14). Made of steel, brass, copper or sheet iron.
 1. Worn over breast to protect vital organs and repel enemy darts.
 2. Breastplate of righteousness, our "bullet proof vest" (Psa. 119:172; I Jno. 3:7,10).
- C. Shoes (vs. 15).
 1. Strong sandals strapped tightly to the feet. Spikes on bottom for climbing or walking on ice. Paul said, "Stand"! No backsliding or giving ground to enemy.
 2. Gospel (Rom. 10:15; 1:16). Notice word "preparation." Too many barefooted!

- D. Helmet (vs. 17). Made of heavy leather or metal to protect.
 - 1. Helmet of salvation (I Thess. 5:8).
- E. Shield (vs. 16). Most versatile of all—made to wear on arm. Describe.
 - 1. Note Paul said, "Above all, taking the shield of faith." (Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:17).
- F. Sword of Spirit (vs. 17). This is the only "offensive" weapon Christians have.
 - 1. Powerful and mighty is this weapon (Heb. 4:12; II Cor. 10:4).
 - 2. Must be *used* to be effective—sword not effective if left in sheath.
 - 3. Word of God "pricks" the sinners heart (Ax. 2:37).
- G. Christian Soldier, do you have on "the whole armour of God?"

III. TRAINING, ARMOUR AND WEAPONS OF VERY UTTLTLE BENEFIT UNLESS WE LEARN TO USE.

- A. Basic training (I Pet. 2:2). Bible study—worship—try to enlist others in the Lord's Army.
- B. Exercise is essential. Members of body not used soon become useless (II Tim. 4:7-8). Soldiers need strength to endure hardships (II Tim. 4:5; 2:3).

IV. SOLDIERS MUST BE ALERT FOR SPIES.

- A. False brethren. Within (Gal. 2:4); Without (II Cor. 11:14-15).
- B. Spies are well camouflaged (Matt. 7:15-16).

V. DESERTERS-TRAITORS-INSUBORDINATES.

- A. Deserter—Demas (II Tim. 4:10; I Tim. 4:1).
- B. Traitor—(Ax. 20:29-31). Elders who turn church over to institutions.
- C. Insubordinates—(II Thess. 3:6). These must be discharged!

VI. THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE REWARD (Mk. 10:29-30; Eph. 1:3; I Tim. 6:12; II Tim. 4:7-8).

CONCLUSION: Gen. McArthur said, "In war, there is no substitute for victory." When the Great Commander from the vaulted skies, sounds the resurrection call. . . .

PREPOSITIONAL GOSPEL

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST—HIS BODY THE CHURCH

(II Cor. 5:1—Earthly house—Heavenly)

PAUL M. CALDWELL, SR.

Build house on rock or sand (Matt. 7:22-27).

"Whose house are we" (Heb. 3:6).

I. BEHIND—(Phil. 3:13-14). "Forgetting those things that are **BEHIND** and reaching forth unto those things which are Before, I press *toward* the **MARK** for the prize of the high calling of GOD in Christ Jesus." *Where are we?*

II. OVER—(Ps. 23:5). "My cup runneth over." (Luke 6:38) "Shaken (down) together—running **OVER**."

- III. "BENEATH-on-BELOW"**—Proper foundation (I Cor. 3:10). "Let every man take heed now he buildeth."
- IV. ABOVE**—(Rom. 10:6). "Christ down" faith by heaven (James 1:17). *Perfect Gift* (Col. 3:1). "Seek those things which are *above* (Above all, Eph. 4:6). "One God that is "above" all *Through* all and in *YOU ALL*."
- V. THROUGH**—(Eph. 4:4-6). "You all" ONE BODY-ONE SPIRIT-ONE HOPE-ONE CALLING-ONE LORD-ONE FAITH-ONE GOD-ONE FATHER. Through you *all*—What is left:
Vine and branch—(Jno. 15:4).
Live, move, and have our being—(Ax. 17:28).
- VI. ABOUT**—(Rom. 10:2-3). Going about to establish *own* righteousness. Heb. 12:1 "Wherefore seeing we are *compassed about* with so great a cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, (*SO EASY FOR SOME OF US*).
- VII. IN-INTO**—(Col. 1:27) Christ in you.
How to get in Christ?
(Rom. 6:3) *You in Christ*.
(Gal. 3:27) *IN—put ON* Christ.
- VIII. BEYOND**—This opportunity? This day? *DEATH—JUDGMENT-HEAVEN—HELL*.

Where do you stand with the Lord?

IF THE SHOE FITS, WEAR IT—OR

("Where unto shall I liken this generation.")

PAUL M. CALDWELL, SR.

(Matt. 11:16-19)

INTRODUCTION: Have you ever stopped to realize that there are many people who take on certain characteristics?—Even like the shoes we wear.

SPECTATORS—"To behold-watches without taken an active part." Relation and resp. to the BALL GAME OR BALL CLUB. SOME DO NOT BECOME MEMBERS . . . SOME WANT TO BE MEMBERS BUT REMAIN A SPECTATOR. (Rom. 12:1-4—Matt. 13:4).

BUTTONUPS—I'm going to mind my own business: I won't say a word. Who was that man she was seen out with???? I never talk to my husband or children about their soul. Let the Elders take care of it.

THE CASUALS OR LOAFERS—They are very much like the casuals in the Lord's church. If they are *CASUAL* in attendance, they are usually *loafing* or entertaining company. These people tell you that they work hard at their jobs and need to be casual in their attendance because they need to be loafing to rest (Rom. 12:11 & Heb. 10:25).

HOUSE SLIPPER—Form of Godliness. "For of these are they that creep into houses and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers fusts." (II Tim. 3:6).

PUMPS—THE HOUSE TO HOUSE Gossip Collector—must pump every word out of every one EVEN to asking children privately or leading questions. GET ENOUGH OF THE TRUTH ON ANY SUBJECT ADD TO IT AND PERVERT IT. "SOWER OF DISCORD AMONG BRETHREN" (I Tim. 5:13).

HUSH PUPPIES—*STOP THE PREACHER . . . THEY RUN BEHIND THE BACK AND GET ELDERS TO "HUSH" THE PREACHER . . . IF ENOUGH OF YOU WILL BE HUSH PUPPIES AND GO TO THE ELDERS SOONER OR LATER THEY WILL GIVE IN. THE PREACHER CAN BE A "HUSH PUPPY" OR MOVE.*

WING TIPS—Always there are a few who are so "goody-goody" they think they have sprouted wings—they don't need the Church—they are so good they don't need to obey the Lord's plan to save them . . . and many will follow them (II Cor. 11:13-14 . . . "Transforming themselves into Apostles of Christ."

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST

JERRY F. BASSETT

INTRODUCTION: (Rev. 1:1-7)

1. Some background on The Revelation:
 - a. Christians were being persecuted for their faith in Christ.
 - b. Many were in danger of discouragement and of losing their faith.
 - c. The Revelation was written to assure them of eternal victory if faithful to Christ.
2. Consistent with this purpose John introduces The Revelation with remarks which show the preciousness of Christ to Christians; facts which show we cannot possibly succeed without him.
3. These facts also ought to encourage those to become Christians who have not yet done so.

I. THE PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

- A. John tells us what Christ is (vs. 5).
 1. The faithful Witness.
 - a. Faithful: to be trusted, reliable.
 - b. Witness: from a word meaning martyr, one who bears witness to his sincerity by his willingness to die for his testimony.
 - c. Thus, the trustworthiness of Jesus is attested by his willingness to die to fulfill his promises (John 10:9-15).
 2. The firstborn of the dead.
 - a. Not the first to be raised, e.g., (I Kings 17:17-23; II Kings 4:18-37; John 11:41-44).
 - b. But Jesus was the first to conquer death himself, to rise never to die again (Rom. 6:8-10; John 10:17-18).
 - c. Thus, he is not only sincere in his promises, but also capable of fulfilling them (Phil. 3:20-21).
 3. The prince of the kings of the earth.
 - a. Prince: ruler, i.e., of the kings of the earth.
 - b. Thus, he is mightier than all the rulers of this world (Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 1:19-23).

- B. John tells us what Christ has done, (vss. 5-6).
 - 1. He loved us, even when we had not loved him (John 15:13, Eph. 5=1,2).
 - 2. He washed us from our sins in his own blood (Eph. 1:7; I Pet. 1:18-21; 2:24-25).
 - 3. He made us kings (a kingdom, A.S.V.) and priests unto God.
 - a. Priest: one who offers sacrifice to God.
 - b. Thus, Christ has made it possible for men to offer in the presence of God by cleansing them of their filthiness through the washing of his own blood.
 - c. Notice, too, the very nature of his kingdom is priesthood, offering of sacrifice. One not interested in sacrificing to God has no business in this kingdom.
- C. John tells us what Christ shall do. (vs. 7).
 - 1. Come with clouds, i.e., the second coming (Ax. 1:9-11).
 - 2. Every eye shall see him, including those who pierced him (vs. 7), (Matt. 25:31-33). Includes the Jews, Pilate, Herod, the soldiers who nailed him to the cross, those who reject him now.
 - 3. All kindreds shall wail because of him.
 - a. He came once extending mercy as the Lamb of God (John 1:29).
 - b. But he comes again in wrath to execute judgment against those who have despised God's mercy (Rev. 6:14-17).

CONCLUSION: When he comes in wrath "who shall be able to stand?" (6:17).

THE DEVIL

EARL ROBERTSON

(I Peter 5:8)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Many do not want to think about, much less talk about, the devil.
- 2. Thirty-six verses in the N.T. use this word *diabolos*—devil.
- 3. The word means an accuser, a slanderer.

I. THE DEVIL IS OUR CONSTANT ENEMY (I Peter 5:8).

- A. He accuses man to God (Job 1:6-11; 2:1-5; R^{ev}-12:9,¹⁰).
- B. He accuses God to man (Gen. 3:2-3,14).
- C. He oppresses, Acts 10:38; cf. James 2:6. The idea is "to exercise harsh control over one; to use one's power against one."
- D. He is a wonder worker (II Thess. 2:1-12).

II. HE IS THE CHAMPION DECEIVER (Revelation 20:10, 12:9).

- A. He deceived mother Eve (I Tim. 2:14; John 8:44).
- B. We are taught to give him no place (Eph. 4:27).
- C. He beguiles through subtlety (II Cor. 11:3).
- D. He perverts scripture (Matt. 4:6).
 - 1. This he continues to do through his messengers (II Cor. 11:13-15).
- E. He takes captive by snares (II Tim. 2:26).

- F. He tells that you have plenty time to do what you know you should do! (cf. II Cor. 6:2).
- G. He tells us that we do not have to obey all of God's commandments! (cf. Matthew 7:21; Rev. 22:14).

III. IF WE LIVE FOR HIM, WE ARE IDENTIFIED WITH HIM (Rom. 6:16).

- A. Peter knew this at his denial (Matt. 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72).
- B. "Thou child of the devil" (Elymas, Acts 13:10).
- C. He that committeth sin is of the devil (I John 3:8-10).
- D. One of you twelve is a devil (John 6:70).
- E. Walked according to the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:12).
- F. Known by their fruits (Matt. 7:16-20).

IV. HIS AVENUE OF APPROACH.

- A. He seeks to reach one through the flesh (I John 2:15-17).
 - 1. Christ wants our heart first, and always warned concerning this, Matt. 22:37 (love); Acts 2:37 (pricked); Acts 8:37, Rom. 10:10 (believe); Rom. 6:17 (obey); Matt. 5:8; Heb. 10:22 (pure).
- B. He can also touch the heart (through subtlety breaks down the will Luke 8:12; John 13:2).
- C. He rules this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; II Cor. 4:3,4).

V. HE CAN BE RESISTED.

- A. "*Resist the devil and he will flee from you*" (James 4:7). This is active imperative, meaning to take a stand against.
- B. "Whom resist steadfast in the faith" (I Peter 5:9).
- C. Put on the whole armour of God—stand against the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:11).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Never underestimate the devil (I Cor. 2:11).
- 2. Know always he IS your enemy.
- 3. "Devour" *katapiein*, to swallow up, destroy, passive (I Cor. 15:54; II Cor. 5:4; Heb. 11:29).
- 4. Let us then be careful to redeem the time (Eph. 5:16, Col. 4:5).

THE PEOPLE IMAGINE A VAIN THING

COLLY CALDWELL

(Psa. 2; Ax. 4:23-30)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Psa. 2, is one of the definitely Messianic Psalms.
- 2. Peter quotes a portion of it and applies it to the death of Christ (Ax. 4:23-30). Cf. vs. 25 specifically.

I. THE PEOPLE IMAGINED VAIN THINGS ABOUT CHRIST!

- A. They thought he wanted to destroy the law (Matt. 5:17-18).
- B. They imagined that he desired to destroy the temple (John 2:19).
- C. They supposed that he was plotting to overthrow the government and become an earthly king (John 18:36).

- D. They believed that he blasphemed by calling himself the Son of God (Isa. 9:1; Matt. 1:23; John 1:1).

II. PEOPLE STILL IMAGINE VAIN THINGS ABOUT CHRIST!

- A. Some think he was a fraud in his role as a miracle worker.
 - 1. No man in his own day questioned it.
 - 2. They questioned only the power of it (Matt. 12:22-30).
 - 3. In Ax. 4:14, they could not even question the miracle done by these apostles.
- B. Some suppose that his resurrection was a farce perpetrated to promote a false faith.
 - 1. His disciples believed it... so his enemies, the 3,000 and all who accepted the Gospel.
 - 2. No other explanation for all subsequent events.
- C. Some imagine that he failed of his purpose and returned to heaven to await the right time for a millenium.
 - 1. Such is itself blasphemy.
 - 2. It is belied by (Eph. 3:10-11).

III. PEOPLE IMAGINE VAIN THINGS ABOUT CHRIST'S TEACHING!

- A. The World imagines that Jesus' Moral regulations are relative.
 - 1. Evolution theories have broken down morality.
 - 2. Evil desires of men have broken down morality.
- B. Liberal theologians imagine that his themes were social (Lk. 19:10).
- C. Some Christians suppose that Jesus' spiritual responsibilities are optional.
- D. Modern denominationalism thinks that Jesus' initiatory commands non-essential (baptism, etc.).

IV. PEOPLE IMAGINE VAIN THINGS ABOUT THE LORD'S PEOPLE!

- A. They believe that we do not believe the Law of Moses.
- B. They believe that we disparage grace and believe in water salvation.
- C. They think that the church of Christ was started by A. Campbell.
- D. Some even think that we hate the poor and despise the needy.

UNITY—IS CHRIST DIVIDED?

HAROLD TABOR

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. The unity of all Christians is one of the supreme subjects of great importance in N.T.
- 2. It is a timely question, because of divided condition both of N.T. times and of Ch. Today.
- 3. The Unity of all Christians is essential to the full RESTORATION of N.T. Christianity.

I. THE DIVINE PROMISE OF JESUS CHRIST (Matt. 16:13-19).

- A. Jesus Promised to Build ONE CHURCH.
 - 1. QUESTION: Who do men say that the son of man is?
 - 2. QUESTION: Who do you say that I am?

3. How many? C-H-U-R-C-H My Bible, Your Bible, Every Bible. In every Lang, says CHURCH (Eph. 1:22-23; 2:16; I Cor. 12:12-13,20).
- B. Is Division or Denominationalism necessary for the Existence of Christianity???

 1. The possibility of Unity in Christianity depends upon that which the Apostles "Bound" and "Loosed" on Earth (Cf. 19; Lk. 8:11; II Jno. 9; Rom. 1:16; Jno. 17:17).
 2. The Word of God abideth forever (I Pet. 1:25).
 - a. Denominationalism is not necessary for the existence of Christianity because:
 - (1.) Christianity existed centuries before *the* first denomination was started. This is Historical Fact!
 - (2.) Every truth can be preached and practiced even if every denomination ceased to exist today. This is Biblical Fact!

II THE DIVINE PRAYER OF JESUS CHRIST (Jno. 17:20-22).

- A. Christ Prayed that ALL who Believe on Him may be ONE.
 1. The prayer of Jesus for Unity of his disciples is applicable today.
 2. It was not only for the disciples but included "all who might believe on him thru Word."
- B. The Only Basis of Unity for all Christians is the Gospel of Christ—The Word.
 1. SCOPE (Jno. 15:3,7).
 2. OBJECT: "they may be One."
 3. ULTIMATE EFFECT (Jno. 1:11-12).
 4. IMPLICATION: If unity produces faith, then division produces infidelity.
 5. APPLICATION: If Christ prayed for oneness and then created many: He is a Hypocrite!

III. THE DIVINE PLAN FOR UNITY (Eph. 4:1-6).

- A. Members of the Church must be united in living the Christian life (Cf. 1-3).
 1. Christians must agree to "Walk worthily" (Col. 1:10; I Thess. 2:12; I Cor. 5:7).
 2. Christians must agree to walk "with all Lowliness and Meekness" (Col. 3:12-13; Phil- 2:2-8).
 3. Christians must agree to walk "with longsuffering."
 4. Christians must agree to be forbearing (Jno. 13:34-35; I Jno. 4:7-12).
 5. Christians must agree to "give diligence to keep the Unity of the Spirit:"
 - a. We must make a constant effort toward peace and steadily apply ourselves toward Unity.
 - b. Christians cannot be united with those who make no effort.
 6. The Church must have unity of life before it can have unity of doctrine.
 - a. ILLUSTRATION: I had rather see a sermon . . .
 - b. We have tried to force doctrine on people who could see nothing Christian in our lives but a Bible in our hand.
- B. The Church must be United on Matters of Doctrine (Eph. 4:4-6).
 1. There is a United belief in One Father of family: One God (Heb. 11:6).

- a. There is a United belief in One Head of Church: One Lord (Eph. **5:25**).
3. There is a United belief in the Power of the Church: One Spirit (I Cor. 12:13).
4. There is a United belief in a better life after death: One Hope (I Pet. 1:3-4).
5. There **MUST ALSO** be Unity of belief in the form of the church: One Body (Eph. 1:22-23).
6. There **MUST ALSO** be Unity of belief in the one rule of faith and practice: One Faith (Jas. 2:24).
7. There **MUST ALSO** be Unity of belief in the one means for remission of sins: One **IMMERSION** (Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3-5).

IV. THE DIVINE PLEA FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY (I Cor. 1:10-16).

- A. The Apostle Paul condemns the division of Corinth.
 1. **IS CHRIST DIVIDED?** Doctrine—"Was Paul Crucified" Practice "Were ye immersed . . ."
- B. The Problems that divided the church at Corinth.
 1. Partism (chps. 1-3).
 2. Discipline (chp. 5).
 3. Marriage (chp. 7).
 4. Communion (chp. 11).
 5. Sp. Gifts (chps. 12-14).
 6. Resurrection
- C. Unity is an Individual Obligation (Cf. 1:10).
- D. The Attitude of Individual is that which destroys Unity in the Church.
- E. The Attitude that will promote Unity in the Church (Rom. 12:3-4, 18, 21; Matt. 22:37-38).

CONCLUSION:

1. What must we do to find and maintain Unity through the Gospel of Christ??
 - a. Abide by that which is Written (I Cor. 4:6; Jno. 8:30-31; II Jno. 9; Rev. 22:18-19).
 - b. Properly distinguish between Matters of Faith and Human Judgment (Rom. 14-15; Matt. 7:12).
 - c. Practice Brotherly Love (Col. 2:2; Jno. 13:34-35; I Pet. 1:22; I Jno. **4:20-21**).
2. If We fail to indoctrinate Just One generation, it will mean another apostacy.
3. **CHALLENGE:** to Promote and Preserve Unity.

PRIDE LEADS TO SINFUL PRACTICES!!

LUTHER W. MARTIN

DEFINITIONS(PRIDE) Possessing or showing too great self-esteem, conceit, arrogance; being haughty or presumptuous.

DISCUSSION:From the beginning of recorded history, man has tried to take upon himself prerogatives that belong only to God. *i.e.*, Only God gives life; but

man takes it away by murder and suicide. What God joins together, man tries to put asunder. When God exercises authority, man tries to usurp it.

- I. GOD'S ACTION AGAINST PEOPLE WHOSE PRIDE DROVE THEM TO SIN** (Gen. 11:1-9).
 - A. "... Let us make us a name ..." (vs. 4).
 - B. To "make themselves a name" they built the tower of Babel.
 - C. God then confounded their speech (vs. 7).
 - D. God scattered them upon the earth (vs. 8).
- II. GOD LISTS SEVEN THINGS THAT ARE ABOMINABLE TO HIM** (Prov. 6:16-18).
 - A. A proud look.
 - B. A lying tongue.
 - C. Hands that shed innocent blood.
 - D. A heart (mind) that devises wicked imaginations (ideas).
 - E. Feet that are swift in running to mischief.
 - F. A false witness who lies.
 - G. He that sows discord among brethren. Pride is involved in each of these, either directly or indirectly.
- III. GOD INSPIRED JOB TO WRITE:** "LET ME NOT, I PRAY YOU, ACCEPT ANY MAN'S PERSON, NEITHER LET ME GIVE FLATTERING TITLES UNTO MAN. FOR I KNOW NOT TO GIVE FLATTERING TITLES; IN SO DOING MY MAKER WOULD SOON TAKE ME AWAY" (Job 32:21-22).
- IV. CHRIST WARNED HIS DISCIPLES NOT TO COPY THE PRIDE OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES** (Matt. 23:1-12).
- V. PAUL WARNED THE EPHESIAN ELDERS--** "... OF YOUR OWN SELVES SHALL MEN ARISE ..." (Ax. 20:30).
- VI. PAUL WARNED THE THESSALONIANS--** "... SO THAT HE AS GOD SITTETH IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD, SHEWING HIMSELF THAT HE IS GOD." (II Thess. 2:1-9). Additional characteristics of this departure (I Tim. 4:1-4).
- VII. EMPEROR CONSTANTINE CONVENEED THE FIRST "ECUMENICAL COUNCIL."** ITS PURPOSE WAS TO SET UP RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE CHURCHES WHICH GOD HAD NOT DECREED. THE FIRST SEVEN OF THESE COUNCILS ARE RESPECTED BY BOTH THE GREEK AND ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES.

	YEAR	PLACE	GREEK BISHOPS ATTENDING	LATIN BISHOPS ATTENDING
A.	325 A.D.	I Nicea	315	3
B.	381 A.D.	I Constantinople	149	1
C.	431 A.D.	Ephesus	67	1
D.	451 A.D.	Chalcedon	350	3
E.	553 A.D.	II Constantinople	158	6
F.	680-1 A.D.	III Constantinople	51	5
G.	787 A.D.	II Nicea	350	7
		Total	<hr/> 1460	<hr/> 26

The proceedings of these Councils were conducted in the Greek language. The first departure from the New Testament pattern was in the Government of the

congregations, as Paul had predicted. It was predominandy a Greek departure, producing the "Greek Orthodox" or "Greek Catholic" church.

VIII. IN 606 A.D., THE BISHOP OF ROME, BONIFACE III, TOOK UPON HIMSELF THE TITLE OF WORLD-WIDE BISHOP (Ecumenical bishop)... thus, the first "Pope of Rome."

IX. A CENTURY AGO, IN ORDER TO DO "GREATER THINGS" OUR BRETHERN ENDEAVORED TO ACTIVATE THE CHURCH IN THE UNIVERSAL SENSE, THROUGH A MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

X. TODAY, WELL MEANING BRETHERN HAVE TRIED TO ACTIVATE THE "BROTHERHOOD" WITH SCHEMES AND PROMOTIONS THAT FAR SURPASS THE ABILITY OF ANY ONE CONGREGATION. (Thus they would saddle the "brotherhood" with financial burdens that require elderships and officers that go beyond the boundaries of the local church). PRIDE AND "BIG IDEAS" CONTRIBUTE TO THIS TYPE OF DEPARTURE!

"FINALLY BRETHREN"

GENE WORMAN

II Thess 3:1-5

I. PRAY:

- A. For us—for what?
- B. Word have free course (spread).
- C. Word be glorified—as it is with you, is it?
- D. Be delivered from men—unreasonable—(perverse) wicked—(evil one).
- E. All men have not (the) faith.

II. WHAT THE LORD IS AND WILL DO:

- A. Faithful.
- B. Will stablish (strengthen) you.
- C. Keep you.
- D. Direct your hearts into love of God.
- E. Direct your hearts into the patient waiting for Christ.

III. WE ARE TO HAVE:

- A. Confidence in the Lord.
- B. Do—*"are doing and will continue doing"*
- C. Will do—vs. 4; vs. 13.

CONSCIENCE

MIKE WILLIS

INTRODUCTION:

1. Through the years, many people have misunderstood the place of conscience in religion and have, consequently, made drastic mistakes in regard to their service to God.
2. Conscience is defined as "sense or consciousness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own conduct, intentions, or character, together with a feeling of obligation to do or be that which is recognized as good;—often with special reference to feelings of guilt or remorse for ill-doing" (Webster).
3. Several mistakes now prevalent among those trying to please God are as follows:
 - a. Allowing one man's conscience to be the guide for all (Rom. 14:3-12).
 - b. Allowing one's conscience to be his personal guide.
 - c. Acting against the teachings of one's conscience.
4. In view of these mistakes, the need for a study of this sort has been established.

I. ONE'S CONSCIENCE MUST ALWAYS REMAIN UNDEFILED.

- A. A clear conscience is a necessity to being pleasing to the Lord (I Tim. 1:5,19; I John 3:19,20).
- B. Even in matters of liberty, one must not violate his conscience (Rom. 14:23).
- C. The consequence of going against the judgments of one's conscience is hardness of heart or a seared conscience (I Tim. 4:2; Eph. 4:17-19; Tit. 1:15).

II. CLEAR CONSCIENCE ALONE DOES NOT IMPLY ACCEPTABILITY.

- A. Paul was a blasphemer, persecutor, and an injurious person while following the leadings of his conscience (Acts 23:1; 24:15; I Tim. 1:12-14).
- B. The sins we commit in ignorance are still transgressions of the will of God (Lk. 12:47,48).
- C. The folly of being guided by one's conscience alone is revealed by the writers of the Old Testament (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12; 12:15; 21:2).
- D. Through observation alone, one can see the weakness of following one's conscience since men have cast their new-born infants to crocodiles and have burned witches at the stake in answer to their conscience.

