

**35 YEARS**

**ARE YOU LISTENING?**

by  
V. E. Howard

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1971

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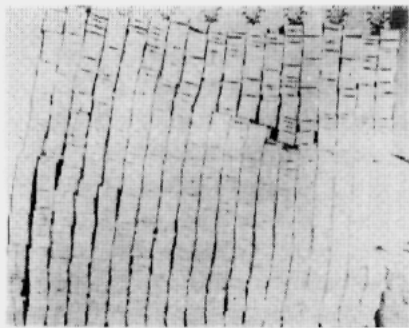
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**1. During 35 years of radio ministry several hundred thousand letters received and more than one million free copies of sermons mailed to listeners in every state in the nation and many foreign countries.**



# 1934 - 1969: Thirty-five Years Continuous Radio Ministry



1. 1931, age 19,  
preached first  
sermon.

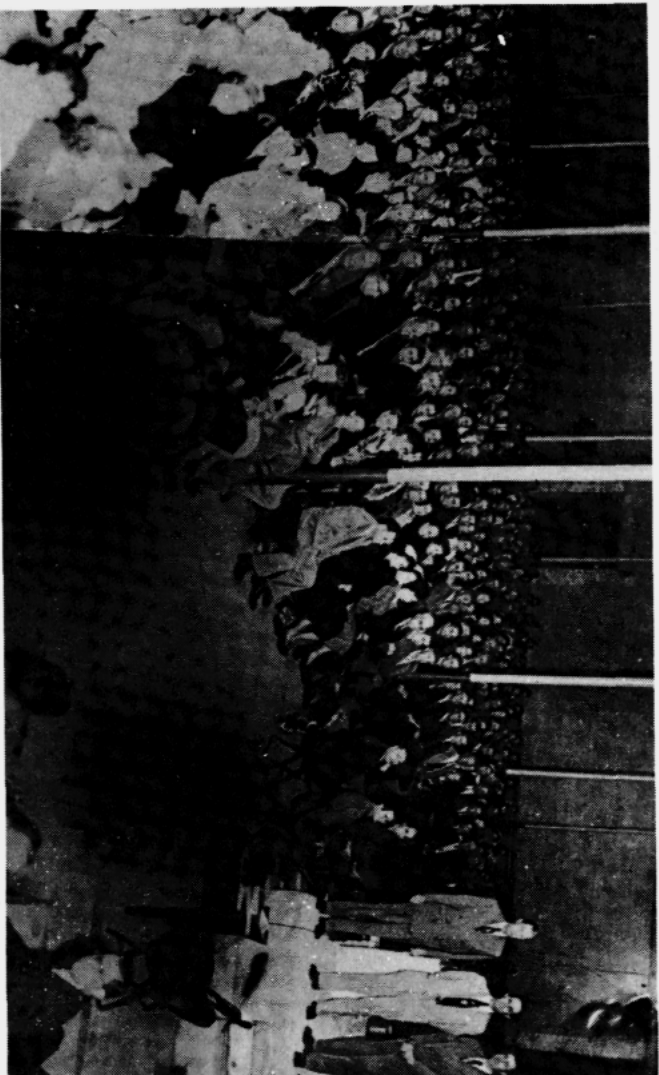


5. In 1969



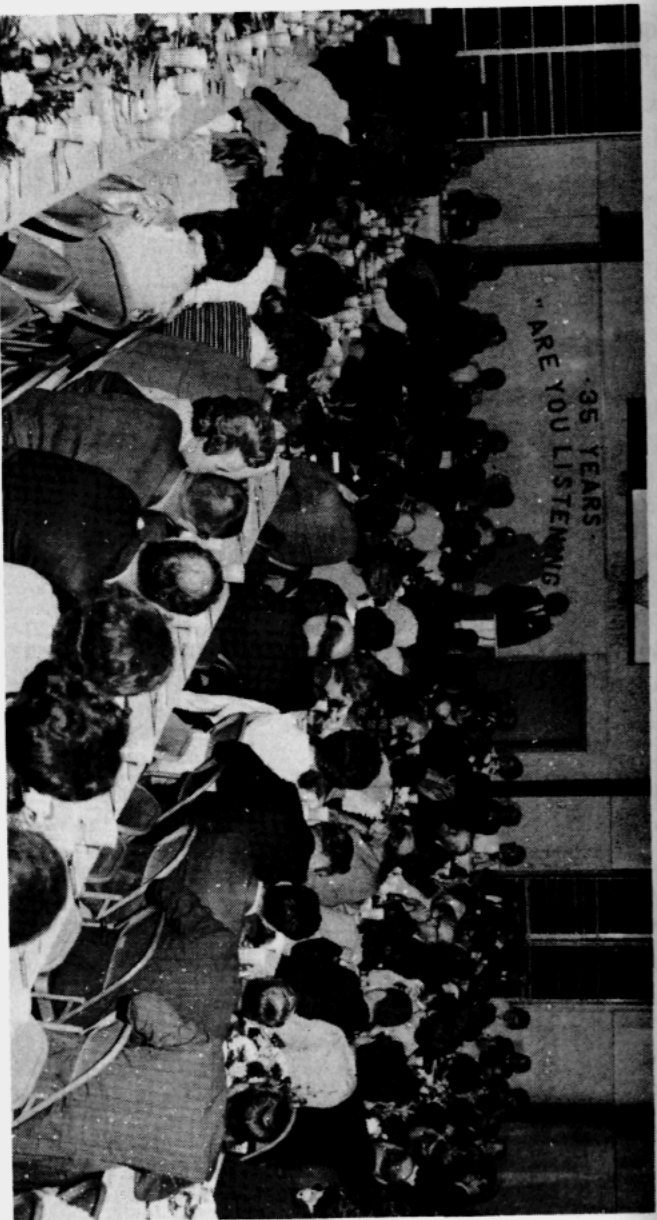
2. 1934, began  
radio minist-  
ry.





Debate between V. E. Howard (Church of Christ) and Julian Pope (Missionary Baptist), Louisiana State Shreveport, continued for 4 days, 1952. Pictured above is part of the audience of 1600 people attending result of Howard's and Pope's radio programs on KWKH. Far-reaching results were in evidence, including many who immediately followed the debate. The discussion is available in the book, "Howard-Lambert on the platform, left to right: Gussie Lambert, Moderator; V. E. Howard, Debator; Julian Pope, Debator; V. E. Howard, Moderator; Gussie Lambert, Moderator.

April 17, 1970—Appreciation Dinner in West Monroe, La. honoring V. E. Howard for 35 years continuous radio ministry.



Head Table-RUTH, his wife, who was presented a plaque — "In Recognition of 35 Years By His Side, a loyal help-meet for her husband's radio ministry of our Lord". MR. and MRS. HARDY HOWARD, father and mother of the honoree. MR. and MRS. E. R. HARPER, brother Harper being the featured speaker. J. L. HINES, who baptized V. E. Howard and performed the marriage ceremony for V. E. and Ruth. HAL FRAZIER, master of ceremonies and ELDERS of White's Ferry Road Church of Christ and their wives.



V. E. Howard receives 35 YEARS, ARE YOU LISTENING AWARD, presented by White's Ferry Road Church of Christ, West Monroe, Louisiana.



Part of the audience of several hundred people from several states attending the Appreciation Award Dinner.



## *Introduction*

I count it both a pleasure and an honor to have been invited to write the introduction to brother V. E. Howard's book, "35 Years-Are You Listening?" It is a great book and should be read by all people.

I have been acquainted with brother Howard for 35 years. When I moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, from Jackson Tennessee in 1934, where I had been preaching for the Highland Church for six and one half years and conducting a radio program over WTJS twice each week for some three years, I met V. E. Howard, then a very young man. He and I and one other man, so far as I knew at that time, were the only full time local preachers in the state of Arkansas. There may have been others but I did not know of them. From that time until now he and I have been the closest of friends.

### His Family

It has been my privilege to know brother Howard's family. I have held in high esteem his father and mother, brother and sister Hardy Howard, both devoted Christians. His father, like mine, was a member of the Baptist church for many years before obeying the gospel of Christ. His mother was a member of the church of Christ and remained loyal and faithful to her Lord in His church until she saw her prayers for her family come true. Her faithful devotion to the Lord and His cause continues to bear fruit. She saw her son, V. E. Howard, baptize her husband, his wonderful father, and all her family. Today her family and that of brother V. E. Howard's are all members of the Lord's church. This should be a source of strength to all young ladies who have husbands

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mother can win the hearts of her family for Christ as this good wife and mother did. It is, indeed, noteworthy that three sons of brother- and sister Hardy Howard are elders in the Lord's church.

### **His Birth and Education**

Brother Howard was born, Verna Elisha Howard, September 29, 1911 in a two room log cabin near Farmer-ville, Louisiana, about 15 miles from Monroe. This being a rural community at that time they did not have schools as we now have. Not being blessed with a high school where he lived, brother Howard was privileged to graduate from the Byrd High School in Shreveport, Louisiana, where it was his pleasure to live with his uncle, M. A. Smith, who in later years became manager of Howard's Jewelers in Greenville, Texas, and is now an elder at White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, Louisiana. It has been my good fortune to have brother Smith as my friend.

Brother Howard's schooling reminds me of mine. His father gave him a cotton crop to assist him in securing his high school education. He made the exact number of bales of cotton as I did, three. However, my cotton crop sent me through the eighth grade at the age of twenty-three. He was graduated from high school at the age of 17. This indicates the progress in school opportunities when born in 1897 and 1911. Brother Howard attended Abilene Christian College, Harding College, and the Arkansas State Teachers College, now Arkansas State University.

### **His Life as a Preacher**

It was in 1934 I met a young man about 24 years of age; a young man with energy, with the love for truth, and with a dream that fascinated me. He was an inspiration to me as I watched him grow and preach. He was the first local minister

for the church in Hot Springs, Arkansas, my home state. This church of about 50 members was on fire for the Lord's cause. His radio program was one of the most popular programs in the state. The station reached across the central part of our nation. To say I listened to this young man with a joy I have never known, for radios were just coming into their own, is an understatement. The church in Hot Springs began to grow and when he left, it broke their hearts. Before coming to Hot Springs he had preached his first sermon at Powell, Texas, May 24, 1931, having been baptized six months previously in Corsicana, Texas, by J. L. Hines. At the time he was a manager of Thom McAnn shoe store for Melville Shoe Corporation in Corsicana. He resigned his position with the shoe company in June, 1931, to devote his life to preaching the gospel. Immediately he returned to his home State to preach to people whom he knew.