III. CONSCIENCE IS SUBJECT TO EDUCATION.

- A. Since one cannot be acceptable to God with a defiled conscience, and since a pure conscience alone is insufficient, we can see that something else is needed and that is the guiding of God's word to educate our conscience.
- B. Notice how Paul's conscience was changed:
 1. He was persecuting the Christians (Acts 9:1-2).
 2. He was confronted with evidence showing that Jesus was truly the Son of God (Acts 9:4-6).
 3. After obedience to the commands of his new Lord, he began to teach and preach that same gospel to others (Acts 9:20-22).

- C. The Jews on Pentecost illustrate these same points (Ax. 2):
 - 1. They had previously crucified Jesus (2:23).
 - 2. Peter preached to them convincing them that Jesus was both the Messiah and their Lord (2:36).
 - 3. They then obeyed the commands given under the authority of Jesus (2:38-42).
- D. Thus, one's conscience plays a prominent part in his obedience to Jesus (I Pet. 3:21; Rom. 8:16).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. When an honest man in religious error hears the truth, he either ceases to be honest or ceases to be in error.
- 2. Respond to the proddings of your conscience before your heart becomes hardened.

WILL THE PRAYER OF JESUS BE ANSWERED?

P. E. BUTLER

(John 17:1-11, 20-21)

INTRODUCTION:

It is readily seen that Jesus prayed for unity among those that would follow him; "... that they may be one ..." v 11 "That they all may be one ..." verse 21. Hence: will the prayer of Jesus ever be answered in this world? And to this subject your attention is invited.

- I. IT WILL BE ANSWERED WHERE MEN RESPECT THE WISHES OF GOD** (Psalm 133:1). Endeavoring to keep the unity (Eph. 1:3).
- II. WHERE MEN ARE FOUND TO BE HONEST WHEN HEARING THE GOSPEL** (Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 15:1-3). Here is a man who heard just one time so far as the record is concerned (Acts 8:26-39).
- III. IF MEN WILL ACCEPT ONLY THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST** (II John 9; Matt. 15:8-9; Mark 7:1-9).
- IV. IF MEN ARE WILLING TO GIVE UP HUMAN OPINION AND TRADITIONS** (Isa. 55:8-9, 6:16; Jeremiah 10:23; John 8:13; 14:6).
- V. IF MEN WILL RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS NO RACIAL BARRIERS, AT LEAST WITH GOD** (Acts 10:1-28; 29-35; 11:1-14, be able to tell the story, Gal. 3:26-28; Rom 2:11).
- VI. IF MEN WILL HUMBLE THEMSELVES LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN** (Matt. 18:1-4; Micah 6:8; I Pet. 5:6-7).
- VII. IF MEN WILL RECOGNIZE THAT CHRISTIANS ARE RAISED UP TOGETHER AND MADE TO SIT TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES** (Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:1-4; Eph. 2:6).
- VIII. IF MEN WILL REALLY BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST** (Acts 16:30-31; Acts 5:28-29; Heb. 5:8-9; I Sam. 15:22).
- IX. IF MEN WILL TRULY HAVE THE HOPE OF HEAVEN WHEN THIS LIFE IS OVER AND AFTER THE JUDGMENT** (Titus 1:2, II Cor. 5:1, John 14:1-3; I Pet. 1:3-4).

CONCERN FOR OUR SALVATION

RONALD V. LEHDE

(I Pet. 1: 10-12)

INTRODUCTIONsWe look about us today in sad dismay, wring our hands, and wail, "Oh, what is wrong with the church!" Attendance has dropped off for every service in many of the congregations compared with what it was a number of years ago. It is harder than ever to get even fellow Christians to attend a gospel meeting, much less those of our friends and neighbors and relatives that are not members of the Lord's Body. What is wrong???? Well, in a word, APATHY. Webster defines apathy as: lack of emotion; lack of interest; listless condition; indifference.

As Christians, we have something that no one else in the world is entitled to: SALVATION. But it is hard to tell this in the case of far too many of the children of God. Our text, however tells of some who did not have this apathy, yet they never saw or heard of the gospel in its entirety while here upon the earth. Notice:

I. THE PROPHETS OF OLD KNEW THAT GOD'S GRACE WAS YET TO BE MANIFESTED TO MANKIND.

- A. The Old Testament prophets foretold many things.
 1. Amos revealed what would happen to the nations around Palestine.
 2. Jeremiah warned of what God would do to His own, but disobedient people.
 3. But both also prophesied of the "sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them" (text).
- B. Yet, despite their Messianic prophecies, these men did not FULLY understand WHEN this was to be (text; I Pet. 1:20-21).
 1. Here is one of the best proofs of the divine inspiration of the Bible.
 2. The prophets recognized WHAT was being prophesied without any trouble; but it took diligent effort on their part to know WHEN.
- C. But because of their concern God allowed them the answer to their search.
 1. This concern about God's grace was in a people that would not live to see the events of which they prophesied (Heb. 11:39-40; Matt. 16:28).
 2. But this concern was not limited to the prophets alone; even the "angels desire to look into" this matter of salvation for mankind (text).
 - a. The "desire to look into" literally means "to stop sideways" (i.e., in order to get a better view).
 - b. Salvation is for man and not for angels (Heb. 2:16).
 - c. But these are our fellow-servants of God (Rev. 22:9).
 - d. And as such they are concerned for us.
 3. Ought not we to be just as, if not more, concerned about our OWN salvation?
 - a. We become cold and apathetic in too many cases (Rev. 3:15-16).
 - b. In short, we become complacent and then neglectful (Heb. 2:1-3).

II. IT WAS GOD'S DESIGN THEN THAT HIS GRACE BE REVEALED ON THAT PARTICULAR PENTECOST AND FOREVER AFTERWARDS (text-v.12; Eph. 3:8-11).

- A. Prior to this His will was dispensed to the people by the prophets (Heb. 1:1).
- B. But now it has been given completely in a final form (Heb. 1:2; text-v.12; Jude 3).
 - 1. This giving of His will was done by the Spirit to certain men (Heb. 2:3).
 - 2. And we today have that these men recorded for us, and preached to us by men who desire to proclaim the gospel of our Lord (text-v.12).
- C. This gospel, the will of God, is how we are saved (I Cor. 15:1-2).
 - 1. It's not based upon a prophesy that is yet to be fulfilled in any sort of way (John 20:30-31).
 - 2. Nor is it based upon the promise of someone in whom we have no confidence (II Tim. 1:12).
- D. So "keeping house for the Lord" (the faithful few meeting just to open the door and air out the building) is not good enough (Rev. 3:15-16).

THE MAN GOD HATES

JAMIE SLOAN

(Prov. 6:16-19)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. One of the most awesome statements in the Bible. Discuss—"God loves the sinner but hates his sin."
- 2. Three areas of our responsibility—(1) doctrine, (2) morals, (3) attitude.
- 3. Troubles among brethren over doctrinal and personal matters necessitates this lesson.

I. THE INNOVATER OF FALSE TEACHING IS A SOWER OF DISCORD.

- A. The child of God cannot afford to fellowship false doctrine—Rom. 16:17-18; II Thess. 3:6, 14.
- B. For immoral conduct—Eph. 5:11,12; I Cor. 5:9-11—cannot preach truth on this in some cases.
- C. To refuse to condone such is not a lack of love, but an effort to maintain purity & restore the erring (I Cor. 5:1-8; II Thess. 3:15).
- D. Those who stand for the truth are usually blamed for the discord.
 - 1. Some say we are all erring brethren (cf. I Tim. 1:19,20; II Tim. 2:16; 4:10,14).
 - 2. Some say "wrong to split the church," but who splits it?
 - 3. Who sowed the discord over inst. music, premillennialism, institutionalism?

II. THE SPIRIT OF STRIFE SOWS DISCORD.

- A. Many churches have been split over matters of judgments—church split over whether the preacher was being paid too much.

- B. Involves our attitude toward peace & harmony. The Bible says much (II Cor. 12:20,21; Titus 3:9-11; II Tim. 2:23-25; I Tim. 6:3-5; I Tim. 1:3,4; Gal. 5:19-23).
- C. The solution—love one another & demonstrate a spirit of gentleness (Phil. 2:2-4; Tom. 12:10).
- D. Do not become contentious over matters of judgment (I Cor. 8; Rom. 14; Acts 15:36-41).
- E. Sad results of this spirit.
 - 1. The church becomes despised in the eyes of unbelievers.
 - 2. The weak stumble and fall away.
 - 3. The killing of the zeal & initiative of the church.

THE WAR IN THE SOUL

ELVIS E. BOZARTH

(Gal. 5:16-25)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Verse 17 of the text sets forth a War in the Soul."
 - a. Paul experienced this dilemma (Rom. 7:22-23).
 - b. The Jews had a saying that man is drawn in two directions—good and evil.
 - c. The Greeks had a myth which described the soul as a charioteer, driving in double harness two horses. One is noble and the other is opposite. Noble horse is reason and untamed horse is passion. They pull against each other. (Ref. William Barclay, *Flesh 6- Spirit*)
2. What, then, is the cause of this warfare within man?

I WHAT IS THE COMPOSITION OF MAN?

- A. In both Old and New Testaments man is generally spoken of as two parts, i.e., the outward and visible body and the inward and unseen soul or spirit (II Cor. 4:16; I Pet. 3:3-4).
 1. The body perishes, the soul or spirit lives on (Gen. 3:19; Ecc. 12:7).
 2. The ancient world, both Jew and Greek, believed that evil and destructive power resides within the body.
- B. Paul describes a more complicated division of man in I Thess. 5:23 (cf Gen. 2:7).
 1. *Body (soma)*—Gen. 2:7—dust, physical, mortal, neutral spiritually.
 2. *Spirit (pneuma)*—Gen. 2:7—breath of life. (Not always easy to determine exactly whether Holy Spirit or non-divine spirit meant when word appears. English translations do not always agree on where to capitalize and where to use lower case letter, e.g., Rom. 8:26-27—some believe the pneuma that makes intercession is human spirit and not Holy Spirit as most English versions indicate—Ref. *Mill. Harbinger*, Vol. I, pp. 111-116).
 - a. This is ruling part of man, controls thoughts, emotions, will. This is the difference in man and animal. Made in image of God (Gen. 1:26-27).

- b. Is spirit only in the Christian? No. (Barclay erroneously argues so.) In all men this spirit may be either a spiritual spirit or an unspiritual spirit, Rom. 8:1-17, i.e., guided by the Spirit of God or the Spirit of Satan (flesh-sarx).
- 3. *Soul (psuche)*—principle of physical life—Gen. 2:7—"became a living soul."
 - a. Properly speaking every living thing has soul. Used by Paul:
 - (1) Living person, Rom. 2:9, 13:1, as "I never saw a living soul."
 - (2) Life, Rom. 16:4; Phil. 2:30 (see I Cor. 2:14—*psuchikos*).

II. THE ENEMY OF THE SPIRIT—This is the "flesh" (sarx). Gal. 5:17—
sane vs. *pneuma*.

- A. Note this is not the body flesh (soma). Sins of the flesh are not only such as fornication, but also anger, strife, envy etc. (Rom. 7:5; 18-25; 8:1-17).
- B. The difference in body (soma) and flesh (sarx) is that the body may become an instrument of the glory and service of God and the flesh cannot (I Cor. 6:19-20).
- C. The flesh is what man has made himself in contrast with man as God made him.
- D. The flesh is what human nature has become through sin.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. This warfare is within each man as it was in Paul.
- 2. We must look to the Spirit (as He is declared in the New Testament) to control the lusts of the flesh.

PERFECTION

JAMIE SLOAN

(Matt. 5:48)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Neglected & misunderstood subject.
- 2. Some think a "Christian" is one who is sinless; never making a mistake. Since they cannot be sinless, they excuse themselves.
- 3. Others try to harmonize *perfection* with human frailties by saying that God has commanded sinlessness, in order to give man a goal to strive to attain.

I. THE MEANING OF PERFECT.

- A. "Complete; full-grown, mature."
- B. A sacrifice without blemish is *perfect*; a full-grown man is *perfect*; a student who has reached a mature knowledge is *perfect*.
- C. Perfection means being in a condition that is acceptable to God.

II. PERFECTION OF ATTITUDE.

- A. The attitude of knowing the truth (Acts. 17:11; 10:33).
- B. Striving earnestly to go to heaven (Phil. 3:12-15).
- C. Willing to repent (II Cor. 7:9-11; Psa. 51).

III. PERFECTION OF CONDITION.

- A. Mature child of God (Heb. 5:12-6:1).

- B. Following God's wisdom (I Cor. 2:6).
- C. Not attached to the world (Matt. 19:21).
- D. Controlling the tongue (Jas. 3:2).
- E. In love (Matt. 5:48; Col. 3:14).

IV. PERFECTION OF CONSUMMATION.

- A. Phil. 3:12, 14.
- B. The bud of springtime is complete; yet does not have its final perfection.
- C. Child in infancy is perfect; yet, not final.
- D. God will one day own us and give us that final perfection, Rev. 21:4.

CONCLUSION:

We can and must be perfect now in attitude and condition, and long for that final perfection.

FOOLING OURSELVES

EDWARD O. BRAGWELL

(Galatians 6:7-9)

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is easy to deceive ourselves.
 - a. Scripture warnings teach this lesson. "Be not deceived" (v. 7; I Cor. 6:9; 15:33).—Self deception (Gal. 6:3; I Cor. 3:18; Jas. 1:22, 26; I Jno. 1:8).
 - b. Personal experience teaches this lesson. Find ways to avoid facing unpleasant truth. Find ways to justify inappropriate acts. Rationalize away personal guilt.
2. It is cruel folly to deceive ourselves.
 - a. The facts must be faced, sooner or later—could delay til nothing can be done.
 - b. The fantasy will be exploded, sooner or later—the older it becomes the harder the explosion is on us.
3. Paul touches on three common illusions among professed Christians.

I. THE NOTION THAT GOD CAN BE MOCKED (v. 7).

 - A. Mock—"turn up nose" or "impose upon."
 - B. God is not mocked in that His law cannot be ignored without punishment (Rom. 2:6-9).
 1. Adam and Eve tried it to their sorrow (Gen. 2:15-17; 3:6, 24).
 2. Ananias and Sapphira tried it to their death (Acts 5:1-11).
 - B. God is not mockea in that He himself cannot be deceived (Job 42:2; Heb. 4:12,13).
 1. Achan concealed his sin from others, Josh. 7, but God was not mocked.
 2. Gehezi, Elishi's servant, tried to gain by lying, but God would not be mocked (II Kings 5).
 3. Jonah tried to run from God, but God would not be mocked.

II. THE IDEA THAT GOD'S LAW OF HARVEST CAN BE BROKEN, (vs 8; cf. Gen. 1:11).

- A. If we are sowing to the spirit, we have real hope of eternal life (II Tim. 4:6-8).
- B. If we are sowing to the flesh, we had better be ready to reap corruption (cf. Rom. 3:8; 6:23).
 - 1. We cannot neglect God's law without consequences (Heb. 2:2, 3)—Law for life, worship, church, marriage, etc.
 - 2. We cannot do "works of flesh" and reap heaven (Gal. 5:17-19; I Cor. 6:9,10)—Possible to receive a *token* harvest even in this life (I Tim. 5:24).
 - 3. We cannot "sow wild oats" and expect to reap good.

III. THE FANCY THAT ALL THE FRUITS OF OUR BEHAVIOR ARE IMMEDIATE (v. 9).

- A. We look primarily beyond present for reward (Mk. 10:29,30; Rom. 8:18; II Cor. 4:17; I Cor. 15:19; Matt. 6:3, 4).
- B. We must not mistake God's present tolerance for a full harvest (II Pet. 3:9, 10).
 - 1. The young may escape wrath of parents, the law and society—not God.
 - 2. The worldlings may think they have "gotten away with sin" if they receive no immediate harm and sins are overlooked by brethren. Not so!
 - 3. The "mild" transgressor may fancy himself as being smart for being able to "play both sides"—he is just fooling himself.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. It is time that we faced the fact that:
 - a. God will not be mocked—so quit making a mockery of being a christian.
 - b. We will indeed reap what we sow—so straighten up and obey God(cf. Rom. 6:16).

CONFESSION UNTO SALVATION

ELVIS E. BOZARTH

(Romans 10:10)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Confession is for—in order to—receiving salvation from sin.
- 2. To believe is to know, confession is to tell. They are not same (John 12:42).
- 3. The words "profess" and "acknowledge" are the same; "to deny" is the opposite.
- 4. Consult Vine's Expository Dictionary on "confession."
- 5. Required of all sinners, both alien and children of God.

I. CONFESSION REQUIRED OF THE ALIEN SINNER

- A. Not to confess sins (Mt. 3:6 cf Acts 19:18) and explain.

- B. May confess some truth but not confess Christ (Acts 23:8).
- C. Jews denied (Acts 3:13-14).
- D. Examples:
 - 1. Peter (Mt. 16:16).
 - 2. Timothy (I Tim. 6:12-13).
- E. With the mouth—text, e.g., Acts 8:37 (Is this an interpolation? No).

II. CONFESSION REQUIRED OF THE SINFUL CHILD OF GOD

- A. The life of a christian is a profession (Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 10:23).
- B. Opposite is to deny (Mt. 10:32-33; II Tim. 2:12-13).
- C. We can confess or deny Christ by the way we live daily (II Cor. 9:13; I Tim. 5:8; I Tim. 6:21; II Tim. 3:5; Tit 1:16; 2:12; I Jno. 2:22-23; 4:2, 3, 15; II Pet. 2:1; II Jno. 7; Rev. 2:13; 3:5, 8).
- D. Child of God must confess *his sin* (not merely the fact that he has sinned I John 1:9; James 5:16; Acts 8:14-24).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Every tongue shall confess (no atheists and infidels at judgment Phil. 2:11).
- 2. Confession may get you into trouble—Polycarp (ref. *Anti-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I, pp. 37-39, but remember Mt. 10:28; I Pet. 4:12-19).
- 3. Will you confess Him now that He may confess you then? (Mt. 7:23).

LAW

ROBERT H. WEST

(Psalms 119:97; Rom. 8:2; James 2:8-12)

INTRODUCTION:

A familiar Bible term; an important subject. We wish to learn what it is and our relationship to it.

I. WHAT IS THE LAW? (in general).

- A. Law an expression of will.
 - 1. Implies a lawgiver, an authoritative will.
 - 2. Implies subjects upon whom that will terminates.
- B. Law a general expression of will. Applies to all equally—no special legislation.
- C. Law implies power to enforce.
 - 1. Imposes obligations to obey. *Guarantees freedom.*
 - 2. Penalties for disobedience. "Law that has no penalty is not law but advice, and the government in which infliction does not follow transgression is the reign of rogues or demons."—N. W. Taylor
- D. Law expresses and demands nature.
 - 1. It always expresses the nature of the lawgiver.
 - 2. It sets forth the conditions or standard of conduct upon which the subjects may be in harmony with that nature.

II. NATURAL AND MORAL LAW.

- A. Natural law—The expression *of will* in the material universe. Conclusive evidence of God's existence—Psa. 19:1; Job. 38:33.

- B. Moral law—All mankind recognize an inherent sense of right and wrong (Rom. 2:14, 15). Whence came this "ought" factor? From a divine lawgiver. One whose nature is expressed in that moral law.

III. THE WRITTEN LAW.

- A. We have a written law today.
 - 1. See subject texts.
 - 2. Gal. 1:6-9
 - 3. I Cor. 4:6
 - 4. IJno. 4:1, 6
 - 5. II Tim. 3:16-17
- B. Consider the characteristics of this law.
 - 1. An expression of will.
 - a. Implies a lawgiver—Jno. 1:17; James 4:11.
 - (1.) Will of Father (I Thess. 2:13).
 - (2.) Will of Son (I Cor. 14:37).
 - (3.) Will of H.S. (I Cor. 2:12-13).
 - b. Will terminates on US (Heb. 2:1).
 - 2. A general expression of will.
 - a. Explains why law of Moses not binding today—to Jews only—Deut. 5:1-3; Gal. 3:23-25-
 - b. Gospel to all, Matt. 28:18-20.
 - 3. Implies power to enforce.
 - a. Imposes obligations to obey (Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:9; II Cor. 5:11; John 8:32; Rom. 6:17-18).
 - b. Penalty for disobedience (II Thess. 1:6-9; Heb. 10:31).
 - 4. Expresses and demands nature.
 - a. Sets forth the nature of God & Christ, that He is pure, righteous, etc.
 - b. Conditions upon which we may be in harmony with that nature.
 - (1.) I Pet. 1:22-23 (plan of salvation).
 - (2.) II Pet. 1:3-4.
 - (3.) Titus 2:11-12
 - (4.) Romans 1:16-17

CONCLUSION:

We are under the law of God. Let us therefore, recognize the Divine lawgiver, acknowledge His Divine power, and *obey*, in order that we might be partakers of His Divine nature.

"I HAVE FOUND THE BOOK"

GENE WORMAN

(II Kgs. 22:8-20)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Recent past of Israel.
- 2. Vs. 13 explains why they had forsaken.
- 3. Many today don't know *the book is lost*.
- 4. *Was* and *is* lost because of failure to use it—must know if first.
- 5. Was found = *results — restoration movement*.

I. "I have found the book" in regard to:

- A. *The Plan of Salvation:*
 - 1. Man's teaching is a departure—thus sin.
 - 2. The book says—faith, repentance, confession, baptism—obedience.
- B. *The church:*
 - 1. Its oneness
 - 2. Its organization
 - 3. Its purpose
 - 4. Its work

PRAYER

MIKE WILLIS

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Prayer is basically an act of faith. The atheist would be talking to himself if he prayed but the theist talks with his God and Father.
- 2. Close association with our Lord is made possible through His grace in providing for our salvation and prayer. Yet, few things become more routine and ritualistic than does prayer.

I. INCENTIVES TO PRAYER:

- A. God has a personal relationship with man comparable to that of a father and a son (Matt. 7:9-11). Therefore, we know that He is concerned with our wants and needs.
- B. God is conscious of us (Lk. 12:7). Had he so chosen, God could have been so far removed from us that he knew nothing of our existence or needs.
- C. God's power is sufficient to grant anything which we need (Matt. 19:26; Eph. 3:20,21).
- D. God is willing to grant to us the things beneficial to us (Matt. 7:7-8). Notice through a comparison to children's desires that not all our wants are beneficial to us.

II. THINGS FOR WHICH WE SHOULD PRAY:

- A. Those who despitefully use us (Matt. 5:44). This is one example when the spirit must subdue the fleshly tendency toward revenge and pray for his enemy.
- B. That we enter not into temptation (Mk. 14:38).
- C. Physical problems in our life.
 - 1. Jesus instructed those living in Jerusalem to pray about their flight to safety during the destruction of that safety (Matt. 24:20).
 - 2. Illnesses should be subjects of prayer (Jas. 5:13).
- D. For civil rulers (I Tim. 2:2).
- E. For the progress of the gospel (II Thess. 3:1).
- F. For the lost (Rom. 10:1-2).

III. THINGS WHICH NEGATE PRAYER:

- A. Lack of faith (Mk. 11:24; Jas. 1:5-8).
- B. Asking amiss (Jas. 4:1-3). "Amiss" (from KAKOS) means "with bad

intent" or "for the wrong reason" (Thayer). The context shows that some asked in prayer for things after which they lusted and over which they fought.

- C. Self-righteousness (Lk. 18:9-14).
- D. Failure to forgive others (Matt. 18:21-35; 6:14,15). We must realize that vengeance belongs to God alone (Rom. 12:19-21).
- E. Sinfulness (I Tim. 2:8; Prov. 28:9).

IV. ABUSES IN PRAYER:

- A. Praying for a show (Matt. 6:5). The ones guilty of this transgression receive the full payment of their reward when an observer says, "Brother Piety can certainly lead a beautiful prayer!" To curtail this problem, Jesus suggested that one pray in his closet (Matt. 6:6).
- B. Vain repetitions (Matt. 6:8). Here are samplings from our prayers:
 - 1. "Thank you, Father, for this another beautiful Lord's day."
 - 2. "May the speaker have a ready recollection of what he has studied."
 - 3. "Be with the sick, the world over and especially of the household of faith."
- C. Pretense (Matt. 12:38-40). The guilty ones made a show of piety but were actually guilty of wickedness since they stole from poor widows. Here are two examples of this:
 - 1. The ones who refuse to attend Bible study thanking God for his revealed word.
 - 2. Those who forsake the assembly thanking God for another opportunity for gathering together.

CONCLUSION: Let us exercise the privilege of prayer with caution as we present our petitions before our Heavenly Father.

"IS IT WELL WITH THEE"

GENE WORMAN

(II Kgs. 4:8-37)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Questions stimulate thought.
- 2. This is a good one—may have different things in mind.
- 3. Review story—Elish, Gehazi, Shummamite woman (great woman).

I. Well in what sense?

- A. Physically? insurance? school? clothes? food? house?
- B. Spiritually? knowledge? respect? obeyed?

II. Not well unless you are right with God.

III. Not right unless you have obeyed the Lord.

CONCLUSION:

Obey Him now!!

WHAT MAKES AN INFIDEL?

ROBERT F. TURNER

(Psa. io:3ff)

INTRODUCTION:

"He will not require it. . . ."

"I shall not be moved. . . ."

"God will never see it. . . ."

The thoughts of one who is really saying, "There is no God."

BASIC FACTOR:—VANITY—(Rom. 1:i8f).

Paul says, two things can be known about God:

1. Eternal Power.
2. Deity and these impose two obligations:
 - a. Glorify (look up to) God.
 - b. Be thankful (recog. dependence).

Basic factor in sin—Creature before the Creator. . . .

Romans—(a) vain in imagination (b) professing wisdom, become fool.

Psalms—This is the essence of David's description of the man who rejects God.

INFIDEL = IN (negative) + FIDEL (believe) — or "NO FAITH," "LACKING FAITH."

In this lesson we are concerned with things which bring about such a condition; or — *indications* that such a condition is developing.

BODY:

I. ACCEPT ONLY WHAT APPEALS TO SENSES — REASON (**Putting Creature before Creator**).

- A. Rom. 4:i6f — Abraham "believed against hope," "staggered not" at promise.
- B. Rationalizing miracles, to believe them (Example, taking of Jericho; etc. your own).
- C. If reason must approve before I believe, my reason becomes superior to God.

II. SPOILED (ROBBED) OF FAITH, THRU PHILOSOPHY.

- A. Human "seeking" after God—which ignores the ONE way God manifested to us.
 1. Col. 2:8—In Christ—fullness of Godhead bodily. Complete in Him.
- B. An error present in Masonry (See *Morals and Dogma*, Pike),
 1. I Tim. 6:20—Science, falsely so called.

III. HAVING FORM, BUT DENYING THE POWER THEREOF (II Tim. 3=1-8).

- A. Neo-Orthodoxy—Bible terminology, emptied of actual meaning and use.
- B. Social Gospel—perverting the purpose (end) of Christianity.

IV. STUBBORNLY REFUSE THE WORD OF GOD (II Cor. 4:1-4).

A. Revelation of God's will, in God's word. To reject word, rejects God (John 12:47f).

B. Lk. 16:31—If hear not Moses, would not accept the resurrected Lord.

V. INACTIVE MEMBERS—LACKING IN FAITH (Heb. 3:12,17-19. Believe not—Obey not. Deny the faith—I Tim. 5:8. Shipwreck faith—I Tim. 1:19).

FALSE RELIGION—Generates false hope, makes for infidels. Historically—French Revol., Atheism, Humanism, Social Gospel, Subjectivism.

ONE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

ROBERT C. ARCHER

INTRODUCTION:

We shall do two things: (1) define some terms (2) discuss our responsibility to the local church.

I. A DEFINITION OF TERMS.

A. What is a Christian?

1. One that has been born twice (Jn. 3:3-5).
2. One that has become a new creature (Eph. 4:22-24; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 12:1).
3. One that is a disciple of Christ (Ax. 11:26; 20:7).
 - a. A disciple is a follower, learner of Jesus.
 - b. One who has given up all (Matt. 16:24).
4. One that is a member of Christ's church (Ax. 2:37-47).

B. What is the church?

1. Not—the building, a social club, just an organization.
2. It will help us to look at the original term: ekklesia.
 - a. It is used in three different ways:
 - (1.) An assembly.
 - (a.) Secular (Ax. 19:32,39,41).
 - (b.) Religious (I Cor. 14:28,34).
 - (2.) All the saved (universal sense, Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:21-23).
 - (3.) A number of persons in a given area of like faith and order (Rom. 16:16; Rev. 1:4-11).

II. OUR RESPONSIBILITY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH.

A. Promote unity (Eph. 4:1-3).

1. How?

- a. Respecting the Bible (II Tim. 3:16,17).
 - (1.) Paul's plea (I Cor. 1:10).
 - (2.) Jesus' prayer (John 17:20-26).
 - (3.) Paul's plan (Eph. 4:4-6).
- b. Respecting the conscience of others (Rom. 14; I Cor. 8).
- c. By avoiding jealousy (Gal. 5:19-21).

- d. By avoiding gossip (Jas. 3:2-12).
- e. By avoiding foolish questions (Tit. 3:9).
- f. By avoiding parties, divisions (Gal. 5:19-21; Jas. 2:1-9).
- B. Support the work.
 - 1. The work is: (a) Evangelism (b) Edification (c) Limited work in benevolence.
 - 2. How?
 - a. Money (II Cor. 9:6; Phil. 4:15,16).
 - b. Personal effort (Eph. 4:16).
- C. Worship (Heb. 10:25).
 - 1. Why?
 - a. To give honor to God.
 - b. To get spiritual strength.
 - c. To strengthen others.
- D. Obey elders (Heb. 13:7; I Tim. 5:17-19).
- E. Maintain the purity of the church.
 - 1. Christ died to make it pure (Eph. 5:25-27).
 - 2. We must maintain it:
 - a. In speech (Phil. 1:27; Eph. 4:29).
 - b. In thought (Phil. 4:8).
 - c. In deed (Eph. 4:24-32).
- F. Restore erring (Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19).

CONCLUSION: Much to do—a full time job, but a great privilege.

LOOKING DILIGENTLY

MARSHALL E. PATTON

(Heb. 12:15-17)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Here is text that not only imposes upon us a solemn duty, but also satisfies man's inquisitive nature.
 - a. Almost from infancy man has ask, Why?
 - b. Some accept only what they can see a reason for.
 - c. Cf. rationalism in nature; in Bible.
2. Duly constituted authority back of any order is reason enough to obey. Cf. Parental, civil, and divine authority.
3. God often gives command without a reason. Such proves faith, love, and loyalty.
 - a. But in our text He would have us see the reasons.
 - b. That we might be more deeply impressed with danger, more earnestly heed the warning, and more fully perform duty.

I. THE DUTY.

- A. Define: "diligently." (Cf. I Pet. 5:8; I Thess. 5:6; Matt. 26:41).

II. THE REASONS.

- A. "Lest any fail of the grace of God."
 1. Cf. marginal reading "fall from." Thus, can fall from grace (Gal. 5:4; II Cor. 6:1; I Cor. 10:12).

2. Consider use made of word translated "fail."
 - a. "The early Greek commentator Theophylact interprets this in terms of a journey of a band of travellers. Every now and again they have to check up and ask: 'Has anyone fallen out? Has anyone lingered by the wayside? Has anyone been left behind while the others have pressed on?'" (Wm. Barclay, Commentary on Heb.).
 - b. Cf. Micah 4:6 in following versions: "I will collect the stragglers" (Moffatt), "Assemble that which is lame" (A.S.V.); "assemble her thathalteth" (K.J.V.).
 - c. How much time must be spent by faithful in "collecting the stragglers"? Give examples.
- B. "Lest any root of bitterness"
 1. Cf. Deut. 29:18—apostates to strange gods—encourages others to do so—thereby becomes pernicious and poisonous influence.
 2. Early church litde removed from paganism—easy to relapse into old standards. Hence, (Eph. 4:22ffj).
 3. Reason for church discipline (Cf. also I Cor. 5:6).
- C. "Lest there be any fornicator."
 1. While sometimes used in spiritual sense, perhaps literal here.
 - a. Common sin among Gentiles (Ax. 15:20; I Cor. 5:1).
 - b. Becoming more common in our day—manifold temptations: Unlawful marriages, immodest apparel, etc.
 2. Diligence urgently needed!
- D. ". . . Or profane person."
 1. Meaning—lack of reverence for things sacred—those who do not look beyond the horizon of time.
 2. Esau an example—lived only for present.
 3. Sin of preoccupation committed largely by those who are profane.
 4. Cf. Col. 3:1-3; Matt. 6:19-21; I Tim. 6:17-19).

CONCLUSION: Esau had to abide by decision he made. His desire to change came too late. We, too, will have to abide by decision we make in time.

CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD

DONALD WILLIS

(I Tim. 3:16)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. This is one of the greatest mysteries of Christianity, yet one of its most important and fundamental doctrines! If Christ is not the Son of God, Christianity is absolutely false and void of power.
 1. Some denied the sonship in N.T. (I Jno. 1:1-2; 4:1-3; 2:i8ff; 2 Jno. 7).
 2. Modernist denies the miracles of birth, life, and resurrection.
 3. One who rejects Word of God rejects Christ (Matt. 10:40).
 4. Jesus existed eternally. He became man for 33 years.
- B. Consider four proofs of the Deity of Jesus.

I. PROPHECY TESTIFIES (Deut. 18:21-32; proof of prophecy).

- A. Seed of woman (Gen. 3:15, Gal. 4:4).
- B. Abraham's seed (Gen. 22:18, Gal. 3:16).
- C. Virgin birth predicted (Isa. 7:14).
- D. Further prophecy (Isa. 9:6).

II. CHRIST TESTIFIES OF SELF.

- A. Greatest teachings the world knows are taught by Jesus.
 - 1. Sermon on the mount (Matt. 5-7).
 - 2. The prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).
 - 3. Tenderness of Son. Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-46).
 - 4. Desire for unity (John 17:20-22).
- B. His works. None of men's works compare with Jesus.'
 - 1. Consider the various kinds of miracles (John 2:1-9; Matt. 14:25ff; Matt. 8:25ff; Matt. 15:32-38; Matt. 15:30-31; Luke 7:1 ff; Jno. 11, 1-46; Water to wine, walking on water, calming sea, feeding the multitudes, healing the sick, and raising the dead).

III. APOSTLES TESTIFY OF JESUS.

- A. John (Jno. 1:1532-35).
- B. Paul (Rom. 1:3-4; Phil. 2:5-9; I Tim. 3:16; 2:5).
- C. Peter (Acts 2:22-36), with proof from prophets and witnesses.
- D. Thomas (Jno. 20:14-29).

IV. TESTIMONY OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

- A. Only two people that can truly testify physically. Joseph and Mary.
 - 1. Born of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).
 - 2. Fulfill prophecy (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23).
- B. Maternal instinct would not allow a child to die in order to hide an act of immorality committed 30 years previously.
 - 1. Mary went to the cross with the Son (Jno. 19:25-27).
 - 2. Mary remained a disciple of the Lord (Acts 1:14).

CONCLUSION:

- A. Jesus is Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).
- B. Jesus has the power to save (Matt. 28:18; Heb. 5:8-9).
- C. Jesus intercedes (Heb. 2:17-18; 4:15-16).

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANS

EARL ROBERTSON

(Matt. 5:13-16)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. All of us are creatures of influence.
 - a. Christ and Paul, Acts 20:35 0- Cor. 11:1).
 - b. Father over his son—illustrated by steps in the dew.
- 2. "Bad company is the ruin of good character" (I Cor. 15:33 NEB).
- 3. "Evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33 ASV).
- 4. "... a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (I Cor. 5:6).
- 5. "... like people, like priest" (Hosea 4:9).

I. GOD DEMANDS AND EXPECTS GOOD INFLUENCE.

- A. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Pvov. 22:1).
 - 1. "Good" is singular accusative, and means beautiful, attractive, as well as good—*kalon*.
- B. "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13).
 - 1. Salt was connected with purity; both Romans and Jews recognized this. Christians must be example of purity (James 1:27; Mark 9:49.50).
 - 2. Salt was in the ancient world most common in preserving foodstuffs.
 - 3. Christians, being the salt of the earth, must have preserving influence.
 - 4. A great quality of salt is the fact of its power to give flavor. (Cf. Job 6:6). This is that winsome ingredient found in the influential Christian.
- C. "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14).
 - 1. Christians are to be like the Lord in this respect (John 9:5).
 - 2. The Philippians were just this (Phil. 2:15).
 - 3. Disciples must "so shine before men, that they may see your *good* works, and glorify your father which is in heaven."
 - a. In Greek two words for good: 1. *agathos*, defines a thing good in quality; and, 2. *kalos*, which not only means good, but winsome and beautiful and attractive. This is the word Jesus used!
 - 4. The good deeds draw attention, not to self, but to God!
 - 5. Companion's behavior (I Peter 3:1-2).

II. HOW TO HAVE GOOD INFLUENCE.

- A. Be consistent; practice what we preach (James 2:18; Rom. 2:21; I Tim. 4:16).
- B. Be uncompromising with truth (Eph. 6:1-18; Gal. 2:4,5; I Tim. 3:9).
- C. Avoid offenses (I Cor. 8:9-13; 10:32; II Cor. 6:3; Phil. 1:10).
 - 1. Cf. Jesus in Luke 17:1-2; Matt. 18:7ff.
- D. Serve the needs of others (Matt. 23:11; Eph. 4:28; Acts 20:33-35).
- E. Serve with fervency. Fervency is a condition of fidelity (Rom. 12:10; Rev. 3:15-16).

III. EXAMPLES.

- A. Antipas, Rev. 2:13.
- B. Saints in Caesar's house (Phil. 4:22).
- C. Paul (II Cor. 11).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. When dead one's influence continues (Heb. 11:4).
 - a. Emphasize "yet".
- 2. "... and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13).

"I AM DOING A GREAT WORK"

N. E. HOFFMAN

"... So that I cannot come down: why should the work cease . . . ?" (Neh. 6:3).

THEME: Dedication to God's work.

INTRODUCTION:

1. A look at the background of the text:
 - a. Israel taken captive to Babylon (II Kings 24).
 - b. Jerusalem left in ruined state.
2. Nehemiah's task:
 - a. Called by God to rebuild Jerusalem (Neh. 1).
 - b. King of Babylon gave permission (Neh. 2:6).
3. Many "Good" works today:
 - a. Man's ideas—temporal.
 - b. God's way, spiritual first (Matt. 6:33).

I. MAN SAYS: (Christians).

- A. "Let us set up schools under Christians!"
 1. "Use money from individuals only."
 2. "Teach the Truth in Bible Dept."
 3. Start well, intentions good.
 - a. Later, begin to seek congregational help.
 - b. Liberalism, modernistic teaching follow.
- B. "Politics need more attention!"
 1. We are citizens of spiritual kingdom (Heb. 12:28).
 2. Soldiers of Christ (II Tim. 2:3-4).
- C. "We need a social gospel!"
 1. "Loaves and fishes"—Socials; Hospitals; Homes; and etc.
 2. Go soft on denominationalism (Matt. 15:9,13).

II. GOD HAS WORK FOR US: (Build spiritual Jerusalem).

- A. Preach the gospel to lost (Matt. 28:18-20).
 1. Locally (Ax. 2).
 2. All men (Mk. 16:15; Ax. 8:3-25; 16:1-10).
- B. Preach the gospel to the church: (Involves most of the N.T.).
 1. Feed milk to babes (Heb. 5:12,13; I Pet. 2:2).
 2. Feed meat.
 - a. Need it for full growth (Heb. 5:14; I Cor. 2:14,15).
 - b. Must learn to think spiritually).

III. WORK FOR EVERYONE:

- A. "Teaching them to observe ..." (Matt. 28:20).
 1. Christians scattered (Ax. 8:1-4; 11:19).
 2. Made great progress (Col. 1:23).
- B. "The people had a mind to work" (Neh. 4:6).

CONCLUSION:

1. Nehemiah dedicated, uncompromising, successful.
2. Our work greater, need dedication to task.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

BILLY W. MOORE

(Heb. 9:11-22)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Many accuse us of not believing in the blood of Christ, but we are the only ones who really do believe in it, while those who make such accusations reject it.
2. Discuss the death of Christ:
 - a. Man's condition (Read Rom. 1:21-32).
 - b. Christ came; met Jews on every hand; taught great lessons; but was put to death.
3. The blood of Christ—tell of its being shed (Jno. 19:34).
 - a. Shed for remission of sins (Matt. 26:28).
 - b. Shed for those under the first covenant (Cf. Zech. 13:1; 14:8; Heb. 9:15,16).
4. Under the law Moses sprinkled the book, the tabernacle, the people and the vessels of the ministry (Heb. 9:18-22).
5. Note what the blood of Christ does.

I. DEDICATES THE LAW.

- A. Moses dedicated the law with blood.
- B. Christ shed his blood to dedicate his law (Heb. 9:16,17).
 1. Those who accept the blood accept the law dedicated by the blood. This law is complete (II Tim. 3:16,17; Jas. 1:25).
 2. Those who accept creeds of men do not believe in the blood (Gal. 5:4).

II. THE CHURCH WAS BOUGHT WITH THE BLOOD.

- A. Moses sprinkled the tabernacle (Heb. 9:21).
 1. Tabernacle a place of worship, where God dwells. "My people" and "your God."
- B. Jesus bought the church with his blood (Ax. 20:28).
 1. The man who says the church is not essential sets aside the blood of Christ and rejects the only institution bought with that blood (Eph. 5:23; 1:22; Ax. 2:47).
- C. Some brethren do not believe in the sufficiency of the blood bought institution.
 1. Talk about the church all you care to and they say not a word, but talk about their idols and out you go.
 2. Israel was a gainsaying, forgot God (Jer. 2:32).
 - a. Bride never forgets her wedding dress, may forget the man she married.

III. VESSELS OF MINISTRY—THE WORSHIP.

- A. Moses sprinkled the vessels of the ministry, i.e., pots, forks, tongs, etc.
- B. Everything in our worship must come under the blood of Christ.
 1. Lord's supper, weekly observance, comes under the blood (Ax. 20:7).
 - a. Only memorial of his blood, but some have it only once a year!
 2. Prayer comes under the blood (Ax. 2:42).
 3. Teaching God's word comes under the blood. Beware of changing it (Matt. 15:9).
 4. Singing comes under the blood of Christ (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
 - a. Give history of the instrument, show that it doesn't come under the blood.

5. Giving comes under the blood (I Cor. 16:1,2; II Cor. 9:6,7).
 - a. No pie suppers, chicken dinners, sales, etc.
 - b. Poor sign of one's religion when you have to feed him to get contribution.

IV. PEOPLE DEDICATED WITH THE BLOOD.

- A. Moses sprinkled the people with the blood (Heb. 9:19).
- B. Can't be saved without contacting the blood of Christ (Heb. 9:22; 10:4,9,10).
 1. Blood shed in his death (Jno. 19:34), baptized into his death (Rom. 6:3,4), thus baptism saves and blood saves (I Pet. 3:21).
 2. The man who says you don't have to be baptized to be saved does not believe in the blood of Christ. He rejects the only act by which the sinner contacts the blood (Then he cries, You folks don't believe in salvation by the blood).

CONCLUSION:

1. Who really believes in the blood of Christ:
 - a. Those who accept the testament dedicated by his blood? Or those who reject it?
 - b. Those who are in the church bought with his blood? Or those who reject it?
 - c. Those who observe the only memorial of his blood? Or those who reject it?
 - d. Those who are baptized into his death where his blood was shed? Or those who reject baptism, saying it is not necessary?
2. Stress the fact that we are the ones who really believe in the blood of Christ. Note: This sermon outline was made after hearing H. F. Sharp preach this sermon.

WHAT DOES RELIGION MEAN TO YOU?

BILLY W. MOORE

INTRODUCTION:

1. Religion is defined as: The service and adoration of God or a god as expressed in forms of worship. The profession or practice of religious beliefs.
 - a. I speak of it as the service or practice that stems from conviction.
2. Religion may be right or wrong; sincere or insincere; true or false; full and rewarding or it may be vain. (Cf. Matt. 15:9; Jas. 1:26,27).
3. The real test of one's religion is, "What difference does it make?"
 - a. The blind man (Jno. 9:24-38).
 - b. The eunuch "went. . . rejoicing" (Ax. 8:39).
 - c. The Jews were "praising God" (Ax. 2:47).
 - d. Paul was "ready . . . to die." (Ax. 21:13).
4. What does your religion mean to you? Has it made a difference in your life?

- I. IT OUGHT TO MEAN PURITY OF LIFE.
 - A. Mary Magdalene (Lk. 8:2).
 - 1. She became a diligent servant; was at the crucifixion (Matt. 27:56); anointed the body of Jesus (Matt. 27:61); and was the first to see the risen Lord (Mk. 16:9).
 - B. Zacchaeus (Lk. 19:1-9).
 - 1. "The half of my goods I give to the poor ... will restore fourfold." (v. 8).
 - C. The Christian's life must be pure (Cf. Tit. 2:11-14).
 - 1. Purity in life begins with a pure heart (Matt. 5:8).
 - 2. Hearts are purified by faith (Ax. 15:9; Cf. I Pet. 1:22; Gal. 5:6).
 - 3. Purity of life is manifested in what we think (Phil. 4:8), do (Phil. 2:14,15; I Thess. 5:22), and say (Eph. 4:29).
 - a. Our religion is vain if we fail to bridle our tongue (Jas. 1:26,27).
- II. IT OUGHT TO GIVE A SENSE OF DIRECTION.
 - A. What most people want in life: good health, homes, children, security.
 - B. Question: What do you want to make of your life? Do you want to be a Christian? Do you want to be a good example? Do you really want to go to heaven?
 - 1. Are you going in the wrong direction? (Cf. Jno. 15:19; Jas. 4:4; I Jno. 2:15-17).
 - 2. The best things in life come by following Christ with conviction and purpose.
- III. IT OUGHT TO TAKE AWAY FEAR AND DEFEAT AND GIVE A SPIRIT OF VICTORY.
 - A. There is a paradox here: you become victorious by surrendering (Matt. 11:28-30); you win by giving up; you live by dying (Gal. 2:20); you lose your life to find life (Matt. 16:25). Give up personal prejudice, selfish motives, surrender to the Lord heart, soul and body . . . crucify the old man and live (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 3:5; Matt. 6:33).
 - B. Examples: Jesus, "Not my will but thine be done." Paul (Cf. II Tim. 4=7,8).
 - C. We can be victors over all sin and evil and overcome the world (Phil. 4:13; I Jno. 5:4).
 - D. We can be more useful in the kingdom, and win a victory over death (I Cor. 15:57).
- IV. IT OUGHT TO BE A CHALLENGE.
 - A. There are too many "use to be" Christians, to whom religion is no longer a challenge. They have either "arrived" as Christians, or lulled into complacency (Rev. 3:17).
 - B. To most people life is made up of "things", but what about when you die?
 - C. Our religion should challenge us to use what we have to God's glory (I Cor. 6:20).
- V. IT OUGHT TO MEAN REFUGE AND SECURITY.
 - A. Amid the storms of life we need a place of refuge—Christ is that place (Rom. 8:1,2).
 - B. In a world where all is transit we need a place of security—Christ is that place.
 - 1. He is able to keep what we give unto him (II Tim. 1:12). Lend him a boat ... it comes back full of fish; give him water ... it comes back wine; give him a boy's lunch ... he feeds 5,000 men and has left overs. Emphasize (II Tim. 1:12).

- C. We must give ourselves unto him, he becomes our keeper.
 - 1. Surrender body, soul and spirit (Matt. 22:37); trust him at all times (Prov. 3:5); let his word be the authority in our lives (II Tim. 3:16; I Cor. 4:6); let our bodies and minds become his servants (Rom. 6:16; 12:1,2).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. I do not know what your religion means to you, but I know what CHRISTIANITY means unto thousands. Review the five main points.
- 2. If your religion does not mean these things to you, then you are missing out.

THE CHURCH—AS GOD WOULD HAVE IT

PAUL C. KELLER

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Church eternally purposed (Eph. 3:10,11). Hence, nothing about it accidental.
- 2. Our subject involves certain implications:
 - a. God has a plan for the church. It is right. We need to know it.
 - b. In our human frailties we may have lost sight of God's plan.
 - c. Hence, the need for investigation—to determine concerning: "The Church—As God Would Have It."
- 3. All of these implications are correct.
- 4. There is ever a need for a study of the church as it was in the first century.
 - a. What it was then, by Divine approval, it needs to be in the 20th century.
- 5. One lesson cannot cover subject, but note that "The church as God would have it" is:

I. UNDENOMINATIONAL IN ITS NATURE:

- A. The church of Christ is not a denomination.
 - 1. Not a part, or section, of something—but the *whole* of God's people.
 - 2. In 1st Century all taught and practiced same thing, wore same name, etc. Hence, nothing to distinguish them from each other.
- B. A denomination is not the church of Christ.
 - 1. Church referred to in N.T. in two senses:
 - a. Universal
 - b. Local
 - 2. Denomination: "a religious organization smaller than the whole church and larger than the local church.
 - 3. Hence, a denomination is not the church in either sense—not in any sense.
- C. Gospel does not create denominations.
 - 1. God's power to save (Rom. 1:16). Was preached in 1st century. Obeyed by many.

- 2. Yet, none were made Catholics, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, etc.
- D. Gospel requirements are undenominational. Same to all.
- E. Results were undenominational: In Christ. Salvation. In church.
- II. PLACES EMPHASIS ON THE SPIRITUAL—NOT MATERIAL:**
 - A. Read Paul's epistles, for example. Note which he emphasized.
 - B. Contrast with modern religious ideas.
 - 1. Costly Cathedrals. Sects (and church) have been influenced by such ideas.
 - 2. Emphasis on ritual and splendor of ornamentation, rather than Spirituality.
 - a. Great expense for baptismal fount—little significance to baptism.
 - b. Great concern for vessels for Lord's Supper, little concern for Supper, itself.
 - c. More concerned about preacher's social qualities than his spirituality.
 - d. More concerned with his formal education than with what he preaches.
 - C. New Testament church concerned about saving men with the gospel.
- III. INTOLERANT TOWARD EVERY KIND OF EVIL:**
 - A. Rebuked division at Corinth (I Cor. 1,3), Fornication (Chap. 5), Going to Law (Chap. 6), Idolatry and Lust (Chap. 10). Etc., Etc.
 - 1. Demanded penal action when necessary (Chap. 5; II Thess. 3:6; Tit. 3:10,11).
 - B. All Evil—Everywhere (Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-10; Tit. 2:11,12).
 - C. Contrast today:
 - 1. Worldliness and sin popular, Rarely rebuked. "Fire preacher" if he does.
 - 2. Adultery, drunkenness, evil speaking, lasciviousness, etc. lightly regarded by many church members. No surprise that world has little respect for such.
- IV. CHARACTERIZED BY LOYALTY AND DEVOTION TO CHRIST, AND TRUTH, THAT ADMITS NO REBUFF:**
 - A. Read the book of Acts and note this.
 - B. Peter and John. Stephen. Paul (II Cor. 11:24-28). Others.
 - C. The church grew then as it has never grown since!
 - D. What is the secret? SACRIFICE! Must be a denial of self (Matt. 16:24).
- V. EXCLUSIVE: Not a "rival" of other religions. Above—not merely "as good as." They condemned error—wherever it was found.**
 - A. Paganism (Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Acts 17,18,19).
 - B. Judaism and the law. (Jerusalem and everywhere). Fought it as hard as Paganism.
 - 1. Judaism taught by church members looked no better (Gal. 1:6-9; 2:5; 5:1-4; etc.).
 - C. Theorists and Innovators in the church (I Cor. II; I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:17; etc.).
 - 1. Even called names of false teachers.
 - D. Such preaching today is unpopular—but it is needed.
 - 1. Need to oppose—and expose—Catholicism and Denominationalism.

2. Errors and innovations of brethren must also be opposed__and exposed.
- E. It was this Exclusiveness which made Christianity so powerful in early times!