Brother Howard began his first meeting (July, 1931) in Ball's School house, near Ruston, Louisiana, where fifteen precious souls were baptized. His second meeting, immediately following, was at Ward's Chapel, near Farmerville, some twelve miles from his home. Brother Tillman B. Pope helped Brother Howard prepare some of his sermons for this meeting since he had only been a member of the church some six months and had preached only twelve sermons. The Lord's cause was blessed with forty additions during this meeting. His third meeting, immediately following the Ward's Chapel meeting, was the joy of his young life. He was now back in his home community, Rocky Branch, where he was reared. Large crowds came to hear this home boy. He baptized twelve precious souls, with whom he had lived, into Christ. I know what it means to go back home and baptize the people with whom you have played as a boy. At the conclusion of his meeting at Rocky Branch he entered

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Abilene Christian College in Abilene, Texas, where I have resided for twenty-five years.

From Hot Springs he moved in 1938 to Conway, Arkansas, the "county seat" of my home county. My father was one of the elders of this church for five years. V. E. preached for them. It is now you are beginning to see why I have been so closely connected with brother Howard for so long. Before coming to Conway, brother Howard and I worked out a cooperative work between us and the churches where he and I worked. He at Conway, and I at Fourth and State Streets Church of Christ in Little Rock. I had a daily radio program over KARK which covered the state of Arkansas and all the middle states of our nation. I had arranged for him to continue his great radio work over KARK. When I began my program, "Back To The Bible Broadcast, " the church was afraid to undertake such a work. It wasn't long, however, until they called me and said, "Brother Harper, we were wrong in being afraid. We are ready to assist you. " Brother Howard was with me until he moved from Conway. From his work at Conway came one of the finest gospel preachers in the brotherhood today, my wife's nephew, Paul Matthews, now of Shelbyville, Tennessee. This association with brother Howard was one of the joys of my younger life. Now I am nearing my seventy-third birthday. From Conway brother Howard moved to Greenville, Texas, where he served as minister for the Johnson Street congregation. Here he lived for twenty-five years until he moved to Texarkana, Texas, in 1965. He has conducted meetings in more than half the states in the nation and has baptized more than 6, 000 people into Christ. At the present time brother Howard is one of the elders of the Walnut Street Church of Christ in Texarkana.

I believe this is of significance: brother Howard, so far as

I know, was the first native of Louisiana, a member of the church of Christ, to devote full time to the preaching of the gospel. To some young men, who may feel that we older men haven't accomplished much in our day, this will be good for you to ponder well. This man, then a young man, and scores of others like him have done much, with the Lord's blessings, to advance the church to its position today. Gospel preachers, young and old, are needed in the service of the Lord. Elders and preachers of the Word will determine what the church will be tomorrow.

#### Thirty-Five Continuous Years

One of the unique and outstanding accomplishments of this good man is the fact that he has been broadcasting the gospel continuously now for more than thirty-five years.

His radio program, known as the Gospel Hour, was produced and broadcast by him for twenty-five years. It is impossible to know of the multitudes in the Northern hemisphere, and especially in the United States, who have heard the truth because of this man's love for the lost souls in his generation.

In 1963, Brother Howard was honored by being invited to become the English speaking evangelist on World Radio, under the direction of the wonderful elders at White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, Louisiana. His ability as a radio speaker, his knowledge of the Bible coupled with his ability to defend the truth, is unique, a blessing enjoyed by few of us. This program reaches into many nations of the world. Its unique, fantastic, almost unbelievable beginning in Brazil has surpassed the fondest dreams of many who knew its beginning. Since the beginning of World Radio broadcasts of the gospel, 19 languages have been beamed into 75 known nations. It is considered that short wave stations in Brazil and Radio Ceylon, through its primary and secondary coverages,

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reach almost one half of the world's population

Languages that have been spoken on World Radio include English, Ukrainian, French, Spanish, German, Taglog (Philippines), Ilocano (Philippines), Swedish, Vietnamese, Japanese, Italian, Portuguese, Mandarin (Chinese), Twi (Ghana), Korean, Tongan (Tongan Islands), Urdu (Pakistan), Czech (Czechoslovakia), Creole (Haiti).

In 1950, brother Howard delivered a series of sermons on "What Is The Church of Christ?" This series was heard by multiplied thousands; in fact, there is no way to know how many precious souls heard these great truths. More than 75, 000 free copies of these sermons were mailed out to various places of the world. This is believed to be the largest response ever given a religious broadcast in radio history. During his thirty-five years of broadcasting more than a million copies of his sermons have been send out into the world. This is no little item!

Such dedicated efforts as these of brother Howard's and those connected with him in West Monroe, Louisiana, are the reasons why churches and brethren around the world continue to see that this kind of preaching shall never cease. Let us pray that it never shall. Too little plain and distinctive preaching is done in our day. Brother Howard, in a plain, kind, yet forceful manner, draws the lines, makes the distinction, and causes the church of the Lord to stand out, separate from the denominational world. Two more generations of undistinguished preaching and the church of that generation will vote to become another denomination with their "sister denominations" as have our "Digressive Sisters"! May this kind of preaching, that lets the world know we are not a human denomination, continue. May the "tribe" of brother Howard's kind of preaching blossom before it is too late. I fear that time of error has already found its way into

**our** ranks by its insidious and cunning deceptive devices!

### **His Business Abilities**

Brother Howard has not only been successful in the preaching of the gospel, he has been, in a very great measure, a financial success. I remember while in Conway he owned a small dry cleaning shop operated by his brother-in-law. He is founder and owner of Howard's Jewelers in Greenville, Texas, having begun the business with one showcase and a few gifts in 1942. He was co-founder of Howard Brothers Jewelers in Monroe, Louisiana, now owned by two of his brothers. Brother Howard is Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Howard-Gibco Corporation, which owns and operates a chain of Gibson Discount Stores. He is President of Central Printers & Publishers, Inc., President of Howard Foundation, Inc., and Vice President of Mid-South Development Corporation. He is a member of the Board of Directors, Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee.

### **Special Honor**

Brother Howard was honored with a special "35 Years, Are You Listening? Dinner, " by the White's Ferry Road church of Christ in West Monroe, Louisiana, and several hundred friends. The Appreciation Award was presented on April 17, 1970, in "Recognition of 35 Years of Faithful Gospel Broadcasting. "

On August 14, 1970, V. E. Howard was honored by Harding College when he was presented the Harding College Distinguished Christian Service Award. Also, on the same **date**, brother Howard was inducted into Harding College's **Oral** History Library where his life, work and philosophy were recorded in his own voice for posterity.

### **World Radio Archives at Abilene Christian College**

By invitation from Abilene Christian College, the

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archives of World Radio, including all the radio sermons of V. E. Howard, will become a part of the Archives of the Library of Abilene Christian College. The World Radio Archives will be a resource available for study and research in mass communications in evangelism.

### **Publisher and Author**

Many tracts and books have been published by brother Howard. I know of some 35. Among them his debate with the missionary Baptist, Mr. Pope, his work exposing the insidious Catholic intrigues, Faith Healers Exposed, Howard-Hines Study of Revelation, The Holy Spirit, What Is The Church of Christ?, and many others. He was editor and publisher of Freedom News for 15 years. He published 200, 000 copies of one edition during the Kennedy-Nixon presidential campaign. One hundred thousand copies was a special request for distribution.

### **Sister Howard and Children**

V. E. Howard has not stood alone. His family has been with him in a very capable way.

Brother Howard was married to Miss Ruth Jackson of Corsicana, Texas, December 20, 1931. To them were born three children, Jasper Smith, Vernon Edgar, and Marilyn Kay. Ruth, as I know her, has stood by her husband in all his adventures, helping every way she could. While the children were at home she stayed close to them and helped in their business which was sometimes slow and difficult to keep going, while brother Howard was away preaching the gospel in meetings. As the children grew up they also helped in the jewelry store. In more recent years she has traveled with him extensively. She is most friendly and most likeable. When she attends a meeting with brother Howard she will most likely call every member of the congregation by their



first name before the meeting is over, although strangers before.

Jasper, their oldest son, is a recognized, outstanding young business man. He is President of the Howard-Gibco Corporation. Edgar (Ed) is Executive Vice President of Howard-Gibco Corporation, and is presently serving his second term as Representative to the Texas State Legislature. Their daughter, Kay (Mrs. Sidney Young), is a faithful Christian mother.

### **Howard and Kennedy**

One of the notable stands for truth and against those who would change our constitution was his confrontation with presidential candidate John F. Kennedy in the "Houston Ministers — Kennedy TV" program. Here it was he who dared call the hand of John F. Kennedy on the Catholic doctrine of "Mental Reservation. " Here he dared demand Kennedy's stand on "Separation of Church and State. " Kennedy's managers refused to allow this part of the film to be seen as it was shown across the nation. The Howard — Kennedy part was edited out. Cowards they were! For this heroic stand for truth and for the defense of our constitution I bow in humble gratitude for my brother V. E. Howard of World Radio, and may his kind live long after my body sleeps in the grave, and that cannot be too long now.

### **Conclusion**

I close this lengthy introduction, but I wanted to say what I have said because too few this day know what some have had to endure, and the opposition encountered. For example, when the ugly head of premillennialism raised up, V. E. Howard was there. When the vicious attacks of denominational preachers in the past generation made their advance upon truth, V. E. Howard was there. When one of

America's foremost enemies, the Catholic church, made her bid for control of our nation through Joseph Kennedy's millions, much of which was made at the expense of the tears and heartbreak of mothers whose husbands, sons, daughters, grandchildren and friends drank his damnable liquor, V. E. Howard was there with the gospel truth. People mourn the deaths of so many from one family; so do I, but few stop to weep for the thousands who have died as a result of drinking Uncle Joseph's Scotch whiskey. Eternally lost souls have filled the Kennedy coffers, drinking the Scotch whiskey, from which the Kennedys became millionaires from their "blood royalties." Countless ruined, disgraced and eternally lost souls have filled their coffers drinking the Scotch whiskey that flows freely to this day!

#### A Mother's Eulogy

Brother Howard's eulogy to his mother is a fitting way to close this introduction to his book. He praises both his father and mother as they gathered for Bible reading and prayer. This brings back memories to me of long, long ago. Of his precious mother he says, "Because of her convictions and deep abiding faith, which would not be shaken, my mother was the great power and influence affecting my life and the life of the entire family. Although the congregation of Christians was very small, her devotion and loyalty as a Christian were well-known and respected in the community. Both of my parents were from deeply religious families. My grandfather Howard was 'Mr. Baptist', the pillar of the Baptist Church in the community, and my grandfather Smith was 'Mr. Christian', the tower of the church of Christ in the community.