CONCLUSION AND EXHORTATION.

REDEMPTION

BARNEY KEITH

(Eph. 1:7)

INTRODUCTION:

1. The grand theme of the Bible is human redemption. The purpose behind all that God has done through Christ was to redeem men.
2. Paul's statement in Eph. 1:7 contains a summary of the chief features involved in God's plan of redemption. Here we learn the *meaning*, the *cause*, the *cost* and the *location* of redemption.

I. THE MEANING OF REDEMPTION—"FORGIVENESS OF SINS."

- A. The word *redeem* itself means "to take by purchase, buy, to ransom."
 1. The sinner is a slave, in bondage to sin and Satan (Rom. 6:16-18).
 2. A ransom is necessary if he is to be freed from this bondage and become the slave of another.
- B. Paul explains that "redemption" is that which occurs when there is "the forgiveness of sins." (Redemption and forgiveness are not synonyms, but no person is redeemed except where forgiveness has occurred. Each word stresses a different thought, but both have to do with salvation).

II. THE CAUSE OF REDEMPTION—"GRACE."

- A. Sin separates man from God (Isa. 59:1,2; Eph. 2:12); the sentence of death rests upon every soul that sins (Ezek. 18:20).
- B. Since man was hopeless and helpless in and of himself (Jer. 10:23), God stepped in and provided a way for man to escape spiritual death. This was "GRACE," or favor that sinful man did not deserve.
 1. In Eph. 2:1-8 Paul uses several terms to explain the cause for God's action in behalf of sinners: "mercy" (v. 4); "great love," (v.4); "grace," (vss. 5,8) "kindness" (v.7).
 2. Out of this attitude of God toward sinners came the "gift" (v. 8). Truly the CAUSE of God's action was His "GRACE" and nothing more.
- C. However, grace is not the only factor in one's redemption. If it were, there would be universal salvation, for God loved all men (Jno. 3:16; Tit. 2:11,12). Yet all men are not going to be saved (Matt. 7:13,14, 21-27).

III. THE COST OF REDEMPTION—"HIS BLOOD."

- A. A ransom had to be paid; a purchase price was involved in salvation.
 1. The wages of sin was death; yet God wanted the sinner to be able to live.
 2. Only God could arrange for this ransom.

- B. The only thing that would satisfy the demands of this situation was the BLOOD of Jesus (not on animals, Heb. 10:4; 9:12-14; I Pet. 1:18,19).
 - C. The blood of Jesus, of course, is not applied directly or physically, but its benefits are received when one OBEYS Christ (Heb. 5:8,9; Rom. 6:3,4). (Many people claim cleansing by the blood who refuse to obey the Lord.)
- IV. THE LOCATION OF REDEMPTION—"IN HIM."
- A. "In whom" expresses the WHERE of redemption; it can be found in no other place or person.
 - B. All spiritual blessing are found IN CHRIST (Eph. 1:3; II Cor. 5:17; etc.).
 - C. This automatically raises the question of HOW one can enter "into Christ" so as to be redeemed.
 - 1. Since it is so important for a man to be redeemed, and since man CANNOT redeem himself, it is strange that any sinner would not be perfectly satisfied to let Christ tell him both:
 - a. where redemption is and
 - b. how to reach that state.
 - 2. The Scriptures are clear on HOW one gets into Christ, if men will simply believe God (Gal. 3:26,27; Rom. 6:3,4).
 - 3. All New Testament conversions show that baptism was in Christ's plan.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Have you been redeemed? IN CHRIST you can find "forgiveness" because His "grace" provided the ransom through "his blood."
- 2. Will you enter into union with Christ by being baptized into his death, into the benefits of His blood, and thus be redeemed?

CHRIST IS ABLE

STEVE WOLFGANG

INTRODUCTION: CHRIST IS GOD

- 1. Son of God (Jno. 8:19,42; Discuss Jno. 10:1-18, 22-39 and other passages).
- 2. Responsible for creation (Jno. 1:3, 10; Heb. 1:1-3, 10; Psa. 33:6-9; Col. 1:16,17; II Pet. 3:7).
- 3. *Equal* with God (Phil. 2:5-11). "The greatest and most moving passage Paul ever wrote about Jesus"—William Barclay.

I. TO SUBJECT ALL THINGS.

- A. If we imitate Christ, we insure our heavenly "citizenship," and proclaim our "power" over things earthly (Phil. 3:17-21; Eph. 1:19-22, note v. 20; Phil. 2:6ff).

II. TO SUCCOR WHEN TEMPTED (assist, give aid, help).

- A. Discuss the Dual Nature of Christ (refer to Phil. 2:6 again; Heb. 5:7,8; Heb. 2:9,10; Heb. 2:17,18; Heb. 4:15; I Tim. 2:5).

III. TO SAVE.

- A. (Lk. 15:2; Mark 2:17; Lk. 19:10; Eph. 1:7).
- B. Notice Paul—I Tim. 1:12-16—Not that sins forgiven *because of ignorance*, but that when committed in *ignorance* rather than *flagrantly* or *willfully*, then a chance to *correct*. When he *LEARNED* better, he *DID* better (Acts 2:40).

IV. TO JUDGE.

- A. (Rom. 2:1-16; Jno. 12:48-50; I Tim. 4: iff.; II Cor. 3:12; 5:10-11; Acts 10:42).

MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

ROBERT H. WEST

(Gen. 1:26-27)

INTRODUCTION:

In what does the image of God in man consist? We first must consider the nature of God and of man.

I. THE NATURE OF GOD.

- A. God not a physical being.
 - 1. A *spirit* (John 4:24 Luke 24:39).
 - 2. *Invisible* (Col. 1:15; John 1:18; I Tim. 6:15-16).
 - 3. *Contrasted with human form* (Psa. 50:21; Rom. 1:23; Phil. 2:5-7; Jno. 1:14).
 - 4. *Immaterial nature of God ground of 2nd Commandment* (Deut. 4:12, 15-18).
- B. Divine Characteristics.
 - 1. Life (Matt. 16:16; Jno. 5:26, etc).
 - 2. Personality (self-consciousness, self-determination, Exodus 3:14).
 - 3. Immortality (I Tim. 1:17; 6:16).
 - 4. Perception (knowledge Rom. 11:33; Heb. 4:13).
 - 5. Affection (I Jno. 4:8; Jno. 3:16).
 - 6. Righteousness & Holiness (Rom. 3:25-26; I Pet. 1:16).

II. THE NATURE OF MAN.

- A. Man, a two-fold being (Gen. 2:7; Matt. 10:28; III Jno. 2; II Cor. 4:16; Jas. 2:26).
- B. Part of man survives death (not body) (II Cor. 5:1-8; Matt. 10:28; Phil. 1:22-24; II Pet. 1:13-14).
- C. Man, therefore, has a *physical* and a *spiritual* nature; the latter of which does not cease to exist at death.

III. THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN. Review consideration of Gen. 1:26-27.

- A. The "image" cannot be PHYSICAL, since God is not physical!! (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3).
- B. The image of God in man is, therefore, the original, spiritual, nature which man inherits from God (Acts 17:28-29; Heb. 12:9; Eccl. 12:7; Gen. 2:7).
- C. Characteristics of man's spirit (in image of)
 - 1. Life—spirit that lives after body dies.

2. Personality—self-consciousness and self-determination, characteristic of spiritual; what raises man above the beast.
3. Immortality—spirit doesn't die—inherited from immortal God (I Pet. 3:3-4).
4. Perception—I Cor. 2:11; Col. 3:10; Rom. 12:2.
5. Affection (Matt. 22:37-39).
6. Righteousness & Holiness (Eph. 4:24). A DEAD BODY EXHIBITS NONE OF THESE!!!!

CONCLUSION:

Man is indeed made in the image of the living, personal, immortal, perceptive, loving, righteous and holy God. That divine image is frequently marred by sin. But God calls us to purify that soul in obedience. (I Peter 1:22-23).

TRADITION—TRUE OR FALSE

BARNEY KEITH

INTRODUCTION:

1. "Tradition" (paradosis)—a handing down or handing over; that which is handed down. (Everything we do is, in the basic sense, a matter of "tradition").
2. "True or false"—points up a basic New Testament teaching; namely, that one discern, distinguish between right and wrong (Ph. 1:10; Heb. 5:i4; I Jno. 4:1,2).
3. "Canon"—from an old Greek word meaning a reed, a rod, or a bar; refers to that which is used as a standard or norm.
 - a. If the true is to be distinguished from the false, there must be some way of measuring, some standard; hence, "canon."
 - b. Do we have the "standard," authoritative and true N.T. Books?

I. DIFFERENT TYPES OF "TRADITION" ARE MENTIONED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- A. "Traditions of *men*" (Col. 2:8; Mk. 7:8,9).
- B. "Traditions of.. *fathers*" (Gal. 1:13,14).
- C. Tradition of the *apostles* (II Th. 2:15; 3:6).

II. APOSTOLIC TRADITION IS THE ONLY TRUE STANDARD.

- A. Jesus' *promise* to the apostles indicates this (Jno. 14:26; 16:13).
- B. *The fulfillment* seen in coming of the Spirit to them (Ax. 1:8; 2:1-4).
 1. The *claims* they made on speaking what was *revealed* to them are significant (Gal. 1:11,12; I Cor. 11:23; ¹5:3; I Cor. 2:9-14).
 2. The *practice* of the early church in respecting the apostles' doctrine shows this was the standard (Ax. 2:42; 15: iff).
- C. Hence, the *real test* of canonicity is whether the message is a *revelation* from God. Whatever is REVEALED is true, and whatever is truly God's word belongs in God's book. (It would be good to have a lesson also on "Evidences of Inspiration," but that is not the purpose of this study).



III. OUR 27 N.T. BOOKS HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED AS INSPIRED SCRIPTURE FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES (THAT IS, CONSIDERED "CANONICAL").

- A. There is general agreement among all groups (Protestant, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox) on our present 27 books.
 - 1. Despite this, Catholics ADD traditions which did not come from the apostles.
 - 2. Liberal religionists will not respect the authority of these books, of course, because they question their inspiration.
- B. These books were recognized as "Scripture" from the time they appeared.
 - 1. The very fact that they were apostolic "canonized" them. They were to be read in the various churches and circulated among them (Example, Col. 4:16).
 - 2. Paul's letters are called "scriptures" by Peter (II Pet. 3:15,16); Luke's gospel is called "scripture" by Paul (I Tim. 5:18; Lk. 10:7); Peter's writing (II Pet. 3:3) is attributed to the "apostles" by Jude (v. 18).
- C. The early "church fathers" quoted extensively from every N.T. book—that is, taken as a group they quote from all the N.T. books.
 - 1. Justin Martyr (ca. 110-165) has 330 quotations in which are references to 10 of the N.T. books. (He wrote about the middle of the second century which was NEAR the time of the apostles).
 - 2. Irenaeus (ca. 135-202) has 1,819 quotations. He quotes from every N.T. book except Philemon and III John; names most of the books and discusses their authorship. He denounced the "Gospel of Thomas" as a forgery.
 - 3. Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150-212) has 2406 quotations.
 - 4. Origen (ca. 185-253) has 17,922 quotations.
 - 5. Clement of Rome (30-100) even refers to several N.T. passages in his "Epistle to the Corinthians" which likely was written between A.D. 68 and 100 (see McGarvey).
 - 6. Others could be added to the list, but this is sufficient for our purpose.

V. THE LESSON FOR US: THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF OUR SUBMITTING TO THE WORD GOD HAS REVEALED THROUGH CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES.

- A. This is seen in the teaching of II Thess. 2:1-11,15.
- B. It is made clear in the command to withdraw from the ones who refuse to follow apostolic tradition (II Thess. 3:6).
- C. The necessity of such is indicated in II Tim. 2:13-18 where the danger of erring from the truth is stressed.
- D. Even angels dare not teach what is different from the apostolic faith (Gal. 1:6-9,11,12).
- E. Jesus promised to guide the apostles into "ALL truth" (Jno. 16:13) and Jude spoke of the "faith once delivered" (v. 3).

CONCLUSION: Every "tradition" should be examined to see whether it can be found in the "apostles' doctrine." (Sprinkling, faith only, Instrumental music in worship, human names in religion, denominations, religious titles, etc.) Whatever is not found in the New Testament revelation is the wrong kind of tradition

and is false. The authority of Christ must be respected, and he declared that his gospel would be revealed when the Holy Spirit should come.

Have you believed and obeyed the TRUTH? (Jno. 8:32; II Thess. 2:10,11; I Pet. 1:22,25).

JESHURUN WAXED FAT AND KICKED

GEORGE T. JONES

(Deut. 32:15-18)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Text from Song of Moses.
2. Song composed and taught to children of Israel in accordance with Divine injunction (Deut. 31:14-19).
3. Song contrasts unchangeable fidelity of Jehovah with perversity and faithlessness of Israel.
 - a. It embraces the future history of Israel spoken by the prophetic testimony of Moses.
 - b. Persons addressed are Israelites in Canaan when they had grown haughty in the midst of rich abundance.

I. JEHOVAH'S PROVIDENT CARE OF ISRAEL (vs. 10-14) WHOLE DESCRIPTION IS FIGURATIVE.

- A. Jehovah found Israel in perishing condition (v. 10).
 1. "Desert land" is Egypt; "finding" signifies "seeking"; great love prompted.
 2. Kept them as "the apple of his eye" (Prov. 7:2; Psa. 17:8).
- B. He delivered them from Egypt, cared for them in the Wilderness and brought them to Canaan (Ex. 19:4; v. 11).
- C. Jehovah alone led them; no excuse for Israel's apostasy (vs. 12-14; Ex. 13:21; 15:13).
 1. To ride on high places of the earth . . . conquest.
 2. Honey out of rock and oil out of flinty rock.... Bees and olive trees abounded in Canaan's rocky areas.
 3. Butter of the herd . . . thick cream.
 4. Milk of the flock . . . fresh milk; fluid state.
 5. Fat of lambs... best of lambs.
 6. Rams of breed of Bashan.
 7. Finest of wheat.
 8. Finest wine.

II. ISRAEL REPAID GOD FOR ALL THESE BENEFITS WITH APOSTASY—BASE INGRATITUDE—TEXT.

- A. Name of Jeshurun,.. righteous nation... four times in Old Testament.
 1. Is used with strongest irony here, signifying reproach for Israel having fallen from the state to which it was called.
 2. Their name meant righteousness but their condition was destitute of it!
- B. "Waxed fat and kicked."
 1. Allusion to an ox grown fat through good feeding and which had become unmanageable (Deut. 6:10-12; 8:10ff., 31:20).

2. Men repay God's prosperity by "kicking" . . . rebelling. Luther: "A full stomach does not promote piety, for it stands secure, and neglects God. . . ." "Prosperity too often has the same effect on its possessor, that a calm at sea has on a Dutch mariner, who frequently, it is said, in these circumstances ties up the rudder, gets drunk, and goes to sleep." (George Home) . . . "Prosperity is like salt water, the more you drink of it the thirstier you are" (Talmage).
- C. Forsook God and lightly esteemed the Rock of salvation.
 1. Treated as a fool. . . despised.
 2. Moved Him to jealousy with strange gods and provoked Him with abominations (v.i6).

III. ANCIENT ISRAEL. A TRUE MIRROR OF GOD'S PEOPLE NOW (I Cor. io:i-6).

- A. Holy name, Christian (I Pet. 4:16), reproached as Jeshurun was.
- B. Just as Israel waxed fat and kicked under God's abundant prosperity, so have we.
 1. Abundant employment. . . over-time and moonlighting.
 2. Manifold conveniences, labor-saving devices; but not time saved for the Lord and soul-enrichment through prayer, meditation and Bible study.
 3. Beautiful houses with elegant furniture and appointments but not for hospitality and association with other Christians.
 4. More money but not for use in spreading the gospel and doing good but for more entertainment, etc. which removes our minds from the spirit.
 5. More independence of the Lord, expressed in indifference (Rev. 3:17).

CONCLUSION: Lord, send us an Economic Depression!

"... LEST ANY MAN SPOIL YOU"

MARSHALL E. PATTON

(Col. 2:8)

INTRODUCTION:

1. First word of text "Beware" reminds me of red flag or light often seen while traveling hwy. Always means danger! Time to stop, find out what and where danger is, how to avoid it, then proceed with caution.
2. So with word "beware" in Bible; in our text.

I. THE DANGER.

- A. Identified by word "spoil."
 1. Sometimes used to describe deterioration of things (Ex.: Food when it decays, sours, etc.). Perhaps some people like that: morally rotten!
 2. But word also means to plunder, rob, take that of value,
 - a. Examples: Spoils of war (I Sam. 15:21; 17:53).

- b. That of supreme value about man (Matt. 16:26).
- c. Hence, warning against loss of the soul.
- B. Note instrument used—"man."
 - 1. Yet, back of "man" is Satan.
 - a. God of this world (II Cor. 4:4; Jno. 14:30; Eph. 2:2).
 - b. "Man" simply his agent (Jno. 8:44,47; II Cor. 11:13-15; I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 4:1-4; Gal. 1:6-9).

II. HOW? BY "PHILOSOPHY AND VAIN DECEIT."

- A. Philosophy, as opposed in the Bible, involves speculation on things about which man is dependent upon God's revelation for knowledge. Sometimes outright denial.
 - 1. Example: Grecian philosophers and influence in Asian churches (Col. 2:8; I Jno. 4:1-3).
 - 2. Cf. Jer. 10:23 I Cor. 2:10-13; Rom. 1:2iff; I Cor. 1:18ff).
- B. Vain Deceit—that which is vain (empty), yet, by which men are deceived: False argument—"Won't hold water."
 - 1. Define "dispute" and compare with "debate" according to modern usage (Ax. 9:29; 15:2; 19:8,9; Cf. also—Rom. 1:29; II Cor. 12:20).
 - 2. Give examples of false arguments.

III. AREAS OF DANGER.

- A. Traditions of men (Mk. 7:1-13; II Tim. 3:14) Cf. sprinkling, inst. music, church subsidizing other org., sponsoring chs.
- B. Rudiments of the world.
 - 1. I Jno. 2:16; Cf. Gal. 4:3; Rom. 7:23-25.
 - 2. Application: big bldg., social cir., effects of ridicule, epithets, etc.; social entertainment, etc. (Cf. Jno. 6:44-45).
- C. Not after Christ (The unauthorized).
 - 1. His authority (Matt. 28:19; Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 3:17; Deut. 18:18,19; Ax. 3:22,23; Heb. 1:1,2; Matt. 17:5; 7:21-23).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. What Jesus authorized (Lk. 24:46-49; Ax. 2:38-41,47).
- 2. Has some man spoiled you? Then come (Matt. 11:28,29,30).

LIFE AND MISSION OF JESUS

JAMIE SLOAN

(Matt. 16:13-18)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Jesus is the Christ!! If not so, then no hope for any.
- 2. Broad subject, but the basis of our faith (Ax. 9:20; 5:42).
- 3. We do not study his life enough, else we would be more like him.

I. THE LIFE OF JESUS.

- A. The Purity of His Life.
 - 1. Impeccable character (Jno. 4:27).
 - 2. Challenged men to find one sin (Jno. 8:46).
 - 3. Example for us (I Pet. 2:21,22).

- B. Perfection of His Teaching (Jno. 7:46).
 - 1. Gospel is a perfect code of conduct (Matt. 5; 7:12; Lk. io:25ff.)
 - 2. Gospel is a full revelation of that man must know, do and be in pleasing God (II Tim. 3:16,17; Tit. 2:11,12; II Pet. 1:3).
 - a. reveals our origin, purpose, destiny.
 - b. what to do to be saved and stay saved.
 - 3. Jesus never became entangled in die human reasoning and sophistry of his day (Matt. 21:23ff; Matt. 22).
- C. The Witness of His Miracles (Jno. 20:30,31; Jno. 3:2).
 - 1. Bread of Life (Jno. 6:35).
 - 2. Light of World (Jno. 9:5).
 - 3. Resurrection and Life (Jno. 11:25).

II. THE MISSION OF JESUS.

- A. To make men better, not to reform society (Matt. 9:10-13).
 - 1. Jesus came to heal the disease, not to treat the symptoms; to uproot sin rather than destroy fruits.
 - 2. Illustrate with venereal disease—"Flee fornication."
 - 3. To change the heart (Matt. 15:19).
- B. To save the soul, not feed the body (Jno. 10:10; Matt. 20:28; Jno. 6:26,27).
- C. To reconcile man to God (II Cor. 5:i7ff.).
- D. To lead man to heaven, not to make a better life on earth (Jno. 14:1-6).

CONCLUSION: Jesus' Hfe proves Him to be the Christ. His death makes salvation possible.

"BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING"

KARL DIESTELKAMP

(TEXT: Phil. 4:6,7—A.S.V.)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. **K.J.V.** says, "Be careful for nothing" or "take no thought for."
- 2. Same word as used in Luke 10:41, "Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things."
- 3. Used in these cases to describe **UNDUE** concern for things that are unimportant by comparison, or **PRIME** interst in such (Illustrate).
 - a. "The Bomb" or "Cold War."
 - b. Social Reform and Social Welfare programs, etc.

I. UNDUE CONCERN FOR PHYSICAL THINGS.

- A. Proper perspective given by Christ.
 - 1. Matt. 6:25-32. Discouraging undue concern, not honest labor.
 - 2. Comment on each division of this passage.
- B. Some improper perspectives.
 - 1. Care for worldly things and riches **CHOKES** the word (Matt. 13:7,22).
 - 2. Love of world results in apostasy (II Tim. 4:10).
 - 3. Trusting in riches divides one's desire (Matt. 19:21).

4. Causes us to make preparation in wrong areas of life (Lk. 12:16-21).
 - C. Christians sometimes lose sight of original loyalty and duties.
 1. Illustrate with story of civil war soldier who had built up such a fine watch-making business that he didn't have time to fight when the time came for such.
 2. II Tim. 2:4
 3. Matt. 6:24
 4. Someone has said, "Seeking happiness in what riches can buy is like a blind man searching a dark cellar for a black cat that isn't there."
 - D. This affliction (desire for material things) affects churches as well as individuals. Note emphasis on elaborate buildings, large cash reserves, "Madison Ave. promotional campaigns, etc.
- II. "BUT WE ARE REQUIRED TO WORK," SOMEONE RESPONDS.**
- A. Lazy not to be fed (II Thess. 3:10-12).
 - B. Eph. 4:28 (Cf. I Thess. 4:10-12).
 - C. Again, though, all such must be kept in proper perspective.
- III. GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN (I Tim. 6:6-10).**
- A. Heb. 13:5
 - B. Contentment is something *learned* (Phil. 4:11). Compare this with (II Cor. 11:24-28).
- IV. "I SHALL NOT WANT" vs. "I'LL STARVE TO DEATH" or "I'LL GO BROKE."**
- A. Psalms 23:1. Illustrate with child who recited, "The Lord's my shepherd, that's all I want!"
 - B. David's confidence in God (Psa. 50:10).
 - C. How is this accomplished?
 1. Col. 3:2
 2. I Jno. 2:15
 3. Matt. 6:19,20
 4. I Jno. 5:14
 - D. Do we have faith in the power, the plan and the purposes of God?
 - E. Illustrate: Man fell over cliff, but grabbed bush. Prayed for God to save him, said he firmly believed God was able. Message came back, "Turn loose of the bush."

CONCLUSION:

1. I Pet. 5:6,7, cast your care (anxiety) on God.
2. Must obey him in order to benefit from the care that is available for ALL your needs. God, through his word, invites you to turn loose of the bush.

RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR CHILDREN

WILLIAM H. LEWIS

(p_{sa}• 127:3-5)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Rearing children is the most responsible job to be found.
2. However, it can be the most rewarding of a physical nature (Prov. 31:28).
3. Our responsibilities to them consists of:

I. PROVIDING FOR THEM:

- A. Materially (I Tim. 5:8).
- B. Spiritually (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4).

II. SETTING THE RIGHT EXAMPLE BEFORE THEM:

- A. In the home:
 1. Where love, respect, and understanding prevails (Eph. 5:22-33, 4:32)
 2. Where the Bible is studied and prayed if offered (II Tim. 2:15; I Thess. 5:17).
 3. Where high standard of morality exists (Tit. 2:11,12; Tit. 2:4,5).
- B. In the church:
 1. Attendance of services (Heb. 10:25; Matt. 6:33).
 2. Respect for "leaders" (I Tim. 5:17).
 3. Reverence in the worship (Ex. 3:5; Matt. 18:20).
 4. WORK, for both old and young (Phil. 2:12).
 5. In giving of our means (I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:6,7).

III. TEACHING THEM:

- A. The Bible (Deut. 6:7; Eph. 6:4; Tit. 2:4,5).
- B. To have respect for:
 1. Parents (Rom. 1:30; Eph. 6:1,2; Gen. 18:19; I Sam. 3:13; Prov. 13:24; Prov. 22:15).
 2. Older people (I Tim. 5:1).
 3. Law officials (I Tim. 2:1-4; Tit. 3:1; I Pet. 2:17).
- C. To work (II Thess. 3:10).
- D. Proper use of money (Lk. 16:11).
- E. The permanency and sanctity of the marriage relationship (Heb. 13:4; Matt. 19:9).
- F. The need of faithfully serving the Lord:
 1. By obeying the gospel (II Thess. 1:7-9).
 2. Living a godly and faithful life until death (Rev. 2:10; Heb. 12:14).

HEART TRANSPLANT

ROBERT H. WEST

(Ezek. 18:31; 36:26)

INTRODUCTION: We have recently marvelled at the widely-publicized heart transplants. No doubt many people need new hearts. But many more need new hearts of a spiritual nature.

I. THE BIBLE HEART.

- A. The Bible Heart Involves The Mind (Matt. 9:4, Rom. 10:10).
- B. Involves The Emotions or Sensibilities (Matt. 22:37; Psa. 33:21).
- C. Involves The Will (I Cor. 7:37; Rom. 6:17, 18).

II. DISEASE OF THE HEART (symptoms and result).

- A. Divided Heart (Hosea 10:1, 2; Matt. 6:24).
- B. Hardened Heart (Mark 3:5; Heb. 3:8-15; Rom. 2:5).
- C. Foolish Heart (Rom. 1:21; Psa. 14:1; II Pet. 2:14; Eph. 5:5).
- D. Immoral Heart (Matt. 5:27, 28; Matt. 15:18, 19).

III. FALSE REMEDIES.

- A. Human Wisdom (Col. 2:8).
 - 1. subjectivism, psychology, etc.
- B. Denominational Doctrines
 - 1. "faith only" (Jas. 2:24).
 - 2. "feelings" (I Jno. 2:3).

IV. REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT ONLY REMEDY.

- A. Read again Ezek. 36:26—Signifies a putting away of the old thoughts, emotions and will—a complete change in attitude and action is contemplated (II Cor. 5:17).
- B. Replacement Connected With Removal of Sins (Ezek. 18:31).
 - 1. Believe w/ heart (Rom. 10:9, 10).
 - 2. Repent—means change of mind (heart).
 - 3. Confess w/ mouth (Rom. 10:10).
 - 4. Obey fr/ heart—thus given a new heart (Rom. 6:17, 18; Ax. 2:38).
- C. The "New Heart" Serves God.
 - 1. Christ dwells in heart (Eph. 3:17).
 - 2. Peace of God rules in (Col. 3:15).
 - 3. Sing with melody in (Eph. 5:19).
 - 4. Callon God out of (II Tim. 2:22).
 - 5. Give as purpose in (II Cor. 9:7).
 - 6. Doing will of God from (Eph. 6:6).
- D. Once Replaced, Must Guard It Carefully (Prov. 4:23).

CONCLUSION: Why not let the Great Physician give you a heart transplant; otherwise, death eternally will be the result.

ELIJAH

OLIN HASTINGS

INTRODUCTION: "You may tell your tales of prophets brave, Who walked across the world; and changed the course of history, by the burning words they hurled". Appears suddenly like a meteor. Nothing known of parentage or early life. Most unique, dramatic, interesting and inspiring. Rugged, like John the Baptist (II Kings i;8; Matt. 3:4).

I. A MAN OF COURAGE.

- A. Dared to rebuke the king (I Kings 17:1; 18:17, 18).
- B. Challenged the vascillating Israelits (I Kings 18:21-24).

- C. Challenged the prophets of Baal and Asherah (I Kings 18:25-40).
 - 1. Mocked them (I Kings 18:27).
 - 2. God's approval (I Kings 18:36-38).
 - 3. Prophets slain (I Kings 18:40).
 - 4. Should die (Ex. 20:3-5).
- D. Elijah told Ahab of the grave judgment of God (I Kings 21:19-24).
 - 1. Courage of Elijah manifested in John die Baptist (Lk. 1:17; Matt. 14:3, 4).
 - 2. Courage needed for good fight of faith (II Tim. 1:7; Psa. 31:24; Matt. 10:28; Heb. 13:6).

II. A MAN SUBJECT TO DISCOURAGEMENT.

- A. His powerful prayer life, staggering faith, dauntless courage, whole-hearted devotion to God makes him seem a giant, a superman.
- B. Under the juniper tree in utter disappointment and despair (I Kings 19:4) we see he is after all a man like us (Jas. 5:17, 18).
- C. Why was he discouraged?
 - 1. He was physically tired. Ran from Carmel to Jezreel (30 miles). (I Kings 18:46). Fled to Beersheba (100 miles, I Kings 19:3). Went day's journey more, I Kings 19:4).
 - a. Spiritual state affected by physical (Matt. 26:41).
 - b. Sin not against the body (I Cor. 6:18; Matt. 15:19, 20).
 - c. Body is temple of Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19, 20; Ax. 5:32).
 - d. When tired, we are spiritually depressed (Cf. Heb. 12:15).
 - 2. He was lonely.
 - a. Elation and victory at Mt. Carmel had faded; the applause and affirmation of faith by the people was replaced by the murderous threat of a wicked queen.
 - b. Immobile, .despondent, only champion, odds against him (I Kings 19:10; Rom. 11:2, 3).
 - (1.) Not alone. 7,000 men (I Kings 19:18; Rom. 11:4). God with him (I Kings 19:11-13).
 - (a.) God is with us (Rom. 8:31; Heb. 13:5; Psa. 139: 7-12).
 - (b.) Others bravely walking with the Lord (I Pet. 4:12; I Thess. 4:15).
 - 3. Felt a sense of worthlessness.
 - a. Victory at Carmel soon forgotten and Israel returned to her old ways. His work seemed in vain.
 - b. Work never in vain (I Cor. 15:58; Matt. 10:42; Lk. 6:35; Psa. 37:4).
- D. What is the Remedy?
 - 1. "Escape" not the answer. Elijah and Jonah reveal that we cannot run away.
 - 2. "Go," work (I Kings 19:15-17). We must go and teach (Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15).
 - a. Early church did not go out with disposition "Look what the world is coming to" but with encouraging disposition "Look what has come to the world."
 - b. Self-pity breeds depression. A Savior-oriented life chases away the blues.

III. A MIGHTY MAN OF PRAYER (Jas. 5:17,18).

- A. Prayed seven times for rain (I Kings 18:42-44). For the widow's son (I Kings 17:21). For fire (I Kings 18:36, 37; II Kings 1:10-12).
- B. God answered for he was a righteous man (Jas. 5:16).

- C. Bible heroes who possessed great courage prayed often (Dan. 6:10; Ax. 9:11; 16:25).
- D. We should pray all the time (I Thess. 5:17).
- IV. A MAN LIKE UNTO US** (Jas. 5:17, 18).
 - A. "Like passions" not meaning excitable and irritable but our nature (Ax. 14:15).
 - 1. Had our emotions, desires, weaknesses and infirmities.
 - 2. Cannot work miracles like him but can proclaim the Word of God with zeal and courage.
 - B. Carried to Heaven (II Kings 2:11).
 - C. We, too, can "be caught up in the clouds" (I Thess. 4:17).
 - D. With Moses appeared with Jesus (Matt. 17:3).
 - E. We, too, shall ever be with the Lord (I Thess. 4:17).

"IMITATE THAT WHICH IS GOOD"

BEN M. SHROPSHIRE

(III Jno. 11)

INTRODUCTION: John's admonition for Gaius to imitate not that which is evil but instead that which is equally applicable to us today. In this short book we have examples of both the good and the evil.

I. IMITATE THAT WHICH IS GOOD—GAIUS (vs. 1-8).

- A. John prayed that Gaius might prosper and be in health even as his soul was. His prayer was that Gaius' physical welfare would be commensurate with his spiritual welfare.
 - 1. Unless our spiritual prosperity be at least equal with our temporal prosperity, the latter ceases to be a blessing.
 - a. (Mk. 8:36)—"for what doth it profit a man . . ."
 - b. (Lk. 12:16-21)—parable of the rich man who was foolish.
 - c. Riches will ruin a man if his soul is not right.
 - d. On the other hand, if the prosperity of a man's soul is equal with his health and wealth then he can do much good.
 - 2. How different this world would be if this prayer of John for Gaius were universally realized in all men.
 - a. Many of the wealthy would become poverty-stricken.
 - b. Many of the poor would become wealthy.
 - c. Many now in good health would die in their weakened condition.
 - d. Many diseased, crippled and unhealthy people would become the picture of health.
 - 3. What if this prayer were realized in us?
 - a. Would we die of starvation because we so seldom feed our souls (I Pet. 2:2; II Tim. 2:15; Heb. 10:25).
 - b. We might become physically weak even as we are spiritually weak because of a lack of spiritual exercise (Heb. 5:13-14).
 - c. Others might suppose us to be physically dead inasmuch as we sometimes seem to be spiritually lifeless (I Cor. 11:30; Eph. 5:14).

- B. Characteristics of Gaius Which We Should Imitate.
 - 1. He appropriated the truth in his mind and heart (v. 3).
 - a. He believed the truth (Jno. 17:17). He did not believe the false teaching of his time concerning the person and work of Christ.
 - (1.) Some doubted the deity of Christ; they doubted His preexistence and incarnation because He suffered indignity and anguish (see Jno. 1:1, 14).
 - (2.) Some doubted His manhood saying that Deity was above such suffering so they taught that His body was merely an illusion (I Jno. 1:1-2).
 - 2. Truth manifested in life and conduct (v. 3).
 - a. His practical life was in harmony with his professed teaching; not hypocritical.
 - b. The truth that he believed was a living force in his conduct.
 - (1.) Compare (v. 11).
 - (2.) Compare (I Jno. 3:7-10).
 - 3. He was hospitable, see (vs. 5, 6) and compare (Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:2).
 - 4. He supported the preaching and teaching of the truth (v. 8).
- II. IMITATE NOT THAT WHICH IS EVIL—DIOTREPHES** (vs. 9-10).
 - A. He Love to Have the Preeminence—Wanted to be first (Rom. 12:3).
 - 1. **Matt. 23:10-12**
 - 2. Phil. 2:1-4—The proper attitude of Christians toward one another.
 - B. He rejected the authority of John, an apostle of Christ (Lk. 10:16; I Thess. 4:8).
 - C. He was prating against John with wicked words (idle, foolish and unprofitable talk directed with a malicious intent) see (Eph. 5:3-4).
 - D. He would not show hospitality to the brethren nor allow the rest of the church to do their duty toward these worthy ones needing help (v. 10).
 - E. John forecast the punishment of the evil Diotrephes.

CONCLUSION: WHICH SHALL WE IMITATE? The destiny of our souls depends on our answer and actions.

- 1. Are we of God? or
- 2. Have we not seen God?

WHY HAVE YE SENT FOR ME?

B. G. ECHOLS

INTRODUCTION: Every preacher is concerned with reasons for going anywhere to preach just as every church may well ask his reasons for coming. A good understanding must exist between the preacher and the church as to the reasons for their being brought together. Why did you send for me?

I. YOU COULD WANT HUMAN WISDOM.

- A. Some of the Corinthians were apparently of this sort (I Cor. 1:22).

- B. Paul's determination is my determination (I Cor. 2:1, 2).
 1. Paul made his choice knowing the preferences of some (1:22). He was determined to preach Christ even if opposed (1:23).
 2. The reason for this is stated (2:5). Our faith must not rest on human wisdom.

II. YOU COULD HAVE CALLED ME TO SCRATCH ITCHING EARS.

- A. Paul warned that some would seek preachers to tell them what they wanted to hear (II Tim. 4:3, 4).
- B. He preceded this with a statement of the preacher's platform (4:2). The message must be spiritually healthy (Tit. 2:1).
- C. You should expect and demand only God's word and all of God's word on every subject that concerns life and eternity (Ax. 20:20).

III. YOU COULD BE SEEKING SOMEONE TO SATISFY YOUR CURIOSITY AND TO PROVIDE YOU WITH SPECULATION.

- A. The Athenians were curiosity seekers (Ax. 17:18, 21).
 1. Many want to hear something unique or different. This often leads to innovations as preachers seek to be different.
 2. The man whose preaching pleases God abides in the old paths (Jer. 6:16; Gal. 1:8,9).
- B. Many desire to speculate and come up with all sorts of questions and theories. The New Testament forbids this (I Tim. 6:4; Tit. 3:9).
- C. Those interested in questionings are never satisfied. They will always find something about which to question. Such is worthless (II Tim. 2:16).

IV. I PRAY YOUR ATTITUDE IS THAT OF CORNELIUS (Ax. 10:33).

- A. When people have the one purpose of learning and doing what God requires, the result will be pleasing to Him (Ax. 17:11, 12).
- B. If people have no desire to learn, rebellion results (Ax. 7:57).
- C. Those desiring to hear all that God says will listen attentively. Plainness of speech does not turn them away. They never apologize for strong teaching.

V. WHY AM I HERE?

- A. The answers have already been suggested, but let us study the question from the positive view.
- B. I am here not only because you called, but because of a commission expressed in the New Testament (II Tim. 4:1, 2; Tit. 2:1).
- C. Laboring under this commission I must conduct myself properly at all times (Ax. 20:18, 19a).
- D. I am here to follow to the best of my ability the example of Paul (Ax. 20:26, 27).

CONCLUSION: When a preacher's determination is to preach the word and the church is interested in nothing else, there is no end to the good that can be accomplished (Isa. 55:11).

THE WRETCHED EXCHANGE

LUTHER G. ROBERTS

(II Kings 5:20-27—especially v. 27)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Give background on Naaman the Syrian—often referred to in showing necessity of obedience according to what God commands.
2. In background Gehazi affords as great lesson for Saint and Sinner.
3. Wretched defined: "Miserable, woeful, grievous"—Webster—7th. ed. Synonymous words or convey idea: Beggarly, worthless, miserable, paltry, pitiful, unhappy, unopportune, shabby, deplorable.
4. Retell story by paraphrase and explain *EMPHASIZE VERSES* 26-27.
 - a. Gehazi in "fine physical health."
 - b. Gehazi had fine home, good master, etc. always a blessing.
 - c. Gehazi had good companions—prophet and his associates, etc.
 - d. Gehazi had "security."
 - e. Gehazi as servant of God's prophet had great spiritual hope/promise, etc.

I. CHARACTER OF GEHAZI AND HIS CASE:

- A. A sad case but not unusual one—in close contact with highest form of moral and spiritual excellence—but casts aside influence for a low standard of life, conduct and morality.
 1. Was covetous—shown by TepToaching His master for having spared Naaman in refusing to take goods. —Such generosity seemed absurd to him. Might miss "his chance"—Had no scruples against "spoiling a foreigner"—like some of the Florida "tourist baiters" etc. —Like many today who consider all fools who turn away from great fortune because of sentimental or religious convictions.
 2. *Was liar and "conniver"*—vivid imagination to make up story—would be called "resourceful today"? "As the Lord liveth"—like some has no scruples against bring Lord into his devilment.
 - a. Such skill in lying and embezzlement does not come "all at once" and Elisha probably knew of character of Gehazi just as Jesus knew of Judas that he was a "thief" and "had the bag and bare what was put therein" (Jno. 12:6).
 - b. Too clever to be an amateur!
 - c. Was "raced prejudiced"—"this Syrian"—Was a swearer—took Lord's name in vain—"As Lord liveth"—Was covetous, untruthful, careless of his master's honour; secretive (v. 24) and shameless.
 - d. Had no sense of God's watchful eye, continual presence, no respect or love for his master, no care as to what Naaman and the Syrians would think of him. Nor did he care if ruined the works of Elisha.
 3. ALL THESE LAY GROUND FOR HIS WRETCHED EXCHANGE:
 4. Because—one sin leads to another by sequence—almost inevitably. Coveted great wealth of Naaman (what harm could it do him? he has plenty!) Disdained master's honest service to God, sets his wits to work to get a "share"—builds "tell tale" about prophet's sons and tells it with slick tongue. *Then comes into master's presence as bold confident thieves and sinners often do.*

- B. ALL SUCH CASES HAVE TO "FACE THE MUSIC"—(Gal . 6:7, 8).
 - 1. Where been? "No where"—another lie. As children today—"What are you doing"—REPLY "NOTHING."
 - 2. "Went not my heart with thee when the man turned again from his chariot and etc. (v. 26). "Is it time for worldly goods etc.?"
- C. The WRETCHED EXCHANGE BECOMES A REALITY (v. 27).
 - 1. "Got what he wanted"—Things belonging to Naaman—but not what he bargained for—is often the case, "unclean" as Lord required (Lev. 13:45, 46).
 - 2. "Stolen fruit" often turns bitter on the lip—as especially true in unfaithfulness etc.
 - 3. Truly all would agree he made a "Wretched Exchange."

II. WHAT GEHAZI EXCHANGED:

- A. Definite change took place such as EXCHANGED.
 - 1. Fine physical health for life of ill health for self & Posterity. Loathsome incurable leprosy—sin is called—leprosy of soul, etc.
 - 2. Exchanged fine home for "valley of lepers" & etc.
 - 3. Exchange honorable position with man of God for life of beggar to live among own kind.
 - 4. Exchanged association from God's people with all their faults the highest form of humanity *for* association with the outcasts of the then society who stood afar off crying "unclean, unclean."
 - 5. Exchanged "security" of fine home & surrounding for "wandering" and no certain future except as an outcast.
 - 6. Exchanged the rewards and spiritual hope of a servant of God's own spokesman for "HOPELESS EXISTENCE" and no spiritual hope.

III. SOME EXCHANGES TODAY WHICH ARE IN REALITY "WRETCHED"—beggarly, etc.

- A. We think banker who "embezzles" and exchanges tellers cage for iron cage makes wretched exchange but notice also.
- B. Some exchanges we see today in other realms/religious:
 - 1. Young people exchange school opportunities for life of crime—example recent college graduate and "bloodiest" bank robbery in history.
 - 2. Men change good wife for short association with that "fine young thing" but remember (Matt. 19:9).
 - 3. Some preachers have changed good future in early young life for a little "chasing of the sisters" and etc.
 - 4. Some Christians exchanged hope of eternal life for few more minutes in bed on Sunday morning, or a few more minutes before the TV on Wednesday night, or a few hours pleasure at some useless thing. WHAT WRETCHED EXCHANGES!
- C. Other exchanges:
 - 1. For riches—some haven't the time to be Christians—business prevents or some take jobs which make serving Lord impossible. Or move to places no church and quit—what a wretched exchange in end!
 - 2. Some Exchange hope in Christ for political power:
 - a. Note candidate while campaigning—then elected—then sell people out.

3. Some exchange hope in Christ for social distinction & etc.
 - a. Young ladies compromise their modesty—dance—dress—wind up running with world.
 - b. Parents sacrifice sons/daughters for social distinction in the dance, thus wind up drinking, gambling, prostitutes/drun-kards, etc. **ALL THESE ARE WRETCHED EXCHANGES TO TO SURE!**

IV. JESUS ASKED WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT GAIN WORLD LOSE SOUL
etc. (Mk. 8:36).

- A. Danger of wretched exchange is real (Mk. 8:37; Matt. 10:28).
 1. Too busy? consider Mary/Martha (Lk. 10:41, 42).
 2. Careless of associations—notice (I Cor. 15:33; also I Cor. 5:6).
 3. Careless of what believe—consider (Matt. 15:9; Gal. 1:8,9).
 4. Careless of what do—consider what life of sin is (Jno. 3:19) and remember it is pleasurable (Heb. 11:25).
 5. Want it easy? takes effort to resist such wretched exchanges (Matt. 16:2).

CONCLUSION: Beware lest make wretched exchange for yourself: Exchange wretched condition of sin now for **ONE IN CHRIST**.

PEACE ON EARTH

P.E.BUTLER

(Lk. 2:1-13)

INTRODUCTION: If there were ever a time that peace in the world is needed it is now. Nations are against nations; people, kindred and tongues are at variance one with the other: Hence, there is a great need for peace in the world; and to this subject your attention is invited.

I. CHRIST WAS AND IS THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

- A. Isaiah the prophet foretold him as such (Isa. 9:6).
- B. Increase of government of peace (Isa. 9:7).
- C. Luke's testimony concerning this peace (Lk. 2:14).

II. CHRISTIANS ARE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM OF PEACE.

- A. Christ conversing with Nicodemus (Jno. 3:1-5).
- B. The teachings of the mountain (Matt. 5:9; Rom. 14:17).
- C. Believers in the God of peace (Phil. 4:9).

III. NO CARNAL WAR AMONG CHILDREN OF GOD.

- A. Our weapons not carnal (II Cor. 10:4; Rom. 8:6).
- B. To be carnal minded is death (see above).

IV. GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO KEEP UNITY IN THE BOND OF PEACE.

- A. Paul to the Ephesians (Eph. 4:1-7).
- B. No respect of persons (Rom. 2:11).
- C. Based upon working righteousness (Ax. 10:35; Prov. 14:34).

ENOCH

B. G. ECHOLS

INTRODUCTION: In Genesis 5:21-26 we have the account of the life of Enoch. In addition to this passage, there are three other references to Enoch in the Bible (Lk. 3:37; Heb. 11:5; Jude 14, 15). While brief, these reveal to us that Enoch was a great man of God.

I. ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD (Gen. 5:22, 24).

- A. This reveals the character of Enoch (Gen. 6:9b). If this man in primitive times determined to walk with God, so can you.
- B. To walk with God he kept himself in agreement with God (Amos 3:3). God does not walk with sinners (Isa. 59:1, 2; II Cor. 6:14,15).
- C. To "walk" indicates the whole of life (Gen. 17:1; Isa. 2:5).
 - 1. Such a life is required of Christians (I Jno. 1:6, 7).
 - 2. "Walking" means progress. Christians move into ever deepening stages of grace and knowledge (II Pet. 3:18). We either advance or regress.

II. ENOCH GAVE EXAMPLE TO HIS CHILDREN (Gen. 5:22).

- A. The youth of every generation need good example. There is no substitute for home environment (Gen. 18:19).
- B. Above all else you should show your children by your actions that you love God's way above everything else (II Kings 20:15).

III. IN LIFE ENOCH WAS WELL-PLEASING TO GOD (Heb. 11:5).

- A. How can man be pleasing to God?
 - 1. No man ever pleases God unless he believes (Heb. 11:6).
 - 2. We please God when we hear and believe what He says (Rom. 10:17).
 - 3. Hear and believe (Ax. 16:31; Lk. 13:3; Ax. 22:16).
- B. This is the greatest accomplishment man can attain. When you die what greater statement could be made of you than that you were well-pleasing to God?

IV. ENOCH WAS A PROPHET OF GOD (Jude 14,15).

- A. Enoch was desirous of bringing others to a condition pleasing to God. Thus he spoke God's word. All who please God want to tell others (Ax. 8:4).
- B. Enoch's message was one of judgment (Jude 15).
 - 1. Many say that preachers should not refer to judgment, destruction or hell. Judgment has been preached since the beginning.
 - 2. The New Testament teaches a coming judgment (Matt. 25:31-33).
 - 3. According to Enoch, sinners will be convicted of their sins when the Lord comes (Jude 15). Wake up and learn now!

CONCLUSION: Hebrews 11 informs us that Enoch was translated that he should not see death. God has always rewarded the faithful. To those who believe in Him today, He offers the hope of eternal life (Tit. 1:2).

Faith is rewarded when it prompts its possessor to do what God commands (Heb. 11:4, 7; Jas. 2:17, 18). Do you have faith to obey? (Gal. 5:6).

THE ROAD TO HELL

LOWELL D. WILLIAMS

(Matt. 7:13)

INTRODUCTION: Just as there are definite steps in an ungodly man becoming a Christian, there are also definite steps in a godly man becoming vile. Paul outlines the step by step procedure of the gentiles fall in Rom. 1:18-32. Note that he is speaking of people who once knew God (vs. 20-1).

I. FIRST STEP: GLORIFIED HIM NOT AS GOD (Rom. 1:21).

- A. Man glorifies God by restricting his speech to the oracles of God (I Pet. 4:11).
 - 1. The Holy Spirit was so restricted (Jno. 16:14).
 - 2. Jesus was restricted in the same manner (Jno. 7:17).
 - 3. Angels are likewise restricted (Gal. 1:8).
- B. Man glorifies God by his works, "ministering as of the strength which God supplieth" (I Pet. 4:11).
 - 1. Jesus in like manner glorified God (Jno. 17:4).
 - 2. Man often gives excuses (Ex. 4:10), but he is duty bound to prepare himself to be meet for the master's use (**II Tim. 2:21**).

II. SECOND STEP: CEASED TO GIVE THANKS (Rom. 1:21).

- A. After Paul had labored exceedingly, he always gave God the credit for the work which was accomplished (Ax. 14:27; 15:4; 21:19; II Cor. 1:9; 7=6).
- B. After man works today and supplies his needs, yet he must recognize that it is really God who gives him all he has (Matt. 6:25-34). F^{ot} this reason God deserves our thanksgiving (**I Tim. 4:4**).

III. THIRD STEP: BECAME VAIN IN THEIR REASONINGS (Rom. 1:21).

- A. When man ceases to recognize the proper place of the Eternal God, he must then begin to reason out in his own mind the answers to all of his problems and/or questions that perplex him.
 - 1. Such reasoning gave birth to idolatry among the gentiles, and evolution to modern man.
 - 2. The 1st century found man bothered and engaged in vain reasoning over Jesus. Ax. 17:32; 26:8; I Cor. 1:21; Eph. 5:6.
 - 3. Americans today generally accept the teaching concerning Jesus, but engage in vain reasoning concerning the one true church. (Note the different denominational doctrines concerning the church.)

IV. FOURTH STEP: TURNED TO IDOLATRY (Rom. 1:23).

- A. Man is a religious being. No tribe to man has ever been found that has not practiced some sort of religion. This being true, it is inevitable that man will turn to some kind of idolatry after he has rejected the one true God.
 - 1. Modern forms of idolatry.
 - a. Earthly possessions (Eph. 5:5).
 - b. His own power, prestige, etc. (Rom. 16:17; Phil. 3:19).

V. FIFTH STEP: UNGODLINESS (Rom. 1:26-31).

- A. As night follows day, so ungodliness follows idolatry. When man makes his own God, he also makes his own laws. Those laws will always permit him to engage in the things he desires, resulting in some sort of ungodliness.

- B. As much as we like to commend and receive commendations and as helpful as they might be they can never gain heaven for us. Must obey.
 - 1. I could commend Cornelius, but that wouldn't give him heaven, He must have the commendation of God (Ax. 10).
 - 2. Might commend many for moral goodness or faithful execution of duties as fathers and mothers but that would not give them heaven. To obey is the only answer and the only true source of any commendation (Heb. 5:8, 9).
 - 3. Faithful living on our part assures us of blessing of Christ. Epitome of all commendations: "WELL DONE GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT." None better. Fit yourself to receive this commendation. None unworthy will obtain it. Will you?

VI. JEWISH APOSTASY IN THE O.T. PARALLELS THE GENTILE STEPS.

- A. They first rejected God as king (I Sam. 8:4-9). Secondly, became vain in their reasoning by contending that Jerusalem was too far to go (I Kings 12:28). Thirdly, turned to idolatry (I Kings 12:28). Fourthly, when into ungodliness (Hos. 4:1-2).
- B. Note Paul's warning of how the N.T. apostasy progresses by steps (II Tim. 4:3-4).