My mother seemed to have made plans for me when I was a child. We were very poor and the small produce from the little 'one horse' farm barely kept us going. But we had never

heard of the word, 'poverty'. Everybody worked and was happy- As a child, even a baby, I 'rode the cotton sack'. That simply means my mother went to the field to work too. She put me on the cotton sack, while picking cotton, during the early years of their married life, and pulled me on the sack, down the cotton rows many miles. Then, when I became old enough, even as a child, I worked in the field with my father and mother. But one thing I well remember, in the springtime my father thought it was necessary to take me out of school to help him with the crop on the farm—the family did all the work—there was no such thing as hiring or paying someone to work, for there was no money to pay with—but my mother always intervened, saying, 'I will help; Verna must stay in school because we have greater things planned for him in the future. ' Yes, I worked in the field in the afternoons when I came home from school, but very few times was I taken out of school to work. It was my mother who insisted that she wanted me to 'get an education'. Incidentally, I was the first boy in the community to receive a high school diploma, although there were others who entered colleges upon 'examination' without having graduated from high school. "

Brother Howard says though they had no regular classes, no Sunday night services and though they had only occasional preaching as a preacher passed by, yet, because of the faith of his grandfather and his loyalty to the Lord and His church, his mother's faith never wavered and her love for the Lord's church never weakened. So strong was her faith that he says when she learned, while he was away in Texas, that he was baptized and had preached his first sermon, that it was the greatest thrill of her life. How different to many mothers today. May God increase such families as the Hardy Howards and the V. E. Howards.

May God bless you, brother Howard, you and your family and World Radio. May it continue to encircle the

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world so that many may hear the Lord say, "Enter thou in. " May your contributions continue to increase and may White's Ferry Road Church and you have one of the great missionary works of this age.

Your friend and brother in Christ,  
Ernest Rosenthal Harper  
November 1, 1970

Elders, White's Ferry Road Church of Christ, West Monroe, Louisiana: The book, "35 Years, Are You Listening?" is a splendid compliment to the completion of 35 years of radio preaching by a great man of God, brother V. E. Howard. Brother Howard has devoted his time and means to the plain teaching of God's Word. He can now be heard over 74 stations throughout North America. We have been richly blessed to have him as our speaker for our English broadcasts on World Radio. It is our great pleasure to commend both the book and his continued broadcasting of God's truths.

Elders, 12th, Walnut, & Hazel Street Church of Christ, Texarkana, Texas: Many there are in the brotherhood who have known V. E. Howard longer, but we are confident that there are few who have known him as closely and as intimately as those of us at the 12th, Walnut and Hazel Street congregation. Needless to say, to know the man intimately and to associate with him closely is to love, admire, and respect him for his many great qualities as a man and as a minister of God.

Space will not permit an enumeration of those qualities. Suffice it to say that we are firmly convinced that the church can go forward with its true mission in the world so long as there are men in the brotherhood like V. E. Howard, who have the wisdom to detect, the courage to fight, and the faith to overcome the many and varied threats (from within and without) to the purity of the Gospel that was given by the Holy Spirit and recorded by inspired men of God.

It is encouraging to us to know that a part of his work

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will be preserved for future generations in this book, "35 Years—Are You Listening?" We commend it to all and pray God's blessing upon it. Brother Howard has been serving this congregation with us as an elder for several years.

**W. A. Bradfield, Freed-Hardeman College:** I am so happy that Brother Howard is publishing the new book entitled, "Thirty-five Years, Are You Listening?" I know this will be great. I am interested in it very, very much and will promote it in every way that I have opportunity. I have heard Brother Howard preach for many years both personally and over radio. I think he is one of the finest radio preachers that I have ever heard. I hope the book will have wide circulation. I know it will do good everywhere that it is read.

**Frank Pack, Pepper dine College:** I have known Brother V. E. Howard and his family for a number of years, and had the privilege of having one of his children as a student of mine. He has had a tremendous influence by means of radio in preaching and teaching the truths of New Testament Christianity to a wide listening audience. Across the years he has experienced a great success as thousands of people have responded to his messages with questions, inquiries for further information and help. I am happy to salute him on the completion of 35 years of regular radio preaching. The amount of good done by this means as the radio enters into countless homes and lives cannot be calculated. Congratulations and best wishes, Brother Howard.

**Dr. F. W. Mattox, President, Lubbock Christian College:** V. E. Howard's great sermons over the radio for years have given people an understanding of the gospel of Christ in clear and concise terms. It has been impossible for a person to hear without appreciating the Gospel more. Only eternity can judge the good V. E. Howard has done through his powerful

**correct** image of New Testament Christianity to more than **probably** any other man in the brotherhood, except perhaps Batsell Barrett Baxter in his work in the Herald of Truth.

**LeRoy Wood, Superintendent, Southern Christian Home:** Another excellent way to spread the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ.

**Hulen L. Jackson, Minister:** For about 30 years V. E. Howard and devoted wife have been close friends of mine. Often I have enjoyed the hospitality of their Christian home and have with pride seen their children grow into active and **valuable** members of the Lord's church. Likely, I heard some **of** his early or first radio sermons and he did pioneer this type of Gospel preaching in Texas. Back when many brethren **doubted** the wisdom of such preaching and felt it accomplished little, V. E. Howard kept insisting that it was the way of reaching the masses. His golden voice continued to ride the waves in carrying the Gospel to thousands. His audiences through the years have continued to grow and now his voice **is** heard around the world. But, thank God, he still preaches the plain, yet powerful Gospel of Christ. Wherever I go in preaching people ask about V. E. Howard and comment favorably on his great preaching and the good they think his program is doing and has done through the years. Brother V. E. Howard believes the Book and preaches it. That is the great need of this hour. God bless him and grant him many **more** years.

**Dr. Walter H. Adams, Dean, Abilene Christian College:** I **know** of no one who has contributed more to the spread of the Gospel through radio preaching than has Brother V. E. Howard. I am sure there is no way to estimate the great **amount** of good that can be done through this medium of communicating the Gospel. Brother Howard has certainly

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taken advantage of that which the Lord has provided in this respect. I am happy to see fifty-one of his outstanding sermons put in printed form. This, too, should do a great deal of good.

**Batsell Barrett Baxter, Chairman, Department of Bible, David Lipscomb College:** It was during my college years, 30 years ago, that I first heard V. E. Howard preach by means of radio. I was impressed then, as I have been from time to time through the years. Brother Howard has done a tremendous work, oftentimes almost alone. I express gratitude for his life and influence by means of radio. Many will rise up and call him blessed throughout eternity.

**Dr. J. D. Thomas, Abilene Christian College:** I am happy to speak a word of commendation for brother V. E. Howard's marvelous ministry and for this book of sermons which illustrates his ministry in such an excellent way. Brother Howard has probably preached to more people than any man among us over this long period of time, and his lessons have been central to the gospel message. He has hidden behind the cross, and for this attitude, as well as the quality of his lessons, we are grateful.

**Robert D. Bankes, Minister:** V. E. Howard is one of the most outstanding preachers in our generation and has done immeasurable good through the pulpit, radio and private life to advance the cause of Christ to the measure of its advancement in our day. He is a personal friend and fellow preacher of the gospel whom I esteem very highly.

**John Allen Chalk, Minister:** Brother V. E. Howard's long time efforts in radio preaching do not quite reach back as far as KDKA and its October 27, 1920 birthday in Pittsburg, but it does reach back farther than any other living



**brother** in Christ of whom I have knowledge. Not only do brother Howard's efforts have the distinction of age, but, above all, his provocative lessons down through the years **have** also had the distinction of being widely received. We **will** never know how many individuals were led to accept Jesus Christ as the result of V. E. Howard's radio sermons during the past thirty-five years.

In the very prime of his life and radio preaching efforts, **he** brings to World Radio a unique voice that is being heard by millions. I want to personally commend the White's Ferry Road eldership and all who support World Radio for their effective use of V. E. Howard's radio preaching. Everywhere I go' brethren speak sincerely and highly of brother Howard and his radio ministry.

It is my wish and prayer that the book, "Thirty-five Years, Are You Listening?" will be enthusiastically received by brethren around the world. Nothing could more properly celebrate this great soldier's efforts at radio evangelism than a wide acceptance of his very best sermons. May God bless V. E. Howard and World Radio.

**H. A. Dixon (deceased), President of Freed-Hardeman College:** I have been personally acquainted with V. E. Howard for a number of years and have heard him speak on a number of radio broadcasts. He has an excellent voice, a storehouse of knowledge of the word of God, and knows how to present the gospel effectively. I consider him one of our most accomplished men in the field.

I am delighted to learn the book, "Thirty-five Years, Are You Listening?", is scheduled for publication. Look forward toward receiving a copy. I hope that a number of our students will see fit to get a copy of it. Brother Howard's strong stand for the fundamentals of the Faith is much needed in our generation.

## 26 THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, ARE YOU LISTENING?

**Dr. John C. Stevens, President, Abilene Christian College:** I have known V. E. Howard since he first came to preach for a little congregation in my home town of Richland, Texas, in 1932. I considered him a very capable and inspirational preacher then, and have followed his career through the years with the same opinion.

V. E. Howard has done a great work. He is unselfish in giving of his time and talents without ever having been concerned about remuneration for his work. He loves the Lord and he loves those who serve the Lord, as well as the people who ought to be serving the Lord but who are not.

The first trip I ever made to Abilene Christian College was with V. E. Howard in the summer of 1934. I became a freshman in the College that fall. V. E. did some preaching along the way and helped to encourage me to preach the gospel.

I trust that this new book, "Thirty-five Years, Are You Listening?", which will contain 51 of the most requested sermons during the past 35 years of V. E. 's radio preaching, will accomplish much good, as his other preaching and publications work have done. I sincerely hope and pray that there will be many, many years of fruitful service for V. E. and his wife, Ruth, in the years ahead.

**Art Haddox, Elder, Highland Church of Christ, Herald of Truth:** Brother Howard, I know of no finer thing you could do for the world (saved and unsaved alike) than to make available in book form some of the great messages of God. Those of us involved in the preaching of the gospel by radio and television owe you a debt of gratitude for pioneering this field of work. Those of us connected with the Herald of Truth are so thankful to be "partners" with you, World Radio, and others in the greatest work on earth. Only God in heaven can possibly know the ultimate good being

**accomplished** through His servant, V. E. Howard. May God **bless and** keep you is my prayer.

**Dr. W. Joe Hacker, Jr., Chairman, Bible Department, Harding College:** As a young man I remember seeing pictures of Brother Howard surrounded by an avalanche of mail. **I thought** then how wonderful it must be to be able to be so effective in preaching the gospel of Christ. Through the years **my** admiration for Brother Howard and his ministry has increased. This book of his containing his most popular radio addresses will be a welcomed addition to the library of evangelistic preaching. He is one of the great radio preachers **of our** day. I am grateful that his "best" will be preserved for **all to read.**

**Gary Colley, Minister:** Simple, clear and forceful. Though appreciated by contemporaries, the success of any **man's** influence in preaching the Word of God will only be known in eternity. It is the responsibility of every Gospel **preacher** to patiently and faithfully discharge his labors to the fullest of his talents. Brother V. E. Howard has done these things in a very commendable way, over many years, **seeking** neither the favor nor the applause of man but the **approval** of God. The simple story of the cross is constantly **seen in all** of his works.

**Dr. Clifton L. Ganus, Jr., President, Harding College:** **Brother** V. E. Howard has had a very long and effective radio **ministry.** **Untold** millions have heard the gospel from his **heart and** only God can evaluate the harvest of his labors. **May** the Lord continue to bless him in His service.

**B. C. Goodpasture, Editor, Gospel Advocate Company:** **I am glad** to hear that a volume of Brother Howard's radio **sermons** is **to** be published. The sermons are clear, scriptural and convincing.

## 28 THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, ARE YOU LISTENING?

**Noble Patterson, Editor, Fort Worth Christian Journal:**

As a small boy I knew brother V. E. Howard when he did his first preaching at Powell, Texas, just east of Corsicana. Also, his wife, the former Ruth Jackson, was my first Sunday School teacher. I have followed with keen interest the highly successful radio ministry of brother Howard through the past thirty-five years. I feel, without doubt, that brother V. E. Howard has done more for the church, through radio preaching, than any individual among us today. I predict that "Thirty-five Years, Are You Listening" will be welcomed by brethren throughout the entire world and it is certainly a most fitting tribute to such a faithful gospel preacher.

**G. K. Wallace, Evangelist, Author:** It has been my pleasure to have been acquainted with brother V. E. Howard ever since he began preaching. I have watched his radio work and listened to him for a long time, and I rejoice and thank God for the fact that he preaches the gospel without fear or favor. He is neither rude nor sarcastic, but is firm and uncompromising. Brother Howard understands the old Jerusalem gospel and preaches it with great power.

**Don H. Morris, Chancellor, Abilene Christian College:** I have known V. E. Howard for more than forty years. He loves the Bible and the truths that it contains for us human beings.

It is likely that during his thirty-five years of radio work he has preached to more people than any other person of our age. His clarity of statement and his convincing delivery make it so that he moves many people to action.

The book of fifty-one of his sermons will be, I believe, of much help to all Christians and especially to those who are trying to find effective ways to preach the gospel.

**Dale R. Larsen, President, York College:** The work of

brother V. E. Howard, as he has preached the gospel over the air for these many years, has truly left its mark in many corners of the world. As a native of the North Central States and one who has been vitally concerned with the establishment and the strengthening of the church in this mission area, I have been very grateful for the numerous contributions made through radio by brother Howard. The church in the northern part of our nation has grown steadily, and brother V. E. Howard's radio preaching has made definite progress toward this end.

**T. N. Putnam, Superintendent, The Tipton Home:** Brother V. E. Howard is a life-long friend of children's homes and has done much in promoting the efforts of the church and Christian friends in caring for the fatherless, neglected, and underprivileged children throughout the nation. He and sister Howard are certainly wonderful Christian people that have spent their life for the Lord.

**Dr. Lowell G. Perry, Director Radio and Television, Abilene Christian College:** I admire his work from a number of standpoints. First of all, this radio work has taken a tremendous amount of time and physical labor on his part. I also admire him for going ahead, week by week, supporting this ministry, financially, himself. I know that he had assistance for part of this broadcasting, but I am also sure much of it he financed personally. I admire him for selecting a particular audience and directing his sermons over these 35 years to that audience. I am afraid that too many of us in religious broadcasting don't know our audience as well as brother Howard knows his. I also admire him for his determination in saying those things he believed needed to be said. It would be wonderful if more of us were as dedicated to spreading the Gospel by radio.

### 30 THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, ARE YOU LISTENING?

**Dr. Thomas B. Warren, Chairman, Department of Bible, Freed-Hardeman College:** It has long been my opinion that brother V. E. Howard is one of the truly outstanding preachers of the Gospel of this generation. His dedication to truth and righteousness and his faithfulness to the Christian life are clearly recognized by those who know him best. I rejoice to know that this book of sermons is being published.

**Frank L. Cox, Editor, Minister's Monthly:** Millions upon millions all over the world have heard the voice of V. E. Howard. The voice of this marvelous man is a voice that enlightens, that elevates, that ennobles. How happy were we when we learned that some of his wonderful sermons were to be printed! Fortunate is the person who has before him the unusual book: 35 Years — Are You Listening? Now we can study his sermons over and over!

**Dr. James O. Baird, President, Oklahoma Christian College:** V. E. Howard is one of the dynamic and forceful personalities who has blessed the church in this generation. His voice has reached out by means of radio to touch the lives of thousands and thousands of people. He is articulate, clear and Biblical. He does not hesitate to see issues and to bring full light of his sound, Biblical knowledge upon those issues.

**E. Claude Gardner, President, Freed-Hardeman College:** V. E. Howard, internationally known, is a great preacher. He has been a great and successful proclaimer of the gospel for many decades. His 35 years tenure of radio preaching is an amazing and remarkable record. Through his preaching multitudes have been saved and strengthened, the lost have been found and congregations have been established. Brother Howard is, as Paul requires, "faithful" and "able" (2 Timothy 2: 2). He is faithful to the church, to the Bible and

in his manner of life. He has the ability to get the message across. His trademark of "Are you listening?" is indicative of his real concern that his hearers understand what the Bible teaches. Brother Howard is a Bible preacher and this is a real compliment to any preacher. He preaches "relevant" sermons. They adhere to the Bible; they are distinctive; and they embody the pure and full gospel of Christ. V. E. Howard is a dynamic, courageous, effective, gospel preacher. In my judgment he is doing some of the best preaching being done in the brotherhood today. I salute V. E. Howard for his wonderful work.

**Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Evangelist, Author:** The radio ministry of V. E. Howard has been an era of gospel preaching through the channels of the air covering a full generation of our time. I have been among his listeners over the years and I have never heard him preach a syllable of error on any subject nor voice a note of compromise of the truth in any area, nor has he withheld any part or portion of the gospel truth as has been so often done to accomodate radio programs. For this one-third of a century plus, Brother Howard has preached the full gospel of Christ with humility, devotion, simplicity and power. He has presented to countless thousands the scriptural concept of the New Testament church. He has upheld the cause of Christ with grace and dignity — and I honor him personally for his noble work, and commend his world program to the entire brotherhood as a pattern for radio preaching which could well be imitated by others all over the nation.

**Roy H. Lanier, Sr., Dean, Bear Valley School of Preaching:** I regard Brother V. E. Howard as one of the really great gospel preachers of this generation. I have known him nearly that many years and have followed his work rather consistently. *I* wrote him recently that I never cease to be

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amazed at the amount of radio preaching he has done and is still doing. His radio work has been outstanding for several reasons. First, he has done more of it than any other man among us. Second, he has done it without begging the brotherhood continually for money. Third, his preaching has been sound. I have never heard anyone question the soundness of any of his sermons. Fourth, his preaching is conservative. He has not wasted his time and money discussing questionable themes, nor has he used the radio to promote brotherhood organizations which would detract from the primary work of saving the lost. Fifth, his preaching has been distinctive. By this I mean that most of his sermons contain lessons which cannot be taught by denominational preachers. It seems that he has not used the "canned" sermon outlines of the outstanding denominational preachers of this generation. And, last, he has not used the radio to promote his personal interests. The fact that he has made his radio sermons live on in the books he has published compounds his contributions many times. I am happy to be on his list of personal friends. I feel honored that he sent me complimentary copies of all of his books, most of them being autographed. We use his "What Is The Church of Christ?" as a text in the Bear Valley School of Preaching. We think every preacher should be familiar with the material contained in it. He is to be commended for his characteristic unselfishness in allowing his material to be used to support the two greatest efforts at evangelizing the world in our time. May he live long to ask the world if it is listening to God's message of love and mercy.

**Tillman B. Pope, Minister:** In the summer of 1931, brother V. E. Howard stayed with me a week while I conducted a meeting at Ward's Chapel, near Farmerville, La. He copied outlines of my sermons and followed my presenta-



tion of lessons. I learned immediately that this 19 year old boy had a great potential as a gospel preacher. I have observed his ministry from the beginning and have lived to see him become one among the most able preachers in the Lord's church today. Through him the church has been made stronger and the world has been made better. He loves radio preaching and for more than 35 years millions have heard his sermons. Ruth, his beloved wife, has stood faithfully by him throughout the years of his ministry. Their three children are rooted and grounded in the faith. This family has stayed with God and God has stayed with them. God has blessed them with material wealth and they have used it to the glory of the Lord and His church. My wife and I consider them among our dearest friends on earth. I am thankful for the forthcoming book, "35 Years, Are You Listening?" I trust its circulation will be great and be the means of salvation of souls.

**J. L. Hines, Minister:** It was in October, 1930, that I, a militant preacher of the gospel, in the city of Corsicana, Texas, walked casually into a new Thorn McAnn shoe store, which had as its manager, a young man, 18 years of age, whose name was Verna Howard. I met the new manager, who with a gleam in his eyes said: "May I serve you?" "Yes, " I said, "Do you have a pair of shoes that would fit me?" Verna said, "What size, please?" "Size 12AAAA, " I replied. Verna laughed and said, "I am afraid I cannot fit you. " He didn't have my number, but I had his number! At this point, we turned our conversation into a religious discussion. The Corsicana church was filled with young people, so I invited Verna to attend our service. Verna became an attendant at the Fifth Avenue church, and in a short time I baptized him into Christ. From the very beginning, this young convert took an interest in singing and studying the Bible. V. E., with

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several other young people of the fifth Avenue church was always ready to assist in singing at funerals and other church activities.