CONCLUSION: RESULT

(Rom. 1:32; 6:23; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31; II Pet. 2:20)

A COMMENDATION

PAUL KELSEY

(Rev. 3:1-6)

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Definition: "Deliver with confidence; present as worthy of confidence; to mention with praise."
- 2. Everyone likes a commendation. Children, adults, etc. Many supposedly maljusted individuals because of the fact they want commended or praised.
- 3. Commonly practiced by apostles as they were willing to commend when and where possible (Cf. I Cor. 1:4-8).
- 4. To receive commendation denotes faithful execution of duty. Commendation in text (esp. v. 4) is to a few who were worthy. But not all worthy.

I. DISCUSSION: SOME WORTHY OF COMMENDATION SUCH AS:

- A. Being consistent in bible study and attendance at all bible classes. Can see results gained from practicing II Tim. 2:15.
 - 1. We believe the Word of God to be the only guide from earth to heaven, thus we certainly should study it. Spirituality to be admired in anyone, thus if students, then commendable.
- B. Practicing pure religion (Jas. 1:27).
 - 1. Need to examine this scripture to see its application and its meaning.

- a. To the individual and it is to be active.
- 2. Must recognize additional responsibility to "keep himself unspotted from the world." Illus. Do Parents commend their children who go out and get all dirty after having been cleaned up? Hardly. Would God commend us for becoming filthy with the things of the world after being cleansed by the blood of Christ? Hardly!
- 3. But many very conscientious about remaining clean. How encouraging. They deserve commendation.
- C. Liberality. Paul and Macedonians (II Cor. 8; Phil. 4).
 - 1. It may be true that they did no more than they were able in some cases but the apostle still commends them.
 - 2. Surely we appreciate the willingness, bountifulness, and cheerfulness of many as they lay by in store.
- D. Attendance. Even though commanded by God we know some will not be present as they can or should. They will pay for their disobedience.
 - 1. But some present when the doors are open. Surely a good indication of their interest.
 - 2. How much encouragement is given by those in constant attendance and how much discouragement is given by those who forsake the assemblies.
 - 3. Though expected by God still faithful are to be commended.
- E. How much should we commend those who seldom, if ever, discourage. Those who try to encourage the weak (and the strong as they need it too).
 - 1. A sincere compliment or a "mere thanks" can gain what criticism could never gain.

CONCLUSION:

We should want to offer commendation to all faithful and thanks they extend. Many sit and listen to lesson after lesson that might not apply directly to them. Still they offer encouragement.

CHRIST'S PRACTICE OF PRAYER

The earthly ministry of our Lord was begun in prayer (Luke 3:21), continued in prayer, and ended in prayer (Luke 23:34). The heavenly ministry of our Lord was begun in prayer (John 14:16), and is now continued in prayer (Heb. 7:25).

"Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1).

Prayer is more important than rest, for "in the morning a great while before day he rose up and went out into a desert place and there prayed" (Mark 1:35).

Prayer was more important than sleep, for "he went out into the mountain to pray and he continued all night in prayer to God" (Luke 6:12).

Prayer was more important in securing workers than either money or machinery, for he said, "Pray ye the Lord of harvest that he send forth laborers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:38).

Prayer is as important as his other ministries, for "he ever liveth to make intercessions for us" (Heb. 7:25).

Unknown

OLDER WOMEN'S WORK

KENNETH R. HOYLE

(Tit. 2:3-5)

INTRODUCTION:

1. What is more beautiful than an elderly saint who has exemplified Christ in their lives for many years. What respect we should have for them!
2. The older women can be so useful and influential for good among God's people, when so many seem to think they have lost their usefulness to Christ.

I. MANY BLESSINGS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH BEING "AGED."

- A. Wisdom & Experience: (What a great need of such today).
- B. We should look for the INWARD BEAUTY (the true beauty) so often possessed by older saints (Cf. II Cor. 4:16; I Sam. 16:7; Prov. 31:30).

II. CONSIDER THE TREATMENT THAT OLDER SAINTS ARE DUE FROM THE YOUNGER:

- A. Honor & Respect: (Cf. I Pet. 5:5)—"Elder", here is used in its ORDINARY sense seemingly. Certainly, all are to be in subjection to the "overseers."
- B. Not to "rebuke" an older man (I Tim. 5:1-3, cf. W. E. Vine: Page 253 & 254).
 1. The countenance of the aged tells of many trials & tribulations; defeats & victories.
 2. "The elder women as mothers . . ." (Note: "elder" here, is . . . "the feminine of position but in seniority of age").

III. SOME DUTIES OF THE WOMEN OF THE CHURCH:

- A. Some seem to think that a woman, especially an older woman, has nothing to do to assist with the growth of the church (Cf. Phil. 4:3; Rom. 16:1-2).
- B. The statements in I Tim. 5:9-10 tell us something of which she has been expected to do.
- C. Older women are to TEACH the younger women: Refer again to text (Tit. 2:3-5; Cf. II Tim. 3:14-15; II Tim. 1:5).

IV. A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF TITUS (2:3-5):

- A. "That aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, . . ."
 1. "Behaviour" (from Gr. KATASTEMA—denotes a condition, or constitution of anything or deportment. The ASV says: "reverent in demeanor").
 2. This would, of course, rule out the use of foul speech, unclean habits, and immodesty.
- B. "Not false accusers"—("not slanderers"—ASV).
 1. There is a possibility that the growing influence of years can cause one to become embittered in their feelings and bring accusations against others that may not be true.
- C. "Not given to much wine"—(ASV says: "Nor enslaved to much wine").
- D. "Teachers of good things." (By example, and word).
- E. "That they may teach (train ASV) die young women . . ."
 1. "To be sober"—(from SOPHRONIZO, denoting" . . . to cause to be of sound mind, to recall to one's senses" . . . "the training would

- involve the cultivation of sound judgment and prudence." Vine).
2. "To love their husbands" (the truest kind of helper in attaining a happy, holy life).
 3. "To love their children" (This involves "discipline," restraint from evil & ugly practices," "requiring of RESPECT," & "proper physical care").
 4. "To be discreet" (From "SOPHRON," of sound mind, self-controlled, sober-minded; consider Prov. 11:22). An old ARAB PROVERB says: "A woman without modesty, is food without salt."
 5. "... chaste" (From: HAGNOS, "Pure from carnality, modest . . . Pure."—Vine; cf. II Cor. 11:2).
 6. "Keepers at home:" (Young women are to be taught to keep a neat, attractive house that will make her husband & children love home.)
 7. "Good" (From: AGATHOS, "describes that which, being good in character or constitution, is beneficial in its effect."—Vine).
 8. "Obedient to their own husbands" (Recognize him as "head," not try to be boss).

GOD HATH NOT FORGOTTEN

MORRIS MAY

(Lk. 12:1-9)

INTRODUCTION: Sanctification in God's sight is accomplished according to His will. Jesus warns his disciples that to overlook this is destruction to the soul. The infinite God does not pass by the seemingly small and insignificant things. We live in a world in which most seem to think that God is made like unto them (Psa. 50:21). He remembers the apathy and indifference in man.

I. GOD HATH NOT FORGOTTEN HOW THE WORLDS WERE MADE.

- A. In the beginning (Gen. 1:1; Jno. 1:1-3; Ax. 17:24; Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:15-17).
- B. Theistic evolution devised to allow man to believe in God and evolution.
 1. Man did not evolve—he was created "at the beginning" (Matt. 19=4).
 2. He was made "in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26).
 3. To 'them' was given 'dominion' over all things (Gen. 1:26).
 4. Man would do well to remember the word 'kind' in Gen. 1.
- C. Man's counsel not needed in physical or spiritual creation (Isa. 45:18; Rom. 11:33-36).

II. GOD HATH NOT FORGOTTEN HIS PROMISE TO AND CONCERNING MAN.

- A. To Abraham (Gen. 12:1-7, repeated to Isaac—Gen. 26:3; Jacob—Gen. 35:12).
 1. Reaffirmed to Moses (Ex. 6:1-8).
- B. Fulfilled:
 1. Land (Josh. 21:43-45)—to fleshly Israel.
 - a. God knew when (Ax. 7:17). "But when the time of the promise drew nigh . . ."

- b. What promise? The one God made to Abraham (Gen, 12:1-3).
- 2. Seed (Gal. 3:26-29).—to spiritual Israel.
 - a. Ax. 26:6-7 "hope of the promise made of God to our fathers (Gen. 12:1-3).
 - b. Concerning us (Rom. 4:13-16; 9:7-8).
 - c. The realization of that hope (Acts 26:18; 26:28).

III. GOD HATH NOT FORGOTTEN HIS PROMISE TO DAVID.

- A. That of his seed one would be raised to sit on his throne (Psa. 132:11).
 - 1. The resurrection of Christ affirms him to be the one (Ax. 2:28-33).
 - 2. His exaltation proven by the events of Pentecost (Jno. 14:26; Mk. 9:1; Ax. 2).
 - 3. Acts performed in the name of Christ verified the occupancy of that throne (Lk. 24:46-49; Ax. 2:37-39; See also—Heb. 1:8, 13).
- B. That he would occupy that throne till the end.
 - 1. Sit at God's right hand and reign until all foes are subdued (Ax. 2:34-35).
 - 2. The last enemy to be destroyed is death (I Cor. 15:26).
 - 3. Death destroyed in the resurrection of all humanity (Jno. 5:28).
 - 4. This reign terminates with the resurrection (I Cor. 15:24-25).

IV. GOD HATH NOT FORGOTTEN THE MEANING AND WORTH OF THE CHURCH TO MAN.

- A. It worth established by its cost (Ax. 20:28).
 - 1. Jesus died to establish it (Matt 16:18).
 - 2. He was buried and remembered (Psa. 16:10; Ax. 13:10).
 - 3. He arose to declare his sonship with power and our justification (Rom. 1:4; 4:25).
- B. The church exists where:
 - 1. Man may find reconciliation and fellowship with God (II Cor. 5:19; I Jno. 1:3).
 - 2. Men may call God Father and be counted as sons (II Cor. 6:18).
 - 3. Christians may worship acceptably (Jno. 4:24; Phil. 3:3).
 - 4. The work it must do is done properly (Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:13).
 - a. Putting God's thoughts in Men's minds (Sowing the seed of the kingdom).
 - b. Caring for God's own in God's way (II Cor. 8-9).
 - c. Edifying the body of Christ (Heb. 10:24-25; II Tim. 2:2).
 - 5. Where God is glorified by Christ Jesus (Eph. 3:21).

CONCLUSION: God has not forgotten the price paid for man's redemption. Emphasize the 'new and living way' and persuade men to obey upon God's terms. Count nothing God has said as non-important (Eccl. 12:13-14).

PHARISEES IN THE CHURCH

BILL MILLER

INTRODUCTION: One of the most pathetic characters in the N.T. is the Pharisee.

1. Made a show of piety—Made broad their Phylacteries; Public prayer and fasting; tithing of mint, anise and cummin.
2. Held to the letter, but not the spirit—More concerned with ritual.
3. The Lord rebuked them with a strong word (Matt. 15:8, etc.).

I. PHARISEES BEGAN AS THE STABILIZING FORCE IN JUDAISM.

- A. Arose during a time of great threat to their religion (ca. 225-150 BC).
- B. They stood opposed to any deviation from the revealed Word of God.
- C. You might say their battle cry was "Speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where it is silent."
- D. But in time they drifted into mere legalism.
- E. We are warned to be on guard against this same drifting (Heb. 2:1).

II. BUT I FEAR THAT MANY HAVE DRIFTED.

- A. Oh, we'll fight valiantly over Faith, Repentance, Confession & Baptism; and over the one true church of Eph. 4, etc.
- B. But all too often the emphasis seems to be on the form, or the doctrine.
- C. We'll teach the world, but oh how our hearts are far from it.
- D. Would the Lord have to say of many of us as he did of the Pharisees (Matt. 23:3)?
- E. I am reminded of the scathing rebuke by Paul (Rom. 2:21, 22) of the Jewish Christians.

III. WE NEED TO ASK OURSELVES, "AM I TRULY CONVERTED ... AM I REALLY SPIRITUAL MINDED AND GROWING MORE SO EACH DAY?" Let's look at some of the spiritual people of the Bible.

- A. Heb. 11. Cite Abel, Noah, Abraham, etc. Then READ Heb. 11:13-16.
- B. READ Heb. 10:32-39. (I use the NEB here. It is very good on this passage).

IV. WE OFTEN WONDER WHY OUR YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL.

- A. It may be that we have offered them a God that is far too small.
- B. We can't make them what we are not . . . And we can't give them something we don't really want!
- C. Our attitude as we prepare to come to worship speaks so much louder than all the lessons we attempt to teach our children. If we complain or act as if it is a weariness for us to attend they will pick—up this attitude too.
- D. If we never pray together in our homes unless we are in trouble, if we do not have regular Bible studies together; if we are not godly people, if we are Pharisees, we cannot expect them to obey the gospel.
- E. Who would want a god that makes people so miserable?
- F. If our service to Christ has just become a formality it not only is displeasing to God, but it can drive our children far from Him.

V. AND THEN MAYBE WE HAVE FAILED OTHERS, TOO.

- A. How long since you went to a new Christian and took him under your wing to nurture him into full spiritual growth?

- B. Or does our encouragement end with a handshake and "We're so happy for you?"

CONCLUSION: The life of a Christian is centered in his spiritual nature.

1. If you are not honestly seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness have you not drifted? Is it possible that you have developed a Pharisaical heart?
2. Won't you hold the mirror of God's Word to your heart and see what manner of man you are?
3. If you have drifted, wake up and come back to the Lord with all your heart while there is yet time.

HOW TO KNOW THE TRUTH

MORRIS D. NORMAN

(2 Thess. 2:9-15)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Christ said that the truth can make us free (Jno. 8:30-36).
2. God would have all men know the truth (1 Tim. 5:17).
3. Some are ever learning but never coming to this knowledge (2 Tim. 3:7-8).
4. Some love error more than the truth (2 Thess. 2:10).
5. Satan has blinded the minds of some (2 Cor. 4:4).
6. Men follow Satan when they won't receive the truth (Jno. 8:44-47).
7. Not all things taught in religion are true (Acts 20:29-30; 1 Jno. 4:1).
8. Truth is harmonious, doctrines of men aren't.
 - a. Unity is seen in the singular "truth," "doctrine" when source is God.
9. How to know the truth:

I. DESIRE TO KNOW THE TRUTH.

- A. Not all people have this desire (2 Tim. 4:1-4).
 1. Some have their eyes shut to the truth (Matt. 13:13-16).
 2. Some have no love for the truth (See Text).
 3. Illus. Farmer shut his eyes to keep from seeing rats in his barn.
- B. Must search for the truth (2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11; 13:48).
- C. Must be willing to pay the price for truth (Prov. 23:23).
 1. Parables show truth is worth selling all for (Matt. 13:44-46).
 2. Many unwilling to pay price; friends, jobs, etc. (Luke 14:26).

II. MUST KNOW WHERE TRUTH IS FOUND.

- A. Truth has its source in God (Deut. 32:4; Rom. 3:4; Heb. 6:18).
 1. Christ is embodiment of truth (Jno. 1:14; 14:6; 18:37; Heb. 1:1).
- B. Apostles guided into all truth (Jno. 16:13).
 1. Spoke as moved by the Spirit of Truth (Acts 2:4; Gal. 1:11, 12).
 2. We have the mind of God through Revelation (1 Cor. 2:9-16).
- C. The scriptures then become the source of truth to us.
 1. What was revealed is written, delivered (Eph. 3:3, 4; Jude 3).
 2. The scriptures are sufficient (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:3).

3. We must respect the silence of God (1 Cor. 4:6; 2 Jno. 9-11).
4. Truth is absolute, not relative. Compare Science: (Hz O), math, etc.
5. Truth is always relevant.

III. MUST TAKE ALL THAT IS REVEALED TO HAVE TRUTH.

- A. One verse may not contain all the truth on a given subject.
 1. Blind men who thought elephant was like rope, tree, wall, fan.
 2. God is a consuming fire, angry, terror, severe. . . .
 3. But he is also merciful, loving, longsuffering. . . .
 4. Must take all the truth on: Lord's Supper, plan of salvation, church, its organization, work, worship, etc.

THE QUESTION OF DIVORCE

JIMMY TUTEN, JR.

(Matt. 19:3-12)

INTRODUCTION:

1. The spirit of compromise in the church is becoming increasingly prevalent. This is threatening the moral purity of the church. In this lesson we are discussing compromise about divorce.
 - a. Those who thus advocate this loose teaching on the subject are opening the door of the church to an advent of immorality that cannot help but defile the bride and condemn the souls of its practitioners to a devil's hell.
 - b. The question before us is serious, effecting the souls of men and women, boys and girls in this generation and the generation to come.
 - c. I doubt if what is said will influence the marriage already made, but I hope these words will serve as a warning to our youth, to the end that they may contract marriages of the proper sort.
 2. Just as we declare that the way of the Lord is clear with reference to the plan of salvation, so it is with all that God has written on the subject of divorce and remarriage.
 - a. But just as the difficulty with the denominations in understanding the plan of salvation is brought about by their desire to make this teaching conform to their particular notion of what it ought to be and what it ought to mean, so the difficulty of understanding the subject before us is due to the same spirit.
 3. Two fundamentals must be established:
 - a. The Bible says what it means and means what it says, all human experience to the contrary.
 - b. No passage of scripture may be interpreted in such a way as to place it at variance with another passage of scripture, regardless of the situation which we are trying to condemn or justify.
 4. Our study involves a discussion of the text:
 - a. You may disapprove of what I say, but this speaker has no unkind feelings toward those present who may disagree with me!
- I. IN THE LORD'S LANGUAGE, WE HAVE THE DIVINE RULE (Vv. 3-6):**
- A. From the authority of Him who instituted marriage—no greater au-

thority than the creator (v. 4). Divorce unlawful from standpoint of:

1. Express command (v. 5).
 2. Nature of marriage tie (Vv. 5-6).
- B. The duration of marriage—General rule, not to put asunder (Matt. 19:6).
1. God's law as intended from the beginning (Matt. 19:8).
 2. The woman is BOUND (Rom. 7:2) to her husband even though JOINED to another (Rom. 7:3).
 - a. "BOUND" (greek—deo) means "binding by law and duty . . . to someone: of wife to husband, Rom. 7:3; of a husband to his wife, I Cor. 7:27 (Arndt-Gingrich). The word "JOINED" (gr. ginomai) means "to become a man's wife, Rom. 7:3 . . ." (Thayer). Translated "married" in KJV of this passage.
 - b. Therefore, she is an adultress because she is "joined" to another "while" she is "bound" to her husband. Man permits divorce, but overlooks the fact that she is bound by God to her husband.
 3. Just because a man has a wife does not mean that she is his wife:
 - a. Herodias married to Herod, but still Phillip's wife. Not lawful for him to HAVE his brother's wife (Mk. 6:17-18). "Have" (greek-echo) "to denote the possession of persons . . . be married" (Arndt-Gingrich).
 - b. The Corinthian HAD his father's wife (I Cor. 5:1). He was guilty of fornication. Rom. 7:3 second man not called husband, just "another man." To avoid fornication let every man *have* his *own* wife (I Cor. 7:2).
 - c. I Cor. 7:10-11, the woman *not married*, but still *has a husband*, though departed from him. Why? Ans. I Cor. 7:39!

II. THE ONE EXCEPTION STATED (Vv. 7-9).

- A. Pharisees objection and the Lord's answer (Vv. 7-8).
1. "From the beginning it hath not been so"—Moses did not abrogate the law given in Eden—only temporary concession to protect women.
 - a. This is perfect tense verb (greek-gegonen), denoting the continuance of past action or its results down to the present (Vincent, Vol. 1, p. 108). "Notwithstanding Moses' permission, the case has not been so from beginning . . . original ordinance has never been abrogated nor superceded, but continues in force" (Ibid).
- B. The only exception (v. 9). Fornication & adultery used interchangeably.
1. "Fornication" is the only cause for divorce allowing subsequent marriage to another. The word means "illicit sexual intercourse in general" (Thayer). The word "stands for and includes adultery" (Vine).
 2. Fornication and adultery used metaphorically to describe Israel's unfaithfulness as a bride to God (Ezek. 16:29-32; Hos. 2:2).

III. A CAUTIONARY WORD FROM JESUS (Vv. 10-12).

- A. Verse 10, the perplexity of the disciples, reflecting the laxity of the age in which they lived.
1. Reply: Vv. 11-12—The unmarried state is better only for those who are not qualified *to be* married (eunuchs by nature, made such by men, and such of free choice).

IV. SOME THEORIES EXAMINED:

- A. Not applicable now theory:
1. Argues that Jesus was merely restating the law of Moses, and since this is not repeated in the epistles, or after the death of Jesus, not binding now.
 2. ANSWERED:
 - a. Jesus made a distinction between HIS law and the law of Moses (Matt. 5:31-32). "But I" is the contrast (greek-ego de), "opposes persons to persons, or things previously mentioned, with strong emphasis" (Thayer).
 - b. If not in force now, it never will be in force for the simple fact that it was not binding under Moses (Matt. 19:8), will not be after this age (Matt. 22:30), so if not now, then NEVER!
 - c. A thing does not have to be repeated in the epistles to be binding: *Examples*—"call no man father." (Matt. 23:9), "Tell it to the church" (Matt. 18:17), "maketh her an adulteress." (Matt. 5:32), etc.
- B. Applies to saints only theory:
1. This position make's the sinner's sole responsibility that of believing Christ & obeying the gospel. They may marry and divorce, but whatever wife one is living with at time of baptism becomes wife in God's sight.
 2. Answered:
 - a. Paul to Corinth (I Cor. 6:9-11). If guilty before baptism, then law forbidding these binding before baptism (Rom. 4:15).
 - b. Cannot be argued that they violated law of land for there was no such law in Corinth. They practiced religious fornication in the temple!
- C. Adulterous marriages made pure by baptism theory:
1. The argument is that fornication, like others sins, are forgiven in baptism, that an unholy relationship becomes holy.
 2. Answered:
 - a. If so, then why can they continue in this sin, not in all others? Cf. I Cor. 6:9-11. Did Corinthians continue as in past? Can a polygamist continue to live with six wives after baptism?
 - b. That the sin of adultery is still sin after baptism is clear from the words of Jesus—"commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9), from greek "moikatoi" meaning continued action (present tense). Lit., keeps on committing adultery. Only repentance changes this (Mk. 16:15-16, Ax. 2:38).

CONCLUSION:

1. Since marriage is ordained of God we should look upon it with a spirit of reverence.
2. Seeing that it is life-long, those who enter into it should do so with caution.
3. Happiness in the marriage relationship does not come through the pleasing of oneself, but in doing what is right.

GOD IS IMPARTIAL—HOW ABOUT YOU?

HERSHEL OTTWELL

INTRODUCTION:

1. The word "partiality" is used twice in the KJV (1 Tim. 5:21; Jas. 3:17). Two different Greek words, yet they share a kindred meaning.
2. The "wisdom that is from above is . . . without partiality." (Jas. 3:17).
 - a. Adiakritos, see Lexicon for meaning.
3. Timothy was to do nothing by "partiality" (1 Tim. 5:21).
 - a. Prosklisis, see Lexicon for meaning.
4. Leaning toward one in favoritism, while another person is put aside by unfavorable judgment due to partiality. It is a prejudgment (prejudice), and opinion formed before the facts are known.
5. The practice was not unknown among early saints (See; Jas. 2:1-4).
6. Christian masters were not to show partiality among their slaves, for their Master did not practice such (Eph. 6:9).
7. With God there is no National, Ceremonial, Cultural, or Class distinction but "Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11).

I. BECAUSE GOD IS IMPARTIAL, HE TREATS EVERY PERSON ALIKE AS TO:

- A. Sin. All have sinned (Rom. 1:2; 3:9, 10, 22, 23).
- B. One Savior, mediator (1 Tim. 2:1-6).
- C. One gospel (Rom. 1:16; Eph. 2:17; Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:19).
- D. One invitation (Matt. 11:28; Rev. 22:17).
- E. One condition of Pardon (Luke 24:46, 47).
 1. All must believe (Mark 16:15, 16; Rom. 1:16; Heb. 11:6).
 2. All must repent (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30, 31).
 3. All must be immersed—born again (Jno. 3:3-7; Acts 2:38, 41; 10:47).

II. HE TREATS EVERY PERSON ALIKE AS TO THE ONE BODY:

- A. All added to one Body—Church (Col. 1:18; Acts 2:47; Eph. 2:17; 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13).
- B. All entered one vineyard to serve (Jno. 15:1-6).
 1. All trained to serve (Eph. 4:11-16).
 2. God's oneness in Christian unity (Eph. 4:4-6).

III. GOD WILL TREAT ALL ALIKE AS TO:

- A. God will be impartial at the Judgment day (1 Pet. 1:17).
 - a. All will be resurrected (Jno. 5:28, 29).
 - b. Each will receive according to their works (Jno. 5:29; Rom. 2:5-11; 2 Cor. 5:10; Col. 3:23-25; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:12-15; 21:1-8; Rom. 6:23).

CONCLUSION:

Do you manifest the same spirit of impartiality?

BOND-SERVANT OF CHRIST

J. T. SMITH

INTRODUCTION: We need to learn WHO we are, and what is required of us BECAUSE of who we are.

I. I AM EITHER A SERVANT OF SIN OR A SERVANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Rom. 6:16-18). **NO MIDDLE GROUND** (Matt. 12:30).

- A. If I am a servant of sin, I am walking in spiritual darkness (Col. 1:13; Eph. 5:8).
 - 1. I am a servant of the Devil if I am walking in sin (Jno. 8:33-34).
 - 2. Need just here to define the word "servant." From the Greek word *Doulos* which literally means, "a slave, a bondsman—one who gives himself up wholly to another's will" (Thayer P. 158). This word is used 125 times in the N.T. and is translated "servant" 118 times, "bond" 6 times, "bondman" 1 time (The fact should be stressed that we are slaves).

II. WHY AM I A SERVANT OR SLAVE OF CHRIST?

- A. Purchased—blood bought (I Cor. 7:20-23; Acts 20:28; I Pet. 1:18-19).
- B. Sanctified—Set apart for a special purpose. (Jesus in the temple, Jno. 2:13-16; Heb. 13:12).
- C. Become a part of the Lord's Army (II Tim. 14). In a Spiritual battle (Eph. 6:11-12).
- D. Hence, I am a blood-bought, bond-servant, a slave of Jesus Christ. (Tell what the position of a slave is, II Cor. 5:15).