At Corsicana, Verna met Miss Ruth Jackson, a faithful member of the church. I performed their marriage ceremony. Since this young couple was so interested in church work, I suggested that they attend Abilene Christian College.

I have seen the Howards, in the valley and in the shadows, combatting many foes. I have seen them in darkness and in sunshine. I saw this young preacher march forth as a true soldier of the cross. I have seen him in the thickest of the fight. I have stood with this soldier of the cross when it seemed that the Satanic forces would overcome, but V. E. never gave any ground to the devil, for he fought on and with telling effect he pushed the battle to a successful conclusion, Verna E. Howard, through faith, has climbed to the top of the mountain, never compromising, until today he stands on the mountain heights and is proclaiming the gospel to hundreds of thousands with a spirit filled enthusiasm, "ARE YOU LISTENING?"

I bid Godspeed to my true friend. More power to you, Verna. Today, after sixty years as a preacher of the gospel, I am in the shadows, while Verna is in the sunshine; but one day we will eat from the TREE OF LIFE in the city that is fairer than day. God bless you and may He keep you and your fine family ever humble and Christian.

**John W. Calvert, Jr., Superintendent of Sunny Glen Children's Home:** "35 Years — Are You Listening?" by Brother Howard is a rare collection of sermons telling the world about our Lord and Savior. This book is a must for every library. Nowhere can there be found a more devoted or dedicated Christian than Brother Howard.

**Hank Tankersley, Dallas, Texas:** Please be assured that

your contribution to the cause of Christ is appreciated by not only myself, but literally thousands of others across the country.

**Western Christian College, Weyburn, Saskatchewan, Canada** — Telegram: We share with you the joy of this wonderful occasion. You have given thirty-five wonderful years of service. We are still enjoying your visit to our campus and appreciate World Radio so much. Congratulations and may God bless you. From all of us at Western Christian College.

W. L. Howard, Mayor, City of Monroe, La., Rome, Italy — Telegram: Congratulations on 35 years of radio work. We **are** all proud of this great work and the good which has been accomplished. Sorry we cannot be with you but send our **love** and prayers for continued good work and good health.

**Reuel Lemmons, Editor, Firm Foundation:** Perhaps no man in the church has ever preached the Gospel to as many people over the span of time as has brother V. E. Howard. His Gospel messages have covered the Western Hemisphere for more than a third of a century. His pioneering efforts, largely at his own expense, in getting the Gospel out where the people are by the means of radio will be a lasting contribution to the history of churches of Christ. We owe a great debt to men like brother Howard for untiring efforts and expenditure of self and means to reach the lost world with the saving Gospel.

## In Appreciation

I am grateful, indeed, for the most generous and gracious commendations from brethren in this book and many others not in the book. As I read these words from brethren, whom I love in the Lord, I feel so unworthy. My heart is filled and overflowing with appreciation. Surely, the Lord's servants are the greatest people on earth. What a joy and inspiration Heaven holds for God's people. Words are inadequate to express my feelings. The Lord has been good to me and the expressions of encouragement and appreciation from so many brethren and friends help to establish my faith more firmly.

*In Appreciation* for my brethren and friends who have encouraged me in this radio ministry and who have given moral and financial support to the radio work through the years...

*In Appreciation* of the vast unseen audience, perhaps numbering into millions, for the thousands and thousands of letters of encouragement and inspiration I have received from listeners in many parts of the world, including every state of the United States...

*In Appreciation* for my parents, Hardy and Corine Smith Howard, now past four score years of age, who have lived a very useful life for God, the Lord's church, and true principles of Americanism...

*In Appreciation* for my wife, Ruth, and all members of our family who have encouraged and assisted me so much in my radio ministry...

I dedicate this volume and declare the proceeds from the sale of this book for the purpose of preaching the gospel by radio.

V. E. Howard

It seems only yesterday, yet it was more than a third of a century ago when I first stood before a microphone to speak to an unseen audience. I was young, but radio was even younger. The first radio station, now WWJ, Detroit, began a daily broadcast August 10, 1920, some 14 years earlier. Some two months later, November 2, 1920, KDKA, Pittsburg, began regular broadcasting by presenting the Harding-Cox presidential election returns. President Warren G. Harding was the first president of the United States (June 14, 1922) to speak over radio.

When I first heard a radio I was 13 years of age and under no circumstance could one have convinced me that I would be preaching the gospel by radio ten years later. Our family never owned a radio until after I was graduated from high school. The beginning of my radio work now seems more like a pleasant dream.

I was first inspired to do radio preaching by having listened to the late W. L. Oliphant, minister, Oak Cliff Church, Dallas, Texas, and the late Hall L. Calhoun, minister, Central Church, Nashville, Tennessee. Those brethren stood almost alone, preaching the gospel by radio in those early days of radio and, in my opinion, they were top quality broadcasts. I was inspired to become a public speaker by having listened to the late Herbert Hoover on radio while he was president of the United States.

The 52 sermons in this collection were prepared and presented for a 30 minute format radio program. A few of them are full 30 minutes. Most of them were 15 to 18 minutes in length. They constitute some of the most requested sermons during the 35 years, most of which were

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presented, with some modifications, on World Radio in the year, 1969. Many of the sermons in this book have been edited and especially adapted in small booklet form for distribution by churches and individuals. We hope to print one million copies of the booklets in 1971 for distribution.

My radio work began in Hot Springs, Arkansas, December, 1934. Soon after I began full-time work as the first local preacher for the church in Hot Springs, I decided there had to be a more effective way to reach the masses of people with the gospel than just preaching to the small congregation of Christians and some visitors meeting in a small building on Hazel Street. I first submitted the idea of a radio program to the brethren of the congregation. They agreed that it would be a good thing to do, but they considered it next to impossible to get time on the radio station for such an unknown (to radio station management), small church. Besides, they had just begun their first work with a full time minister, who was a young preacher with no radio experience, and the contribution of some \$30. 00 per week would not allow expenditure for radio time.

I admit this response was less than encouraging, but I knew that there were good people, dedicated Christians, in that small congregation; there had to be to launch out on such a program with a full time minister with so few in number (about 50 members) and with such limited financial abilities of most of the members. But I had faith that somehow the Lord would provide if we could get time on radio station KTHS, which was then a recognized quality station heard throughout a great part of the nation.

I made an appointment with the manager of the radio station. Today I consider it one of the most important business appointments I ever made. The manager was most attentive, but replied that I was perhaps too young and had

no radio experience. Furthermore, he courteously informed me that he had never even heard of the church of Christ in his life. Not only that, when he learned that we did not use mechanical instruments of music in worship he informed me that he knew that their station, with its rating, would hardly be the one to broadcast such a program.

After having visited with the manager several minutes, I suggested that if he would give us a conditional contract, I would be pleased to agree to discontinue the broadcast after the first program if it were not of such quality as he desired on the radio station. Needless to say I was thrilled when the very first broadcast brought a flood of mail, a great part of which was from those who had never heard such a program, especially without instrumental music. I was delighted that several commended the "boy preacher" for his radio sermon, and the congregational singing (which was directed by the "boy preacher"). The manager was very much pleased. Within a few months, time was given to us by the radio station without charge. The broadcasts continued as long as I was in Hot Springs — from 1934 through part of 1938.

In 1938 I moved to Conway, Arkansas, to preach for the church and do more work in college at Arkansas State Teachers College. Previously I had attended Abilene Christian College and Harding College. Before leaving Hot Springs, however, through the assistance and cooperation of brother E. R. Harper, in Little Rock, I was able to continue radio work.

In 1939, I accepted an invitation to preach for the Johnson Street church in Greenville, Texas. There was no radio station in Greenville at the time. However, the church contracted with station KPLT, Paris, Texas, to broadcast our weekly Sunday evening services by remote control. The Broadcast was very effective. Many times our audience for

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evening worship was larger than Sunday morning attendance.

### Decisions to Make

Many times, we make decisions which are difficult to make because of circumstances. One of the first, perhaps one of the most important in connection with radio, was made while speaking on KTHS in Hot Springs. I was offered a part time position on KTHS as an announcer and news broadcaster. This was a great temptation to me. First, because the supplementary income was needed so badly to go with my \$25. 00 per week total income from the church on which I had to support my wife and two children. Secondly, I was young, radio was young, and I was told that there was a "place" for me in radio. I had to make a decision. I requested time to think it over. It was not easy until it dawned on me one evening that I would be expected to make the commercial announcements for a beer firm, which sponsored a news broadcast I would present. I have always thanked the Lord that he helped me and I had the faith to make the right decision to decline the offer. Perhaps that decision is one reason the Lord has helped to "make a place" for me in radio. I am thankful that radio station manager did tell me there was a place for me in radio even though it may have been different from what he expected.

The next important decision, relative to radio, came in 1944 when I decided to give up full-time work as a minister of a local church and devoted my life to preaching the gospel by radio and conduct gospel meetings. It was then I turned to more powerful radio stations to help accomplish this task. I contacted Basil Doran of Dallas, who formerly assisted W. L. Oliphant on a program over KRLD for several years. The broadcast had been discontinued. I asked brother Doran if he would provide a chorus if I were able to get a contract on



KRLD. He assured me that he would be glad to do so, but was sure we would be unable to get a contract with the Station because of the circumstances under which the former program, presented by the Oak Cliff church and brother Oliphant, was discontinued..

I made an appointment with Mr. Clyde Rembrant, then manager of KRLD. I left his office with a contract on KRLD. I showed the contract to brother Melvin Wise, then minister of the Sears & Summitt church of Christ in Dallas. He said he could hardly believe it for they and other churches in Dallas had been trying to secure a contract with the station for several months, having offered to pay a year in advance, without success. I then suggested that I would be glad for them to have the contract I had secured from KRLD, if acceptable to the station. Satisfactory arrangements were made and Sears & Summitt church (with fellowship of 26 churches of Christ in Dallas) began the broadcasts. The program is still on KRLD, but now under the direction of the Skillman Avenue Church and brother John Banister.

It was in 1944 I secured a contract for time on KWKH, Shreveport, and XEG, Monterrey, Mexico. These powerful stations, with other Mexican stations, provided an audience in every state in the nation and several other countries. Literally thousands and thousands of letters have been received from the radio audience through the years. More than a million free copies of sermons have been mailed. For some 14 years the broadcasts on KWKH were under the sponsorship of the Portland Avenue Church of Christ (now Lake Shore Drive) with several other congregations assisting.

The series of twenty-four sermons on "What Is The Church of Christ?" brought what is believed to be the largest response ever given a religious broadcast in radio history. We mailed some **75, 000** free copies of **the** sermons. The sermons

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are now in the fourth edition in book form.

The title of the book, "What Is The Church of Christ?", seemed unusual at first. When first presented to my journalism teacher at Arkansas State Teachers College in 1939, she suggested that I use it because she thought it would "live." She was not a member of the church of Christ. As far as I know, the title had not been used in such composition before. I am delighted that it has been commonly used since.

For some 25 years the programs were known as the Gospel Hour. Many times we were discouraged, not knowing if we would be able to pay for the radio time. Not a few times "grocery money" went to pay for radio time and my income was very limited. A few times it seemed hopeless, with past due accounts at the radio stations and thousands of requests for copies of the sermons. Today, as many times in the past, I thank God for his abundant grace and favors. Without His providence and blessings we would be as nothing. To me, God's mercy and providence were greatly manifested in 1952. After major surgery I was considered to be dead for three minutes; but, by the grace of God, I have been able to preach to additional hundreds of thousands and baptize hundreds since then.

I am grateful that my wife, Ruth, and the children were understanding and cooperative through some trying times in the church and in business. We began our business literally with one show case, under adverse circumstances. Much of the time, when the children were growing up, I was away from home conducting gospel meetings, sometimes twenty meetings per year. And, of course, it was necessary for me to maintain general management of our business, which grew year by year, and carry on the radio work, a weekly production, even as today. For 25 years I was producer and speaker.

My family has enabled me to accomplish much of whatever attainments I may have reached. We are proud of **our** children, all faithful Christians. Our two sons, Jasper and **Edgar** (Ed), associated with me in business, (Jasper, now **president** of our company and Ed, executive vice president) **have** made valuable contributions to my radio work and **other** work in the church. Because of their business abilities **and** leadership, I have been able to do much for the cause of **Christ** which I could not have otherwise done.

### **Experiences**

Radio, like most other industries, has experienced a **great** change. Well do I remember' when the first WIRE RECORDER came along. I have had wire recordings of sermons "tied in knots, " wrapped around my neck, and all **over** the room. What a mess! Yes, we had the large record, a 16 inch disc, the dignified name of which was "Electrical Transcription. " Then came along the tape recorder, which **has** been the "old faithful. "

Several unusual things have happened during the course of time on our broadcasts. I confess I made one mistake one **time that** really "shook me up. " It taught me a lesson — that **was** — take time to listen to what you say before you broadcast it to others. It happened like this.

In the early days of making tape recordings for broadcast I had no studio in which to produce programs and Very little equipment. My studio was the living room, bedroom, bathroom, closet, garage, or almost any place where I could go to. get away from the noise of the telephone, squeaking doors, the voices of children talking, laughing, or crying. One night, about 1: 00 o'clock in the morning, after having worked for hours to produce a program, I was weary after having reworked the program several times; I did something that might well have shaken me

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and the audience had it been heard on the air. I was in the living room reworking the first minute of my introduction on the tape. Just then a car came racing down the street, with the horn full blast, all of which went right on the tape as I was talking. I was disgusted and in the middle of a sentence, I slapped my knee and said, "The cotton-picking thing can go tonight; I am tired. "

I knew this was on the tape, but left it on, fully intending to rework that part of the tape the next day before mailing to KWKH in Shreveport. I forgot it and mailed the tape! Sunday morning when the time came to come on the air, I remembered what I had done. I almost had heart failure! How could anybody ever explain that to the brotherhood and to thousands of radio listeners, I thought, among other things. "The worst I have ever done in all my put-together, " I remarked to my wife, who couldn't understand why I was so shaken. It was too late to call the radio station. But that radio announcer, thank the Lord, saved my neck. In "cueing" in the program he caught it, and there were a few moments of silence. Those were precious silent moments for me. From that day until now I always auditioned a recorded program before sending it to a radio station.

Another unusual thing happened during the days of the "Electrical Transcriptions" — the 16 inch record. I was speaking on the subject of "Repentance" and the needle "stuck. " It repeated over and over and over again — seemed like for five minutes - **YOU MUST REPENT! YOU MUST REPENT! YOU MUST REPENT! YOU MUST REPENT!** Evidently the announcer had gone for a "coffee break. " Couldn't have "stuck" in a better place though! Many other experiences and unusual things could be added.

Radio is still exciting and challenging. I enjoy every

minute of it. Seldom do I miss listening to the broadcast.

It has also been my pleasure to conduct Singing Broadcasts heard by great audiences. In the early 1940's, I conducted a singing broadcast from the Municipal Auditorium in Greenville, Texas, which was attended by more than 2000 people. The singing was broadcast "live" over the Texas State Network of some 20 stations. Presently we are conducting the annual "Gospel Sing Song Till Midnight" at the Walnut Street church of Christ in Texarkana, with some 1, 000 singers participating, broadcast "live" over a part of the World Radio network. The response, with mail from some forty states, Canada, and parts of South America, has been overwhelming. The radio stations carry a full hour of the program at their own expense.

The beginning of a radio program today is much different from the time of my beginning. There are so many diversified interests competing for every minute of one's time every hour of the day. The time of broadcast, the station, the quality of program, and the ability of a speaker to "hold" a radio audience are important factors. It is so easy to turn, or not turn, the dial knob. One may have an audience, or he may not have an audience, but millions are listening to radio regularly.

There is hardly any way to completely evaluate the power and influence of radio. The impact is felt every hour and every day. It would be difficult to determine its influence on us in many avenues of life. We react daily to impressions received from what we hear on radio. Those impressions are repeated so frequently that little children may often repeat commercials and jingles and never miss a word or a beat. A person who listens regularly over a period of time to the gospel on radio may learn the truth and completely change his convictions without being fully conscious of the gradual change. It is a process of education. For example, one may say, "Let's go get a coke, " yet, he may select a tall orange. Why? Because, through advertising, with millions of impressions made by the Coca Cola Company, "Coke" is on the brain usually when one thinks of a cold drink.

As a true example of this power and influence of radio I mention an incident that happened several years ago. I was called to visit a man in the hospital. When I arrived, he said, "You may think it strange that I called for you, since I am a Baptist. " I assured him that I appreciated the call, but did not consider it "strange. " However, I inquired, "Why did you call me rather than a Baptist minister?" The very sick man replied, "Well, I have been listening to you on radio regularly more than five years, but since I have been in the hospital I have decided that you are right and I am wrong about some things. " Actually, the man did not make that total decision while in the hospital. For five years he had been in the process of making that decision. When he came to face the reality of death the decision was revealed.

The gospel on radio does not always produce the same results. Two people may listen to the same broadcasts and one may be convinced while the other may rebel. I recall a sad incident some years ago. A man and his wife, who were members of a denomination, both listened to me regularly. The man talked to his wife about them becoming Christians only. His wife was antagonistic. He became seriously ill. On his death bed, a few minutes before he died, he begged his wife to call me to come get him and baptize him into Christ before he died. She was angry and, evidently, very prejudiced. She threw a glass of cold water in his face — her own husband. Moments later his soul went out into eternity! A few days earlier I had stood by his bedside and, at his request, sang the hymn, "Lead Kindly Light." Today, every time I hear that song I think of that precious soul, helpless on his death bed, who went into eternity with a dash of cold water in his face administered by his own wife. May God have mercy!

Another example of the power of radio is revealed by another incident several years ago. It was the beginning day of a gospel meeting on Sunday morning in Nashville, Arkansas. I was there to do the preaching. After the Bible school classes the church had assembled for worship. A little boy, five or six years of age, walked into the pulpit, faced the audience, just before the song director began the singing, and said "This is V. E. Howard speaking. Are you listening?" Then he went to his seat. This young boy had heard me say that every Sunday all of his life, from infancy. His parents never missed a broadcast. This impression was so indelibly made on his heart that it just had to come out. That's radio!

A few days ago a gospel preacher told me about his five year old grandson who heard me speak on the subject, "The Doctor's Orders," on radio. In the address I emphasized

the importance of following the divine prescription, without addition or subtraction, saying, "Yes —No; yes — no; yes - no" concerning certain matters of faith and obedience. The grandfather said a few days later the boy was in his room "preaching" my sermon, emphasizing, as I had said: "In worship: singing — yes; instrumental music — no; believers - yes; babies — no; baptism by immersion — yes; sprinkling — no!" Incidentally, a peculiar thing might be observed here as to how the plain, simple gospel may appeal to both adults and youth. A few days previously an adult, a representative of a manufacturing company, who is not a member of the church of Christ, informed me that he heard the radio address on "The Doctor's Orders, " was deeply impressed with it and desired a copy of it.

Radio can go where man, without such means of communication, could never go. It can go through prison walls, through the "iron curtain, " span oceans and reach man wherever he might be on this earth, in the sky, or on the moon.

Recently the president of a bank, who is not a member of the church of Christ, informed me of an unusual incident that occurred. Two of his friends went fishing early Sunday morning. They were in their boat, on a lake, miles from shore. They had their radio on. One man had opened a can of beer and had begun to drink. They were listening to me on radio. I was discussing the curse of alcoholic drinks. The man threw his can of beer in the lake, stating that he couldn't drink and listen to me. How else could one go to those two men, whom he did not know, leave the land, go out on a lake and search out a boat carrying two souls who needed to hear the gospel, except by radio.

Or, like the man who was driving his automobile down the highway, near midnight, listening to me on the radio. He



was convinced that he should become a Christian. He drove into a city, called a gospel preacher, was baptized into Christ, then continued his journey "rejoicing in the Lord. " That's radio, too.

Or, like the prisoner on death row in Illinois State Prison who heard me, and after studying the Bible and comparing it with the messages of other radio evangelists, decided to become a Christian only.

Or, like the lady in Dallas, Texas, who had never had any association with members of the church of Christ. She listened to me regularly on WFAA, read copies of the sermons, studied her Bible, called Hardeman Nichols, a gospel preacher, to baptize her into Christ. That is radio!

Or, like the man in Hong Kong who wrote that he had obeyed the gospel as a result of my radio sermons and my book, "What Is The Church Of Christ?" He requested permission to translate some of my sermons and send them to his friends in Seoul, Korea. That's the power of radio!

Or, like the congregation of Christians in Brazil which began as a result of World Radio before any missionary ever set foot in the city. A congregation of baptized believers was already meeting and worshipping the Lord when missionaries arrived. That is radio!