III. NOW THAT I KNOW WHO I AM, WHAT IS REQUIRED OF ME BECAUSE OF WHO I AM?

- A. We must walk in the light as children of light (Eph. 5:8; I Pet. 2:9).
- B. What does this involve?
 - 1. A pure heart (Matt. 12:34-35).
 - 2. Having a purified soul (I Pet. 1:22).
 - 3. Thinking on things divine (Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:1-2). We talk about what we think about (Dirty TV, Books, etc.).
 - 4. Love NOT the world (I Jno. 2:15-17).
 - a. Put the body and its lusts to death (Col. 3:5-10). The word "mortify" means to kill, deprive a thing of its power, to destroy its strength.
 - b. Use no member of your body to sin against God.
 - 5. Now we will have the same aims, motives, views of life, and hope, the Lord had.

IV. WHEN I SIN, WHAT DOES IT SIGNIFY?

- A. That I am causing Christ to sin.
 - 1. We are members of his body, and thus when I sin, I cause a member of the body of Christ to sin (I Cor. 6:12-20).
 - a. We recognize how hard it is for us to overcome temptation, yet Christ overcame EVERY one (Heb. 4:15).
 - (1.) Now, Christ purchased us with his blood, and what thanks does he receive from us for it? We cause a member of his body—one who knew no sin—to sin! If we remain a sinner, be cut off (Mat. 5:29-30).
 - (2.) However, because of his great mercy he uses his blood to cleanse us when we sin AFTER we have been made clean through baptism (I Jno. 1:7-10).

CONCLUSION: We are servants of sin because the devil told a lie to Eve and brought sin into the world, and because we WANT to be sinners. On the other hand, we can become servants of righteousness because of truth and the blood of the precious Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

1. If you are not a Christian, you stand with the enemies of God and Christ.
2. Your redemption price has been paid, and your purchase can be made. Yet Christ will not FORCE you to leave the devil. However, if you choose to leave him and except the purchase price, you must be Christ's Slave. You must then strive to keep your members from sin, to be a servant—to serve your Master, Jesus Christ.

BE HOLY IN YOUR CONDUCT

JAMES LOVELL, JR.

(I Pet. 1:13-2:10)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Note to whom the letter is addressed (1 Pet. 1:1).
 - a. These were once dead, now alive, have obligations to present lives that will glorify God as they live in this strange land.
2. The Christian, whose real home is Heaven, is a sojourner in this land,
 - a. The present day Christian must also guard his actions in view of his destiny (See 2 Cor. 5:10).
3. This exhortation needs to be imbedded into our minds. We have a relationship to God that no one else can have. A person of the world does not enjoy the blessings of this family relationship. Therefore, the exhortation—**BE HOLY IN ALL YOUR CONDUCT**. Consider:

I. THIS RELATIONSHIP DEMANDS ACTIVITY (vs. 13).

- A. "Girded up the Loins of your mind."
 1. See commentary for meaning of phrase.
 2. Christians must—"make up your minds decisively!" (Cf. Matt. 5=6).
 - a. Must be firm in our convictions (1 Cor. 15:58).
 - b. No room for half-converted people (Matt. 10:34-39; Luke 9:57-62).
 3. We must not let our garments "hang loose" but gird them up as if we were going somewhere.
 - a. To gird up the loins of the mind means to be energetic.
 - b. Christ was our example (Cf. Phil. 3:12-14).
- B. "Be sober," A state of mind for all (1 Pet. 4:7; 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:6-8; Tit. 2:4-6).
 1. Give definition for "soberness."
 - a. This is the reason God's overseer must be an elder of age and maturity (I Tim. 3:1-6).
 2. If we are to defeat the Devil in our lives, then we must approach this battle in maturity (Eph. 6:10-13).

- C. "Set your hope perfectly on the Grace."
 - 1. Peter reverts back to the living hope of vs. 3.
 - a. The Jews by rejecting God had lost their hope. Now, those who were obedient to Christ have a hope made sure by the res. of Christ. Note how Peter describes their hope (vs. 4).
 - b. This salvation is a guarded salvation (vs. 5).

II. THIS RELATIONSHIP DEMANDS A NEW CONDUCT (vs. 14-15).

- A. "As children of obedience."
 - 1. The proper attitude instilled from birth (Acts 2:37; Rom. 6:17-18).
 - 2. The Christian obeys God out of reverence and love (Cf. 2 Cor. 5:i7).
 - 3. The child of God views every situation in the light of what can be accomplished for God (1 Cor. 9:19-23).
- B. "Not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts."
 - 1. SUSCHEMATIZO (See Lexicon).
 - 2. The word is for all who will respond (Rom. 10:4-10; 2 Pet. 1:3).
 - a. We should be molded into proper servants (2 Tim. 2:20-21; 3:16-).
 - b. When the Word has free course in our lives so that we heed to admonitions we will be free from the things of the world.
 - 3. "Not... according to your former lusts" (Cf. 4:2-3).
 - a. Christians are not to drift back (Eph. 2:1-3).
 - b. Neither are they to desire to be like the people of the world (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:9).
- C. "But like as He."
 - 1. Through Christ man has perfect view of Father (Jno. 1:18; 14:1-10).
 - a. Jesus in the flesh is man's view of the Godhead (Col. 2:9).
 - 2. He endured every trial in the right spirit so we could have one to fall back on (Heb. 4:14-16).
 - a. The life of Christ is to be our goal (1 Pet. 2:21).

III. HOLINESS—IMPERATIVE OF GOD'S CHILDREN (vs. 16).

- A. Old Testament cited—fortifies Peter's injunction.
 - 1. Note when God stated the demand (Lev. 11:44; ^{19:2}20:26).
 - 2. God commanded that she have no dealings with the world, thus a safe guard. No covenants nor mixed marriages.
 - 3. Her failure to maintain a distinction between the Holy & Common destroyed Israel (Ezek. 22:26).
- B. Holiness enjoined on Those in Christ (Cf. 2:9).
 - 1. Children of God are His representatives to and instruments in converting the world (Rom. 10:12-15; Cf. 2:11-12).
 - 2. If we are to present Him to the world then let's present the true Christ—not a world-mixed view (Gal. 2:20).
 - a. Holiness is reflected to all (Cf. 1 Tim. 2:8).
 - b. If God is not glorified then we are fruitless (Matt. 5:16).
 - 3. Let no one think that he can remain among children of obedience while he still fashions his conduct according to the old lusts (Cf. Col. 3:1-2; Gal. 5:19-21).
 - a. Only the pure in heart and holy ones shall see God.
 - b. Christ died, not to save us *in* our sins, but *from* our sins.

CONCLUSION:

The quality of Holiness must be a part of our lives if we desire to go to Heaven. What type of character are we trying to present the world? It must be the image of Christ or else death awaits those who manifest the image of the Devil.

DIVINE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

LOREN N. RAINES

(Acts **28:22**)

INTRODUCTION: Upon reaching Rome at the end of his long and perilous voyage, the first thing Paul did was to call the Jews together. He desired to explain to them that the reason he came bound was "for the hope of Israel." He was a prisoner because he preached Christ and him crucified. The Jews were interested to know about the Cause he represented. They looked upon it as just another sect of the Jews. Many today are uninformed as to what the New Testament church is. Let us consider:

I. THE TRUE NATURE OF THE CHURCH.

- A. It originated in the divine mind.
 - 1. A part of his eternal purpose (Eph. 3:10-11).
 - a. It was a subject of prophecy (Isa. 2:2-3; Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14).
 - b. Prefigured by:
 - (1.) Israel—bondage, deliverance, wandering, guidance, sustenance.
 - (2.) Tabernacle and temple.
 - (a.) A place where God recorded his name.
 - (b.) A place where God met with his people (Eph. 2:20-22).
 - (c.) To get from the court, a type of the world, to the Holy of Holies, a type of heaven, one must go through the holy place which was a type of the church.
- B. Planned by a divine architect.
 - 1. All-wise. Fore-knew the kind needed to meet the spiritual needs of man for all time to come. Always up-to-date.
 - a. No change needed (Rev. 22:18-19).
 - b. Perfect (Col. 2:9-10; Heb. 8:5; Gal. 1:6 9). Beware of additions to what God has planned (Deut. 4:2; 12:32).
- C. Built by divine guidance.
 - 1. Apostles were selected to build it. They constituted the construction crew.
 - a. They were given a divine blueprint (Jno. 14:26; 16:13; I Cor. 2:9-10; II Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 8:5).
- D. It was built upon a divine foundation (Isa. 28:16).
 - 1. Man can lay no other (I Cor. 3:10-11).
 - 2. No building is more secure than its foundation.
 - 3. This foundation is indestructible (Heb. 13:8).
 - a. The more man seeks to destroy Christ, the more He is magnified.

- E. It has a divine head (Col. 1:18).
 - 1. He has absolute power (Matt. 28:18; I Pet. 3:22).
- F. Composed of divine material (I Pet. 2:5).
 - 1. Cleansed by a divine process. This process involves:
 - a. A change of mind, brought about by faith (Heb. 11:6).
 - b. A change in life, brought about by repentance (Acts 3:19).
 - c. A change in relationship, brought about by baptism (Gal. 3:27-29).
- G. It has a divine mission.
 - 1. To preach the gospel to all the world (Matt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16).
 - 2. The perfecting of the saints—educational (Eph. 4:12).
 - 3. The work of the ministry—benevolent (Eph. 4:12).
 - 4. The edifying of the body of Christ—missionary (Eph. 4:12).
 - 5. Being divine, it is all-sufficient (Eph. 3:10; Eph. 3:21).

TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

RONNY E. HINDS

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. One difficult task we have is to be constructive in our words and actions.
 - a. By constructive we mean build up, see what's right, to be positive.
 - b. Opposite is easy; see the wrong, be critical, negative in our thinking.
- 2. Thus significance of: "You never say what's right, always condemning."
 - a. Preachers get locked into this; why? so much evil.
 - b. Yet doesn't relieve us of responsibility of showing what is right; we should be ready to present an alternative.
 - c. In discouraging low road we should show the better high road.

THESIS: to encourage us to choose the high road.

I. THE CHOICE IS YOURS.

- A. There is no way we can escape that responsibility (Rom. 14:12).
 - 1. My life is the one I've plotted, even if I allow another to decide.
- B. Must learn to accept the results of my decisions.
 - 1. Important to learn in growing up.
 - 2. As it relates to God if we live disobedient then we know our fate.
- C. To make the proper decision we must see clearly the alternatives.
 - 1. This is critical; must think clearly & not ignore evidence and/or be deceived (Col. 2:8; Eph. 5:6).
 - 2. Take thought not only of now but the future consequences of decisions.
- D. The alternatives (Jer. 21:8; Matt. 7:13-14).
 - 1. Moses advised (Deut. 30:15-20).
 - 2. Joshua advised (Josh. 24:15).
- E. It is most important choice you will ever make.

II. WE CAN BE IN CONTROL OF OURSELVES.

- A. Deceptive idea of freedom: libertinism; hedonism (sole goal is pleasure).
 - 1. Become slave to bodily passions.
 - 2. How great is that? What talent, ability does it take? Any animal can!
 - 3. This is the low road—alcoholic, drug addict, adulterers, liars, filth and trash of the world.
 - 4. Money can hide its results but its fruit is there if you'll look.
- B. Gospel is intended to lift men up so we're not ruled by lusts (Rom. 6:12-14).
 - 1. Through Christ we master self (Rom. 6:11).
 - 2. A sense of satisfaction that we've overcome rather than being overcome; we've lifted lives above world's norm.
- C. This is real, lasting; not transitory, material (Rom. 6:22-23).

III. KEY TO SUCH A LIFE IS CHRIST.

- A. The truth we must face: acceptableness is through Christ (Jno. 6:66-69).
- B. High road achieved by following uplifted Christ.
 - 1. Two things: cross and glory (Jno. 12:32; Acts 2:33; Phil. 2:9).
 - 2. First necessary for the second; no cross, no crown.
- C. Successful living now is dependent on Christ (Lk. 12:15, 33).
 - 1. He only can make my life meaningful for me and others.
 - 2. See twofold aspect: Christ in helping me leads me to help others (Matt. 5:14-16).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION:

- 1. Example of Joseph (Gen. 39:7-9).
- 2. No greater, happier life than living for God and Christ.

RESTORING ATTITUDES OF N.T. CHRISTIANITY

MICHAEL TANNER

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. Brief survey of restoration movement: beginnings and goals.
 - 2. But, have we fully restored N.T. Christianity? Isn't there more to Christianity than knowing and following the correct pattern?
 - 3. This lesson: A consideration of characteristic attitudes of N.T. Christians.
- I. **ZEAL** (Tit. 2:11-14).
- A. They continued *steadfastly* in (lit., "were being strong towards .. .") (Acts 2:42; Matt. 28:18-20; I Thess. 5:17; Lk. 18:1).
 - B. They *daily* continued steadfastly .. . (Acts 2:46).
 - C. They zealously preached the Word .. . (Acts 5:42; 8:4).

D. We need that zeal to counter the apathy and lethargy that cripple us in the Lord's work.

II. JOY (Phil. 4:4).

- A. They rejoiced in receiving the Gospel (Acts 8:39; 16:34).
- B. They rejoiced when others received the Gospel (Acts 11:18, 23).
- C. Thus, they could rejoice in persecution (Acts 5:41; Matt. 5:10-12).
- D. And, they could live their daily lives with gladness (2:46). See Vine's *Exp. Diet*, for definition of "gladness."
- E. With such joy, let us not bemoan what the world's coming to, but let's rejoice in what has come to the world.

III. BOLDNESS (Acts 4:13).

- A. Definition of "boldness" (See Vine).
- B. Prayer helps us to be bold (Acts 4:29-31; Eph. 6:19-20).
- C. We need boldness to tell men the good news whether they are interested at first or not.

CONCLUSION:

1. Zeal, joy, and boldness proceeding from a living faith in Jesus Christ will prepare us to set out to conquer the world for Christ.
 - a. There will be no more lost opportunities because of laziness.
 - b. There will be no more time wasted complaining.
 - c. There will be no shrinking from proclaiming the whole counsel of God.
2. Only when we have returned to these and similar attitudes, as well as the N.T. pattern, will we have succeeded in restoring N.T. Christianity.

LET'S DO SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE!!

KENNETH R. HOYLE

INTRODUCTION:

1. Although the above words are not found exactly like this in the Bible, the principle is set forth in many places.
2. The Lord certainly requires man to DO something (Obey Him). He requires ACTION on our part, which is motivated by faith and love.
3. And that which we do is, indeed, to be CONSTRUCTIVE!—constructive in the "building up" of ourselves both individually and collectively (Cf. Eph. 4:11-16; Jude 20, 21).
 - a. There is entirely too much DESTRUCTIVE work done by many today.
4. Let us consider various scriptures which indicate that we are to be ACTIVE CREATURES for the Lord:
 - a. Cf. II Tim. 2:2; Phil. 4:9; Phil. 2:12.
 - b. Note: Acts 20:32 (HOW and WHEN does the "word of his grace" build us up? When believed and PUT INTO PRACTICE in our lives!).

I. THIS PRINCIPLE WAS EMPLOYED BY NEHEMIAH AND OTHERS:

- A. Nehemiah 2:17-18 (Read and elaborate).
- B. Nehemiah 4:6 (Everyone cooperated toward a common goal).
- C. Nehemiah 4:17-18 (Read). **OBSERVE:** They all had duties to perform. Each one did his part. They did not **COVET** each others position. No one made fun of the others work. All the "disruption" came from the "outsiders."

II. CALEB & JOSHUA ENCOURAGED THIS PHILOSOPHY:

- A. With reference to the land of Caanan, Caleb said: "... Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30).
- B. Note the exhortation of Joshua and Caleb in Numbers 14:6-9.

III. ELIJAH MANIFEST A SIMILAR DESIRE:

- A. "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him ..." (I Kings 18:21).

IV. THIS LANGUAGE IS IN HARMONY WITH THE SUGGESTION OF JOSHUA:

- A. Joshua 24:14-24 (Read and consider).

V. NOW, LET'S LOOK AT THIS EXPRESSION AGAIN:

- A. "LET'S" (Let US).
 - 1. This involves ALL of us, not just a few!
 - 2. Cf. John 15:5-6; Phil. 2:2-3; II Thess. 1:3.
 - 3. So EACH OF US has responsibilities (Gal. 6:5; II Cor. 5:10).
- B. "DO SOMETHING:"
 - 1. Action to be done;—participation (Cf. I Thess. 1:9).
 - 2. What is there to do? **PLENTY!** Study; live right; teach; visit; restore the erring; set good examples in "speech," "every-day conduct;" etc.
- C. "CONSTRUCTIVE:"
 - 1. That which will strengthen, edify, build up! (Cf. Rom. 14:19; Jude 20; Gal. 5"13--15; Titus 3:1, 8).

VI. "CONSTRUCTIVE" IS THE OPPOSITE OF "DESTRUCTIVE:"

- A. It is an awful thing to be guilty of **HINDERING** the progress of the church.
- B. One may **HINDER** by: "Sowing discord;" "Backbiting;" "Ridiculing others who are doing their best;" and "being a hypocrite."
- C. Consider: Prov. 6:16-19.

CONCLUSION:

Dear friend, brother, if you need to repent, **DO SO NOW!** And let's all work together in love and harmony to build up the cause of Jesus Christ!

MEN DISPLEASED WITH GOD

THOMAS J. ELLIOTT

INTRODUCTION:

1. Basic evil in the world today.
2. Results in substitution of things that are without divine authority.

I. II KINGS 5:1-14—STORY OF NAAMAN—DISPLEASED WITH GOD'S ARRANGEMENT.

- A. "Behold, I thought" shows dissatisfaction with God's arrangement (v. 11).
- B. Displeased with God's way, many today substitute and follow human opinion.

II. MATTHEW 19:16-22—RICH YOUNG RULER DISPLEASED WITH GOD.

- A. He was covetous (Col. 3:5).
 1. Mt. 6:33; Prov. 3:5; I Tim. 6:17.

III. MATTHEW 27—THOSE WHO CRUCIFIED JESUS WERE DISPLEASED WITH HIM.

- A. What about those who crucify Him again? (Heb. 6:4-6).

IV. SPECIAL GROUPS WHO ARE DISPLEASED WITH GOD'S ARRANGEMENT TODAY (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12).

- A. Atheist—with the very thought of God (Psa. 14:1).
- B. Modernist—with the inspiration of the scriptures (II Tim. 3:16-17; I Cor. 2:9-13).
- C. Catholics—displeased with Bible's all sufficiency and completeness (Jude 3; II Jno. 9).
- D. Denominationalism—displeased with God's oneness in His scheme (Eph. 4:3-6).
 1. Discuss each point (one Lord, etc) and make application.

V. GOD KNEW MAN WOULD BECOME DISPLEASED AND WARNS OF CHANGING HIS WILL (Deut. 4:2; Gal. 1:8-9; Mt. 7:21-23).

- A. Make argument on Mt. 7:23—Greek: ANOMIA—"condition of one without law, either because of ignorance or violation" (Thayer, Cf. II Thess. 2:7).

REVERENCING GOD

KENNETH R. HOYLE

(Psalm 89:7)

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is always profitable to examine our "attitude," our "worship", and "service" to God.
2. This is both a SCRIPTURAL and a LOGICAL thing to do:
 - a. SCRIPTURAL: II Cor. 13:5.
 - b. LOGICAL: —because it is so easy for our thinking (attitude) to be affected with the material & physical things of life.

3. This is one of the greatest needs of our day: men who will REVERENCE God!

I. GOD IS THE "CREATOR," WE THE "CREATURE:"

- A. Observe: Psalm 100:3.
- B. Men often come to think too HIGHLY of the "creature" and not highly enough of the CREATOR, & thus disregard the WORD of TRUTH that God has spoken (Rom. 1:25).
 1. Some, today, esteem themselves too highly (Cf. Rom. 12:3; I Pet. 5:5).
- C. Man, though he attain great heights in the "political" field, the "scholastic" or "medical" fields, is still merely the DUST OF THE EARTH, physically speaking, and his body will some day return to that from whence it came. His primary concern should be to SAVE HIS SOUL!

II. IT IS THE DUTY OF MAN TO WORSHIP AND SERVE GOD, HIS CREATOR:

- A. What does it mean to "WORSHIP" God?
 1. "Worship" is from PROSKUNEO—which properly and literally means: "to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence." (THAYER). Thayer also adds: "... among the Orientals, esp. the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence ..."
 2. Our worship is to be in "spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

III. GOD IS MOST WORTHY AND DESERVING OF OUR WORSHIP:

- A. The first thing Noah did when he evacuated the ark was to worship God (Gen. 8:19-20).
- B. Note: Gen. 1:1; 2:7.
- C. Consider the following passages carefully: Ps. 33:6-9; Job 37:5; Ps. 89:7-
- D. No other is worthy of being worshipped: neither men nor angels:
 1. Cf. Acts 10:25-26; Rev. 22:8-9; Matt. 4:10.
 2. Note: Exodus 34:14; Ps. 29:2; Ps. 96:8-9; Ps. 5:7; Ps. 138:2; Ps. 45:11; Ps. 95:6-7; Ps. 99:9-

IV. OUR WORSHIP SHOULD BE WITH SINCERITY, REVERENCE, & PRAYERFUL MEDITATION:

- A. We should be thankful for the PRIVILEGE and the HONOR of worshipping God! (Ps. 122:1).
- B. We should "prepare" to worship God:
 1. Do we get to bed at a reasonable hour on Saturday night?
 2. Do YOU prepare, & do you prepare YOUR FAMILY to "come to worship"?—or do you just simply "come to church"?—There is a difference. Some come, desiring to get a comforting "pat on the back" and a "sweet sermonette."
- C. Do we come into the auditorium and prepare our minds for the worship service? Often, there is too much "commotion" just before, and during a service.
 1. Need more "dignity" in worship: not cold formality, but dignity (Cf. I Cor. 14:40).
 2. Hezekiah spoke with reference to preparing one's heart (II Chron. 30:19).
 3. Ezra 7:10—"For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."

4. Not uncommon to see, today, too much: "formality", "half-heartedness", "frivolty," "outward show," and "mis-placed emphasis associated with our worship services."
- D. We should endeavor to AVOID disturbing other worshippers by UNNECESSARY talking, moving about and "turkeynecking."
- E. Reverence should characterize every single act of our worship:
 1. Cf. Heb. 12:28-29.
 2. "Reverence" denotes: "true veneration," "pious devotedness," carrying the idea of a deep feeling of RESPECT;—to regard highly.
 3. Apply to each act of worship:

CONCLUSION:

Let's all endeavor to improve our worship:—be more "reverent" toward God.

"TOMORROW"

"Tomorrow" is the great enemy of advancement. Boasting of tomorrow is the lazy man's way of evading today's duties. "Tomorrow" leaves more tasks undone, more books unread, more houses uncleaned, more programs unlaunched, more resolutions unkept than any other factor in life.

"Tomorrow" is the great enemy to the church. Our greatest liability is not our ignorance, or our unconcern, or our unwillingness, but "Tomorrow." More absentees have been neglected, more lessons have gone unprepared, more prospects have gone unlisted, and more lost people have gone unsaved because of "Tomorrow" is the great enemy to the soul. Where one man has died and gone to hell because he was an infidel, an agnostic, or an atheist, ten thousand have gone because they have counted on "tomorrow."

"Tomorrow" is Satan's best scheme in keeping lost men lost. Yes, Satan knows he will never destroy your faith in the Bible, or your belief in the love of God. He does not care when you realize that you are lost and that you need to be a Christian. He knows all of these things are of no avail to you if he can keep you waiting until "Tomorrow."

Jimmy Tuten

FAITH AND WORKS

An old Scotchman operated a small rowboat for transporting passengers across one of the litde lakes in Scotland. One day a passenger noticed that he had carved on one oar the word "Faith" and on the other oar the word "Works." Curiosity led him to ask the meaning of this.

The old man said: "I will show you." He dropped one oar and plied the other called "Works," and they just went around in circles. Then he dropped that oar and began to ply the one called "Faith," and the litde boat went around in circles again this time in the other direction.

After this demonstration, the old man picked up both "Faith" and "Works" and plying both oars together, sped swiftly over the water, explaining to his inquiring passenger: "You see, that is the way it is in the Christian life."

Jimmy Tuten

THE PRAYER OF PAUL

MICHAEL TANNER

INTRODUCTION:

1. Studying Paul's prayers, as well as the prayers of other inspired men, is profitable.
 - a. They teach us what to pray for.
 - b. They set before us goals to strive for.
2. In Col. 1:9-12, Paul prays for the Colossians' increased enlightenment in spiritual matters in order that they might walk worthily.

I. "THAT YE MAY BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL IN ALL SPIRITUAL WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING ..."

- A. The full knowledge of God's will.
 1. To help them gain that knowledge Paul taught them. We must study.
 2. Knowledge alone—insufficient (Jas. 4:17; Matt. 9:13).
- B. In all spiritual wisdom and understanding.
 1. Understanding—insight (Eph. 3:4).
 2. Wisdom—"Good judgment in the face of the demands made by human and specif, by the Christian life, (practical) wisdom" (Arndt and Gingrich).
 3. Prov. 4:5-7
 4. Knowledge prerequisite to wisdom (Psa. 119:130, 97-104, 148).
 5. A full knowledge with spiritual wisdom and understanding enables us to walk worthily (Psa. 119:11).

II. "TO WALK WORTHILY OF THE LORD UNTO ALL PLEASING..."

- A. "Bearing fruit in every good work."
 1. Salvation not earned (Eph. 2:8-9).
 2. Good works—in God's purpose for His people (Eph. 2:10; Tit. 2:14; Gal. 5:6; Jno. 14:15; 15:8).
- B. "Increasing in the (full) knowledge."
 1. Not simply knowledge of His will, existence, or facts about Him (Jno. 16:1-3).
 2. But, in knowledge of the type proceeding from intimate acquaintance through fellowship with God (I Jno. 1:6-7; I Sam. 2:12; Jno. 17:3; Cf. Encoh and Abraham—Jas. 4:4).
- C. "Strengthened with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all patience and longsuffering with joy."
 1. Strengthened with all power (Rom. 1:16; I Thess. 2:13; Jas. 1:21).
 2. Unto all patience and longsuffering with joy (Jas. 1:2; Ax. 5:41).
- D. "Giving thanks unto the Father, who ..."
 1. Why? See context.
 2. Words of thanks (Lk. 17:11-19).
 3. Life of thanks (II Pet. 1:9).