Or, like the letter received today from Ghana, West Africa, which says, in part: "Your sermons are very good. They open a light for people. I am a young man of the Roman Catholic Church, but as I begin to read your books I have stopped the church entirely and I have taken the Bible and have done away with the human creed. I have stopped my work as a draftsman and I want to serve the Lord all the days of my life. I am living in a place where people worship idols and sometime go to church. I owe a duty to help them. I need your help. I beg you send more of your books so that

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it will help me. These precious souls are lost and I have brung them Jesus and I beg you to help me in the name of Jesus. I am being troubled by Jehovah's Witnesses. I will be grateful if you will send me some help. "

Or, like a recent letter from a listener in Bayside, New York, New York: "I am a young American who was formerly a rabble-rousing hippy. I carelessly threw aside the teachings of the Almighty and allowed myself to be steeped in sin and degradation. Without the guiding light of my savior I could not see the error of my ways. I allowed myself to be falsely led by communists wishing to destroy our country.

While visiting this area of America I listened to your sermons and began to see the truth. I wish to cleanse myself of my former sins and become a clean, honest American. Please help me to reach my savior. Send me your free Bible correspondence course and a copy of the sermon delivered Sunday night, July 5. Thank you for helping me to eradicate the evil in my body. "

Or, like the letter from British Honduras, Central America: "Last night I was returning home from Central British Honduras with some denominationalists in my car. Turning the radio dial I heard a man preaching on faith. I thought, 'That's one of my brethren.' Then, the preacher said, 'Are you listening?' I said out loud, 'That's V. E. Howard, a friend of mine in the United States.' The broadcast came in loud and clear and I was thrilled" - Luther Savage.

Such letters are, indeed, appreciated and richly rewarding. We have been repaid hundreds of times by such encouraging reports for the time, work, and money spent in the interest of lost souls.

Radio Brazil is an example of the evidence that radio gets results. During the past 12 months, 27, 500 letters from lis-

teners and correspondence course students were received. During the same period some 1500 Bibles requested by listeners were mailed. More than 7, 000 Bibles have been mailed during the past four years. Presently, more than 27, 000 people have enrolled in Bible Correspondence Courses. Think of that! How else could you so effectively reach 27, 000 lost souls with the gospel with so few involved in getting the message to them? Approximately 80% of all the graduates ask for more information either in the form of an additional Bible correspondence course, printed materials, or a personal visit.

Radio is not dead, not even sick, but very much alive. There are more radios in the United States than people; more radios are in operation today than anytime in the history of radio. There is an average of 4. 3 radios per family in the United States. There are more radios in the world than there are copies of daily newspapers. As of January, 1970, there were 4, 269 A. M. radio stations and 2, 471 F. M. radio stations in the United States. Every American family listens to radio on an average of 2 1/2 hours per day. Obviously, radio, as a modern means of communication, may have a tremendous impact on almost every person in the world. Within seconds one's voice may be heard around the world, on any part of the globe, and even on the moon. Radio climbs the highest mountains, spans oceans, goes through impregnable walls and barriers, through the iron curtain, and makes itself a welcome and honored guest in the living rooms and bedrooms of multiple millions, who otherwise might not be reached. How could it be possible to "preach the gospel to every creature, " more than 3 BILLION souls, without the use of this means of communication which God has afforded man? Surely, the Lord included radio when He said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature..." (Mark 16: 15, 16)

## *Are You Listening?*

The question, "Are You Listening?", became a part of my radio addresses early in my radio ministry. It was not a deliberate thing, but became a fixture in my radio presentations as I progressed.

This expression comes forth sometimes unexpectedly to myself. Some two years ago I delivered a Commencement address to the Harding College graduates. To a group like this in caps and gowns it would hardly be fitting to say, "Are you listening?" But it came out! I observed the class seemed a little startled. Last summer I drove into a service station in another state. A young man came up to assist me with service. He looked at me, paused, then pointed his finger and said, "I know you — I'll never forget you. " Being quite surprised, because I did not recognize him, I replied, "Well, who are you?" He said, "I was in the graduating class at Harding College when you said, 'Are you listening?' and you really shook up some of us when you said that. We wondered if somebody was unattentive like one does in the classroom sometimes, and we were afraid to look to see who it was. "

Quite often I receive mail and in the salutation I am addressed, "**Are You Listening?**" Not infrequently, in the body of such letters, when one takes issue with me on something I have said, the writer will emphasize, "**ARE YOU LISTENING?**", then state his position.

A few years ago, while engaged in a gospel meeting in Hughes Springs, Texas, I was speaking one night and a little 3 or 4 year old granddaughter of one of the elders was attending with her grandparents. They were sitting on the second front pew. The little granddaughter secured paper and pencil from her grandmother, and with her back turned to

me and her paper on the seat, she was busy drawing and writing. She startled the audience and me, too, momentarily when I paused with—"Are you listening?" and she turned ground, looked at me and answered, "YEP!"

A microphone soon became the representative of a living audience, real people like I meet every day, and I feel a nearness to them as I speak on the radio. The many thousands of letters I have received through the years have made me feel closer to the audience. Each time I speak on the radio I sense the presence of listeners; sometimes I feel that I am speaking to millions. It is most gratifying, indeed, to meet, personally, those of the radio audience whom I have never seen, especially those who have become Christians. I have traveled across our nation and in many parts of the world. Seldom do I go anywhere but I meet someone of our radio audience whom I had never seen before. Recently, a very gracious soul, past eighty years of age, whom I had never met, grasped my hand firmly and said, with tears in her eyes, "Brother Howard, I love you for what you have meant to my life and my family. I have been listening to you all of my life. " Hardly eighty years, but a rich and rewarding experience for me!

I love to preach the gospel, the simple story of Christ and His love. I am so grateful that brethren in our great brotherhood continue to be dedicated to the support and proclamation of the gospel by means of radio and television. Millions have yet to hear the gospel one time.

I trust that the sermons in this book, heard by hundreds of thousands in the past, may continue to lead souls to Christ, even after my voice has been silenced and my soul is in eternity.

V. E. Howard

November 10, 1970

## THE WILL OF GOD

Friends, I invite your attention to the discussion of the subject, "The Will of God, " the text of which is found in Matt. 7: 21-23: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and in thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity. "

From this reading of God's word we are impressed with the necessity of doing the will of God. To call on the name of the Lord will mean nothing unless we obey the will of God. Jesus said, "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but **he that doeth the will of my Father** who is in heaven. " Our entering the kingdom of heaven will depend on our obedience to the will of the God of heaven.

In Romans 10: 13 the apostle Paul quoted the prophet when he said, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. " In verse 14, he said: "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" In the record the prophet revealed the fact that man is saved by calling on the

Footnote: The title of this address was the subject of the author's first sermon, delivered May 24, 1931, at the Church of Christ, Powell, Texas. It was also the subject of the first radio sermon delivered at the Hazel Street Church of Christ, Hot Springs, Arkansas, December, 1934, over KTHS, where the author served as their first full time preacher, 1934-1938.

name of the Lord, but he cannot call on the name of the Lord unless he believes, and he cannot believe unless he has heard. Heard what, we may ask? Evidently, the will of God, because Jesus said not everyone that calleth, Lord, Lord, shall be saved, but he that doeth the will of God.

### **What Is a Will?**

A will of human origin is a legal instrument through which certain benefits may be received by named persons, or institutions, after the death of the testator. Anyone of proper age is competent to make a will, except persons of unsound minds, infants, and idiots. The testator of a will has something to bequeath to another. The benefits of a will may be received upon certain terms and conditions stipulated in the will. A written will must be signed and witnessed and the will must be probated after the death of the testator.

A last will always annuls any former wills and must be executed after the death of the testator. The testator's name must be given and conditions of benefit plainly expressed. The testator of a will is the master of his own will. No other person has the right to dictate or force conditions or benefits of a will upon a testator.

The courts of our land admit that a testator may revoke his will before his death. Or, a will may be set aside when it has been proven that the testator was not in his right mind when making the will. Also, our courts admit revocation of a will when the properties, or benefits, were disposed of during the lifetime of the testator.

### **Value to Bequeath**

There are many impressive characteristics of a will, or testament. One of the first things with which we are impressed about a will is the fact that the person making the will has something worth bequeathing to another and he has

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heirs to inherit the benefits of the will. Concerning the will of God, surely that is true. God has something to offer man for his inheritance: the most valuable possession ever to be contemplated. All the riches and values of the world combined are incomparable to the eternal inheritance, that fadeth not away, which may be enjoyed through the will of God. God offers, through His will, the salvation of man's soul. In Matt. 16: 28, Jesus said, "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Truly, the will of God offers man the greatest benefit known, or ever contemplated — the gift of eternal life!

Paul, the inspired apostle, declared: "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6: 23).

Peter spoke of the benefits of God's will as an "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (I Pet. 1: 4).

### **Love of the Testator**

Another thing we observe about a will is the fact that the person who makes a will certainly does have tender thoughts and regards toward those who are to be benefited by the will. It is hardly true that a testator would make an enemy the beneficiary of his will. Those whose names are included in a will are highly respected, or loved, by the testator of the will.

Ladies and gentlemen, God has a will. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to do His Father's will: "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4: 34). Surely, the omnipotence and omniscience of the divine persons of God the Father and Christ the Son are unquestionable. The divine beings are qualified in every detail to make a will.



Christ, the testator of God's will, loves all men and has made provisions for all men, with certain qualifications, to be included as beneficiaries of God's will. God's love for man, His tender affections and concern for man's welfare, are beyond question. John made a universal proclamation of God's love when he said: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3: 16).

God's love was so great for man that He gave His only Son to die on the cross that man might be saved by the will of God. God loves all men of earth and made it possible for all men of earth to be benefited by His will, if man is willing to receive the benefits of God's will. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should be saved (2 Pet. 3: 9). Jesus, God's Son, declared, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you" (John 15: 13, 14).

### **Will Signed and Witnessed**

A will should be properly signed and witnessed. Without doubt, Jesus, the Christ, is the testator of the will of God, having given His own blood as His signature of the blessed will of God. His apostles were chosen, as His witnesses, as revealed in Luke 24: 46-49. "Ye are witnesses of these things, " Jesus said. As the chosen witnesses of the Lord, the apostles were to break the seal and administer the will of God, guided by the Holy Spirit, but not until after Christ's death. Jesus commanded His witnesses to "tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high" (verse 49). Also read Acts 1: 1-8. The last will and testament of our Lord was probated in the high court of heaven and executed more than nineteen hundred years ago (Acts 1: 8; 2: 32-38). We shall see the divine probation unfolded in the Scriptures.