CONCLUSION:

1. Summary
2. Examine ourselves
3. Invitation

PRIORITIES

LOREN N. RAINES

(Col. 1: 18)

INTRODUCTION: Today our nation is faced with many perplexing problems. There are economic problems, ecological problems, educational problems, moral problems, financial problems, racial problems, and many others. In addition to all of these problems, congress and the president are faced with the problem of priorities. Which of these problems is most important? Which should be given most immediate attention? Some say pollution, some say crime, some say the economy; others insist that ending the war, and bringing peace should be given first consideration.

In the field of religion the Lord has removed all doubt as to what things are to have priority in the life of a Christian.

THE BIBLE SPECIFIES TWO DIFFERENT, YET CLOSELY RELATED THINGS TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY.

I. CHRIST (Col. 1:13-18):

- A. He has shown himself to be the pre-eminent One in His:
 1. Birth (Lk. 1:26-33). Not only foretold but also announced by an angel (Lk. 2:7-12).
 2. Childhood (Lk. 2:40-47).
 3. Baptism (Matt. 3:13-17).
 4. Temptation (Matt. 4:1-10).
 5. Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-5).
 6. Teaching (Matt. 7:28-29; Jno. 7:45-46).
 7. Death (Matt. 27:50-54). Many had been crucified before, but never had the sun refused to give its light, never an earthquake, never graves opened, never had the veil of the temple been rent from top to bottom.
 8. Resurrection (Matt. 28:1-4).
 9. Greatness—greater than:
 - a. Abraham (Matt. 3:7-12; Jno. 8:56-58).
 - b. Jonah (Matt. 12:41).
 - c. Solomon (Matt. 12:42).
 - d. Moses (Heb. 3:1-3).
 - e. Angels (Heb. 1:4).
 - f. A name above every name (Phil. 2:9-11).
- B. Hence, we should give Him the pre-eminence in:
 1. Our affections (Col. 3:1-5; I Jno. 2:14; Matt. 19:29).
 2. Our thoughts (Prov. 23:7; 4:23; Phil. 4:8).
 - a. "The thoughts of today will be the dreams of tonight and the actions of tomorrow."
 - b. Our thoughts determine our actions; our actions determine our character; our character determines our destiny.
 3. Our time (Eph. 5:15-16). All have the same amount of time.
 - a. Not a problem of *amount*, but of the *use* we make of time.
 - b. Here again, priority is important.
 4. Our allegiance—shall it be business, pleasure, country?
 5. Our financial obligations (Matt. 6:19; I Tim. 6:17-19).

II. THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Matt. 6:33).

- A. It belongs to Him (Ax. 20:28; Matt. 16:18).
He is its head (Col. 1:18).
- C. Through it we must glorify Him (Eph. 3:21).
- D. In it there is salvation (Gal. 3:27-29).

PROSPERITY—BANE OR BLESSING?

KENNETH A. STERLING

(III Jno. 1, 2)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Here, we find that John wishes prosperity and good health to one beloved in the Lord.
 - a. Not only does he wish *physical* prosperity, but *spiritual* prosperity as well... " ... even as thy soul *pros* ..."
 - b. To prosper physically, financially and spiritually, is a great blessing. However, they do not necessarily go "hand in hand."
—We want to discuss the subj. of prosperity this (morn) (eve) in a lesson entitled: "*PROSPERITY—BANE OR BLESSING?*"
2. It would seem that physical prosperity should be a great blessing to any individual and would draw them closer to God.
 - a. However, the opposite is very often true.
 - b. We live in a nation of plenty. Materially speaking, we are the richest nation on the earth. Individually, we have more wealth & material goods than at any time in our history—and yet, at the same time, we *axe farther away from God* than at any time in our history. I suggest to you that prosperity can be a bad tiling ... that it can be a curse when it separates ..

I. MAN FROM GOD:

- A. As we have suggested, it should bring man closer to God.
 1. Should be grateful for blessings ... (Col. 3:15b).
 2. God has abundantly blessed man—man should bless God in return (Jas. 1:17; Deut. 8:18; Ax. 17:25).
 3. Should *never* take our blessings for granted but we should thank God daily for His abundant blessings upon us!
- B. Often, however, when men are blessed with health and wealth, they forget God:
 1. That which should prove a blessing—proves a curse!
 2. It has always been so! Let us note some Bib. examples:
 - a. Israelites ... God abundantly blessed, yet they forgot Him "days w/o number" ... turned on Him and worshipped Idols ... He had to deliver them into their enemies hands to bring them to their senses!
—*And it could happen to the United States of America just the same!*
God's warning to Israel (Deut. 8:11-14).
 - b. Gentiles (Read—Rom. 1:20-25; 28:32).
—That description sounds as if it were written last week!
—And I fear, my dear brethren, **THAT WE AS A NATION ARE PRECIPITATING OUR OWN DEMISE!**
—Just like the *Romans*—they had *everything* and they went so far away from God—from decency, virtue and right that they rotted from within and fell! (Music festivals).
—You think it can't happen to US? I fear for more **EROSION FROM WITHIN** than **ATTACK FROM WITHOUT!**
 - c. King Uzziah of Judah (II Chron. 26:1-16).
—How God blessed him and made him to prosper!
—When should have been the most grateful for all his blessings—closest to God—he turned from Him!

3. Prosperity can be a curse to man when it causes him to become so self-reliant he feels little need of God.
- C. Prosperity does not always separate men from God—depends upon our attitude toward material things:
 1. Riches not in themselves evil nor poverty virtuous.
 2. Abraham—rich man—but a faithful man.
 3. Rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16-24).
 - a. This man felt a need of God—had not become so self-reliant had forgotten God . . .
 - b. But had wrong attitude toward material things—let his riches keep him separated from God!
 - c. Wanted physical prosperity more than *soul-prosp.*!
 4. Foolish Rich man (Lk. 12:15-21).
 - a. All this man had time to think about was physical prosperity!
 - b. How many like him today!
 - c. Materialism and prosperity will be the ruin of millions!
 - d. Foolish Rich Man *should have thanked God* for his prosperity considered how he could use his riches to glory of God—but instead, all he could think about was himself!
—What a tragedy! He lost his soul! (Matt 16:26).
—But again, prosperity can be a curse when it separates . . .

II. MAN FROM MAN:

- A. Prosperity should be a blessing—should be glad we are able to share with others.
 1. We don't work just to satisfy our *own* needs, but that we might help those about us who are in genuine need due to illness, death, disaster or what (Eph. 4:28; Gal. 6:10; I Tim. 6:17, 18).
 2. *Opportunity* plus *ability* equals *responsibility* . . .
 - a. If we do not help others *gladly*—when we are able to do *so*, we will be lost!
 - b. Parable of "Good" Samaritan (Cf. Matt. 25).
- B. Often, however, those who are most prosperous are the most selfish!
 1. Rich Man in Luke 16—Could have helped Lazarus the poor beggar, but too selfish!
 2. Today—how many people anxious to help their neighbor when they can? We are a selfish people!
 - a. "Don't get involved" is the thing now!
 - b. Lord says, "Get involved!" (Matt. 7:12).
 - c. When you see your neighbor in distress, help him!
—If a fellow motorist—stop and help!
—If an accident—assist those involved.
—Kitty Genowell affair stamped many Americans for what they are—w/all our prosperity *thoroughly selfish!*
 3. An interesting contrast—
 - a. Time of depression—people stick together.
Time of war—people stick together.
Time of famine—people stick together.
 - b. Are closer *together* and closer to *God* in these times . . . begin to prosper—become self-reliant and selfish—that's something isn't it????
—Again, prosperity can be a curse when it separates. . .

III. MAN FROM HIMSELF:

- A. Prosperity should be a blessing to a person—should bring out the best in them:
 - 1. Living in free land w/no real worry about food, shelter, clothing—life's necessities—most of us have luxuries.
 - 2. Should be happy, content, able to do our *very best* for the Lord (I Tim. 6:6-8).
- B. Often, however, prosperity changes people and proves a curse to them:
 - 1. *Become greedy* and all can think about is "more, more" (I Tim. 6:9, 10).^{*} But they that will be rich."
 - 2. Have you ever heard it said of someone: "Money ruined them?" Illus: Coalinga Couple.
 - 3. Some people just can't stand prosperity! Become greedy, selfish and just change completely!
 - a. Not everyone does, of course. Though exalted to a very high position and have wealth in abundance, still same kind, generous, considerate person you once knew.
 - b. It goes back, again, to attitude. It is the *love* of money attitude toward material things.
 - 4. Prodigal Son certainly didn't use his prosperity wisely, but he "came to himself" in time:
 - a. Greatest discovery a person can make *is to* discover themself!
 - b. When he saw that he had separated himself from his FATHER . . . FELLOW-MEN (true fellow-men) HIMSELF (his real nature—what had been before) —He determined to go back, repent, and do what was right!
 - 5. It is a tragedy that many people feel closer to God (or want God close to them) when they are *sick* rather than when they are well.
 - a. Illus: Often takes a real crisis to bring a person to their senses.
 - b. Ought not so to be!
Illus: Old Scotsman sick about to die and daughter said: "Father, shall I send for the preacher?" He replied: "No, daughter, I have thatched the roof in fair weather, I need not work in a storm."

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Prosperity ought to be a blessing to us! Should draw us closer to God . . . cause us to be truly thankful!
- 2. We need to learn how to abound and how to be abased. Paul's attitude (Phil. 4:11, 12).
- 3. We need to learn how to use our blessings.
 - a. Contentment is something that is not innate—it is learned. Paul said . . . "I have learned . . ."
 - b. Not good to give our children everything they want. That's one of the reasons we have so much trouble in world today . . . young people have *too* much!
—Do not know what it is to really struggle.
—Have not learned contentment—causes friction, unrest and divorce. (Want to be living in \$30,000 ranch style house in Suburbia, when ought to be living in a cottage on Thrift Ave).
—Wife worked so they can "get ahead"—leave children w/baby-

sitter most of their life—both tired and hence have arguments and end up in divorce court!

—I know what I'm talking about, brethren! I have seen it!

4. Let us not become greedy—separate ourselves from God, our fellow man, and the person we ought to be (I Tim. 6:6-12; Heb. 13:5, 6—NASV).
5. Let us always remember that SOUL PROSPERITY is far, far more vital than PHYSICAL PROSPERITY! (Matt. 16:26).
—What is the condition of YOUR SOUL???
INVITATION: "Have you counted the cost?"

BIBLE HATE

FRANK J. JAMERSON

INTRODUCTION:

1. We cannot love as we should without hating. The problem is to hate the right things in die right ways.
2. Hate is used in three ways (Cf. W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of N.T. Words).
 - a. Malicious and unjustifiable feelings towards others, whether towards the innocent or by mutual animosity (This is condemned I Jno. 2:9-11; 3:15; Matt. 5:24; 18:15).
 - b. A feeling of aversion from what is evil or towards error.
 - c. Relative preference of one thing over another.

I. GOD HATES (in last two senses):

- A. Dislike of, or antagonism toward evil.
 1. Idolatry (Jer. 44:2-5). We must hate it too (Col. 3:5; I Cor. 10:14).
 2. Seven things (Prov. 6:16-19). Note: The blame for "sowing discord" is often misplaced. Elijah placed the blame in the right place! (I Kings 18:17, 18).
- B. God "hated" Esau, in that he preferred Jacob (Rom. 9:13).

II. WE SHOULD HATE ERROR AND EVIL. (Be antagnoistic toward them)

- A. Hate every false way (Psa. 119:104).
 1. Contrast this to: "Through thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I believe that one way is as good as another."
 2. It makes a difference what we believe. Error is not as good as truth! (II Thess. 2:10-12).
 3. The church at Ephesus was commended for "hating." (Rev. 2:6).
 4. Those who are not against error are not really for truth! Tell me what a person stands for, and I know what he is against! To stand for nothing, results in falling for anything.
- B. Hate evil (Psa. 97:10).
 1. Sin is not simply "a maladjustment." (I Jno. 3:4; 5:17).
 2. It is against God, and we need to recognize seriousness of it (Gen. 39:9).
 3. Sin in degrading. Note the prodigal son in Luke 15. Many others have been brought to such a pitiful condition (including loss of

jobs, family, self-respect, etc.) because they did not hate evil (Cf. Prov. 13:15).

4. Why do men not hate evil? Because they do not love God! (Psa. 97:10).

III. RELATIVE PREFERENCE OF ONE THING OVER ANOTHER.

- A. Man cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24; Lk. 16:13).
- B. Must hate family and own life (Lk. 14:25, 26).
 1. Matt. 10:37 shows that we are to love family "less than" we love Christ. If it is a choice between pleasing God and pleasing family, we should "hate" our family—in preferring God's will over theirs.
 - a. Jno. 12:25 teaches that a man must prefer pleasing God over living. If it is a choice between life and serving God, we should "hate life."
 3. The implications of this are great. What do you prefer? What do you put first? (When one puts God second, he hates God!).

CONCLUSION:

1. We should not hate the person who is in error or sin, but should hate the error and sin.
2. We should love God and the truth, and should hate (be antagonistic toward) error and evil. We should hate (put in second place) all people and our own lives.

IMMODEST APPAREL

FOY W. LAYTON

INTRODUCTION: Discuss prevalent concept of "new morality." Common idea that the "thou shalt nots" do not apply any more Has resulted in "free love;" adultery and fornication becoming common-place. "Everybody's doing it," etc.

I. ONE OF MAN'S GREATEST PITFALLS.

- A. The temptation to commit fornication; have immoral thoughts.
- B. This has been the case in every age:
 1. Rom. 1:24 (Gentiles).
 2. I Cor. 10:8 (Israelites).
 3. II Sam. 11:2-5 (David and Bathsheba).
 4. I Cor. 5 (Man who had his father's wife).
 5. Much said in condemnation during the apostolic age (Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; I Thess. 4:3-7).

H. NOT ALL SEX IS FORBIDDEN.

- A. God created man with a legitimate desire for the opposite sex.
- B. This desire fulfilled honorably only in marriage (I Cor. 7:2; Heb. 13:4).

III. SINS OF FORNICATION AND ADULTERY BEGIN IN THE HEART.

- A. Mk. 7:20-23
- B. Matt. 5:27, 28
- C. Example of David looking and lusting after Bathsheba.

IV. "PARTNERS" IN SIN OF FORNICATION AND ADULTERY.

- A. Women are not guildless when they entice men to lust.
- B. Women entice men to lust by the way they dress.
 - 1. Emphasis in Bible on way a WOMAN dresses (I Tim. 2:9).
 - 2. Man lusts after woman rather than vice versa (Matt. 5:27, 28).

V. WHAT IS MODEST APPAREL?

- A. Modesty: "observing conventional standards of proper dress and behaviour; free from coarseness or indecency; chaste in thought and conduct."
- B. Biblical "modesty" versus worldly "modesty."
 - 1. Two different standards (Rom. 12:2).
 - 2. Some argue that due to common acceptance, not immodest to wear such articles of clothing as short shorts, bathing suits, tight pants, low cut blouses, etc. in public, but God's word says, "BE NOT CONFORMED . . ."
 - 3. Some argue that to go swimming with more clothes than conventional swimwear would be as out of place as wearing a swim suit to church services . . .
 - a. No objection to swimming—only to indecent exposure (exposure of body to opposite sex which invites immoral thoughts).
 - b. If swim for exercise, the solution is simple: Boys swim with boys; girls swim with girls. (If mixed, wear modest apparel).
 - c. If swim for purpose of showing off body to opposite sex, condemned by God's law against lasciviousness, etc. (Gal. 5:19).
- C. Where do we draw the line? Simple: *However a woman may dress that causes or invites sexual interest in her on the part of any male observer not her husband is immodest!* That isn't difficult to understand.

CONCLUSION: THE PROPER EMPHASIS: MODEST APPAREL.

- 1. Let's look at the bright side: seeking the proper way to dress instead of just trying to be fashionable.
 - a. A true Christian will not TRY to be sexually attractive to anyone not his/her mate.
 - b. A Christian woman's beauty will show through her personality instead of her body.
 - c. No dishonor for a woman to want to dress well—her dress can be made most beautiful by the beauty of the person wearing it, rather than by how much it shows.

A True Disciple

If you will follow Christ—
When public opinion opposes,
When the church and state are hostile,
When "high society" disapproves,
When your devotion brings sneers and jeers,
When your fellow-disciples turn back,
When your relatives and friends frown,
When it means a personal loss,
When you must follow alone—
Then you are indeed his disciple.

THE PRODIGAL FATHER

JIMMY TUTEN, JR.

(Lk. 15:11-13)

INTRODUCTION:

1. The parable of the Prodigal son is one of the most popular parables of Jesus. It shows how some who are wayward come to themselves, while others never do!
 - a. In spite of the fact that the son "came to himself," the story is tragic in that it demonstrates *wastefulness*. This is sinful. It brings fearful consequences sooner or later.
2. It is from this story that we get the word "PRODIGAL." The term means: "a *squanderer*, a waster, a user of one's means, reckless extravagance, and finally, a repentant."
 - a. Though nothing is said in this parable of the father, our interest is in the prodigal fathers of today. It is inferred that the father of the son in the parable failed somewhere, for parents often contribute the waywardness of their children.
3. There are many great fathers in the Bible as there are great mothers: Abraham and his love for Isaac and David's cry of broken heart for Absalom, his wayward son. There are also Prodigal fathers to whom we devote this lesson.
 - a. Such fathers are those who waste their substance, squander their influence and opportunities. These are they who sacrifice their glorious position of "fatherhood" by neglect, and who sacrifice the *souls and lives* of the children by careless, indifferent living.

I. THE RESPONSIBILITY AND OBLIGATION OF FATHERHOOD:

- A. He is a father to his family (Eph. 5:23-24; Eph. 6:1, explain text).
- B. He must provide a living for this household (I Tim. 5:8, explain text).
- C. His is the responsibility of nurturing and admonishing (Eph. 5:4). "Nurture means to "breeding, education, training" (Webster). "The whole training and education which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands, and admonition, now reproof and punishment" (Thayer).
 1. *As to education*—children may be sent to public schools, or home supported colleges. This is not the work of the church! (Prov. 22:6; Deut. 6:6-9).
 2. *As to reproof and punishment*—Prov. 23:13-14—Modern day thinkers say this stifles initiative, creates frustration and made a sadist of a child. Not so! Keeble once said, "in this age of automatic devices, about the only thing not controlled by a switch is the child." Discipline is essential:
 - a. It produces response toward authority.
 - b. Home laxity paves the way for crime and misbehaviour, or general disrespect for order in society. The woodshed law needs to be revived.
 - c. It makes a well-ordered family, or family affiliation.
 - d. Essential to the well-being of the child.
 3. Roul Tunley (author of "Kids, Crime and Chaos"), after reviewing delinquency patterns in 20 nations said, "I never saw a delinquent who had a good, strong relationship with his father."
 - a. Those who know blame parental indifference as an important

- contributing factor in the unusual behavior of present day youth,
- b. A little more parental discipline in the formative period teaches respect and right doing that stays with the child until maturity.
- D. Few assume fairly this responsibility, caused no doubt by the failure to see the enormous capabilities of development in a child, and tremendous influence as a father over the child.

II. THERE ARE AS MANY PRODIGAL FATHERS AS THERE ARE PRODIGAL CHILDREN, WHO ARE TOO BUSY TO BE BOTHERED WITH THE CHILD'S COMPANIONSHIP AND TRAINING.

- A. They are negligent and wasteful with influence—power of our influence cannot be over-estimated.
 - 1. David was a prodigal father—destroyed influence with immoral conduct—his experience with Bathsheba had a direct influence on Ammon who ruined for life his sister, Tama (II Sam. 13).
- B. They are indifferent—Destiny of child is not responsibility of church, school, etc. It is the responsibility of parents! One half father's!
 - 1. Illustrate: At state fair, hog took blue ribbon—the keeper of which was a small boy stunted by smoking and given to profanity. As a boy he was the poorest specimen at the fair, though he and the hog reared by same man! The father knew all about hogs, but not his son!
- C. They waste opportunities and responsibilities, though they hold within possession the power to make something out of their children.
 - 1. Study your children, recognize their capabilities, and encourage them. Lose this opportunity, and it will never be redeemed!
 - 2. Tragic story of Eli, a man of position (I Sam. 3:13). Look at the ruin, shame, loss of souls, etc.
 - 3. To busy? Look at Ahab (I Kings 20:40). Tomorrow is too late, your child is growing. Some day he will leave you, and you will never have enjoyed, nor known him.
 - a. Scientific study shows that ten chief fears in order were money, security, health, politics, etc. But not one expressed concern over children.
 - b. A preacher once talked to a young man about to be executed, and asked if he was ashamed of reproach he had brought upon his father. The young man replied: "when I would go to Father and ask him something, he would say, run away lad, I am busy. My father was busy writing his treatise on the law of trusts. Well, he finished his book alright, and here am I."
- D. They squander their love—Louis Poeter, director of Juvenile relations in Savannah, Ga. once said, "children do not need perfect parents, but they do need warm, human understanding parents."
 - 1. They need to feel wanted, loved and valued. Mental illness in children often springs from a feeling of not being wanted.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The tragedy of prodigal father is that unlike the son. He wastes his stewardship—wastes opportunities for joy in this life and child's welfare in hereafter.
 - a. It is better to make a life than a living, to set right examples, to spend time in training children, etc.

2. Can you possibly fulfill Eph. 6:4 unless you are a Christian? and a faithful one at that???
- a. That little child of yours admires you, he wants to go to Bible study and church, but will he when he gets older; if you don't go?
 1. He likes to study his Bible now, but since you don't, will he when he gets older?
 2. He will marry and will need to go to services with his wife. But since you don't, will he?
 3. Will he fail to become a Christian because you did not? Your child wants you to become a Christian? Because he wants to be just like you! Just like Dad!

"JUST NEXT TO ME ... "

The preacher sure did pour it on, but he just let me be. He took the starch right out of him, that sat right next to me.

You should have heard the things he said, it was true as it could be; it burned the seat from under him, that sat right next to me.

He hit the nail square on the head, with him I did agree, he trimmed the dead limbs off of him, that sat right next to me.

How he was taking all this truth, embarrassed he must be. But when I looked 'round ... *weren't no one next to me!!*

"When a Youth starts *sowing his wild oats*, it's time for the parents to start the THRASHING machine!"

ENLARGED HEART AND OPEN MOUTH

HAROLD V. TRIMBLE

(Contextual sermon-study of

II Cor. 4:14 through 6:3)

INTRODUCTION: Two essentials for gospel preaching—An enlarged heart (compassion) and an open mouth. "Woe is unto me if I preach not..." "How beautiful are the feet..."

I. DISCUSSION: Text contains many reasons why one should obey the gospel and serve God faithfully.

A. II Cor. 4:14—"Knowing" . . . Jesus shall raise up us.

Knowing . . . Jesus shall present us with you.

Count it an honor to be presented by one famous to one in high honor who says, "This is my friend" (Jno. 15:14).

B. 4:15 "All things are for your sakes" (I Cor. 3:21-23).

C. 4:16 "We faint not" "Inward man renewed."

D. 4:17 "Our light affliction." (Compare with Christ, Martyrs).

E. 4:18 "We look not at the things which are seen" (Col. 3: if).

F. 5:1 "We know . . . we have a building . . ."

G. 5:2-3 "Earnestly desire . . . our house . . ."

- H. 5:4 "In this . . . burdened." House of flesh too small. "Mortality swallowed up of life" (I Cor. 15).
- I. 5:5 "Earnest (Blessed Assurance!) of our inheritance.
- J- 5:6-7 "Always confident..." "Knowing ..."
- K. 5:8 "We are confident..." "We are willing." Have to be absent to be present!
- L- 5:9 "We labour ..."
- M. 5:10 "We must all appear ..."
- N. 5:17 "If any man be in Christ..."
- O. 5:18 "All things are of God ..."

Here are twenty reasons why one should obey the Gospel but what about the enlarged heart and the open mouth? See (II Cor. 6:11). A Jew's (Paul's) heart was enlarged enough to go to the Gentiles and his mouth was open to Jew and Gentiles!

The Apostles were "Ambassadors" (5:20), aged experienced and trusted and inspired men of God. They had the "word of reconciliation", the great commission. They were constrained by Christ's love, (5:14) to "open their mouth" and "Persuade *men*" as well as "beseech" (beg 6:1), and "Pray" (As Christ is not here to do so) you be reconciled to God. (Just think of an Apostle praying to you, not God).

CONCLUSION: Our hearts are enlarged too! O what compassion we have for the lost. That is why our mouths are open to you now, *to persuade* (5:11), to "beseech," (6:1), and to "pray you in Christ's stead" to be reconciled (Make friends again) for "Now is the accepted time. Today is the day of salvation."

C. H. Spurgeon—Preface To A Sermon Book

These outlines were not written to be used as they are. They may be filled up with choice original matter, and employed as frameworks in their present form; but more probably they will be taken to pieces and built up in another shape, or they will be cut in halves, or portions of them will be united with other materials. I hope to lend a handful of chips and shavings, or if you will, a bundle of fire-wood, to a brother, with which he may kindle a fire on his own hearth, and prepare food for his people. Possibly, a lazy brother may boil his own pot with my sticks, but even that I shall not deplore so long as the food is well cooked. Should I be so unfortunate as to be a helper to the utterly idle man, by tempting him to gather no fuel of his own, I shall not then view the matter with despair, for perhaps the idler may burn his fingers in the operation; and I shall fall back upon the consideration that he would have taken wood from some other pile if he had not met with mine. A man will do no great harm with my faggots if he will use holy fire: the truths which are contained in these notes will injure no man if they will honestly be allowed to speak for themselves.

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