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### Beneficiaries Named

A will certainly states the names of those who are to be benefited by the testament. The will of God definitely states the names of those who are to inherit the benefits of the will. In John 8: 31, Jesus said, "If ye abide in my word, then are you truly my disciples. " Furthermore, He declared, "Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you" (John 15: 14). Those named by the Lord, who will qualify to receive the benefits of God's will, are they who obey the commands of the Lord, that is, comply with the conditions and requirements.

We can understand what Jesus meant when He said, "Not everyone that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that **doeth the will** of my Father who is in heaven. " To do the will of God is to comply with its terms, conditions, and qualifications. The Lord of heaven does not show any partiality in the matter. He shows no special favors, to the exclusion of others.

In Mark 3: 33-35, Jesus indicated who are His dearest friends. He said, "Who is my mother and my brethren? and looking around on them that sat about Him, he saith, behold my mother and brethren. For whosoever shall **DO THE WILL OF GOD**, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. " One's obedience to the will of God is the important thing. There are no special favors for anybody's mother and brethren. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10: 34, 35).

There were no special favors, from the viewpoint of God's will, with reference to its conditions for blessings of mankind, even for the mother of Jesus. Yet, my friends, unfortunately there are people today who prefer to follow their parents in religion, even if they are wrong. We must obey the will of God if we expect to enjoy the blessings of God's will. Remember, my mother and your mother did not

make this will. This is the will of God. We must obey His will.

Hear the language of our Lord! Are you listening? "He that loveth father or mother more than' me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10: 37, 38).

#### Last Will-After Death

It is the last will and testament that is valid. A will is not valid until after the death of the testator who made it. In Heb. 9: 15-18 Paul declared: "And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it. For a testament is of force where there hath been death: for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth. "

It must not be forgotten that inspiration declared that a "testament is of force after men are dead. " Furthermore, it was declared, "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10: 9, 10).

My friends, Jesus, the Christ, is the testator of the New Testament, which is the last will and testament of God. There is none other. After the death of Jesus, the last will and testament of God was executed and administered and will continue to be administered until the end of time. The fact that we do have the New Testament, since the death of Jesus, is indicative of the fact that we do not have the Old Testament as our pride in serving God to qualify for the benefits of God's will.

When Jesus died on the cross, the Old Law, the old will and testament, was set aside. It was abrogated by reason of

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the death of Christ, the testator of the New Testament. In Col. 2: 14, Paul wrote: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. "

The Old Testament, as a law and testament to be obeyed, was nailed to the cross when Jesus died on the cross. The Bible declares, "He taketh away the first that He may establish the second" (Heb. 10: 9). The blessings and benefits of salvation are to be received by terms of the "second, " the New Testament, and not the "first, " the Old Testament. These spiritual blessings have been received "through the offering of the body of Christ once for **all**" — **after His death** — for **all** mankind (Heb. 10: 9, 10). If we expect to be saved by the will of God, we must, therefore, obey the will of God revealed in the New Testament and not go back to shadows and types of the Old Testament.

### **Change of Priesthood, Change of Law**

With the change of the priesthood, Christ having become the "priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, " which was "a disannulling of the commandment going before" (Heb. 7: 17, 18), there was the necessity of the change of the law. The **old** law was removed and a **new** law was instituted. The inspired apostle unmistakably affirmed: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7: 12).

Is it not strange that those who contend for observance of the Old Law do not attempt to maintain the Jewish priesthood order, as was practiced under the Old Law? Remember, the Bible says:

"For the priesthood being changed there is made of necessity a change also of the law. "

### **Testator Has Right To Make Conditions**

My friends, the testator of a will always has full power

to make any conditions in the will he may desire. No one has any right to dictate the terms and conditions of the will to the testator. This is true of the will of God. Since Jesus was the testator of the last will and testament of God, no man, nor group of men, has the right to stipulate any condition, or alter any condition in the will of God. If you should write your will, certainly you are aware of the fact that you alone shall state the benefits of that will and the conditions upon which the benefits are to be received. Any undue influence, or force, will not be tolerated by the courts of our land. Christ had every right to include any and every condition He desired in the will of God. Who am I, that I should tell the Lord Jesus that any condition stated in His will is non-essential? Who is the man who has the right to tell Christ, the testator of God's will, "I am your counselor and I want to advise you that I don't think it is essential to observe all the conditions of your will"?

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me!... Are you listening? Do you not know that many preachers and religious teachers are assuming the roles of dictators to the Lord Jesus Christ by attempting to counsel Christ that certain conditions of salvation, revealed in the will of God, are non-essential? It is too bad that Jesus did not have some of the modern preachers and teachers of this world to advise Him what should have been included and what should not have been included in the Lord's will! Poor mortal men, worms and dust of the earth, who would seek to counsel God concerning His will!

#### Will Not To Be Tampered With

One may ask, do men attempt to alter, or modify, the will of God, the very will that offers to mankind an eternal inheritance? Often it is true. For example, one section of the "Will of God reads: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the

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gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 15, 16).

In contrast some would-be wise counselor advises the Lord that He should have stated in this part of the will: "He that **believeth is saved and may be baptized later.** " What a tragic mistake! Such a mistake disqualifies one to receive the eternal inheritance promised in the will of God.

To alter or pervert God's will is a most serious offense. The inspired apostle declared: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1: 8).

### **The Thief on the Cross**

Someone says, if the will of God includes, among other things, baptism as being essential to salvation, why did not Christ tell the thief on the cross that baptism was essential to salvation? This question is evidence of lack of understanding of the will of God!

It must be understood that one's believing or not believing the thief will be saved, with or without baptism, will not affect the destiny of his soul.

I would say that the thief will be saved. Jesus declared, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23: 43). Paradise is that part of the "Hadean world" where the saved go after death to await the resurrection day. Christ went into paradise after His death. He promised the thief that would be his place of abode that day, too. The saved in paradise will receive the crown of life on the morning of the resurrection. We can logically expect the thief to be among the number.

But why is that thief so popular today? Surely, we can assume that this particular thief, the thief on the cross, will not be the only thief to be saved in the day of judgment. The

answer has already been suggested. Somebody decided, "The thief on the cross was not baptized; therefore, no one today need be baptized to be saved, even though Christ did command, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved' (Mark 16: 16). If the thief on the cross will be saved and he was not baptized, why can't anyone today be saved like the thief on the cross without baptism?" Let us consider the matter.

### **The Thief Baptized?**

In the first place, no one could successfully prove the thief was not baptized. It is evident that he, at least, knew something about the Lord's kingdom, for he requested: "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. " Also, it is probable that he lived in the country where many hundreds were baptized by the authority of John, the Baptizer (Matthew 3: 5, 6). Who could prove that the thief was not among that number?

But, beloved, it makes no difference whether the thief on the cross was, or was not baptized, as far as the salvation of man's soul today is concerned. It must be remembered the thief died the same day our Lord died. Both Jesus and the thief were still living when Jesus said, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. " This promise was made before the death of Christ on the cross and that makes the difference. This promise was made before the New Law, the law of grace and truth, the gospel of Christ, was effective. The old law, the Old Testament covenant, was in force during the personal ministry of Christ. He kept the old law, and fulfilled the old law, but removed the old covenant in His death on the cross. Hear the apostle!

"For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained

in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Ephesians 2: 14-16).

### **Last Will and Testament**

The New Testament law, the last will and testament of our Lord, was not effective until after the death of Him who made it. Hear the apostle again! "And for this cause He is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it. For a testament is of force where there hath been death: for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth" (Hebrews 9: 15-17). It is the last will, **after death**, that is effective.

Man is subject to the law under which he lives. For example, someone may declare: "I have decided that I am not going to pay any federal income tax because I have learned that Abraham Lincoln did not pay the income tax we pay. If Abraham Lincoln did not pay the income tax I pay, why should I pay it?" I would not advise that decision.

It is true that Lincoln didn't pay the same income tax we pay today for the very good reason that the federal income tax, like we have, did not become a law until some fifty years after the death of Lincoln.

Today, many are heard to say, "I am not going to be baptized. Baptism is not essential to salvation, because the thief on the cross was not baptized; yet, he was saved. What about the thief on the cross? The thief on the cross was not baptized, therefore, I am not going to be baptized!"

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? You



cannot afford to disobey the gospel of Christ, revealed in the last will and testament of our Lord. The thief lived and died some fifty days before the last will and testament of Christ, which requires baptism for the remission of sins, in the name of Christ, became effective.

It was **after** our Lord's death and resurrection, He declared: "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, and ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24: 47, 48).

But some honest soul inquires, "Did not Jesus say to the woman, 'Thy sins be forgiven?' Yet he did not mention baptism?" This is true, but the declaration was made before Christ died and it must be remembered that "where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of him that made it" (Heb. 9: 16). While Jesus was living, before His death, if He chose to forgive sins by simply saying, "Thy sins be forgiven, " no one would have the right to question His authority to do so. After His death, however, the benefits of His will, including remission of sins, may be enjoyed only by complying with the terms of His will. To enter the kingdom of heaven, He said one must do "the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7: 21). The Lord's will is God's will. (Read John 5: 30. ) God's will became effective after the death of the testator, Christ, God's Son.

A few years ago, while in Canada, I read a report of a man who decided to dispose of his wealth in a most unusual way. He took some \$25, 000 in currency with him to his hotel, began to toss out \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills to the people on the street below. You can imagine what a traffic jam that caused! The police were summoned to restore order. Finally, **the** police prevailed upon the man not to dispose of his **♦25, 000** in such a manner. Then the traffic on the street

below resumed its normal pace, after several happy people had gathered up a few thousand dollars which came so freely floating through the air.

Now, it must be understood that as long as this man was yet living, and the money was his own, he could dispose of it almost any way he desired, even by throwing it out of his hotel window. But, suppose the man had died and left the \$25, 000 to be disposed of according to terms of a will and testament he might have written, could anyone have just taken the money and thrown it out of a hotel window to the people on the street? Surely not, unless the will stated definitely it should be done that way. While the man was living he might choose to dispose of his wealth in such an unusual manner, but after death the wealth would have to be disbursed according to the terms of the will.

Before the death of Jesus on the cross He could say to the woman, "Thy sins be forgiven" (Luke 6: 48). Or, He could say to the thief on the cross, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. " This would in no way invalidate the terms of His will which would be effective after His death. However, after His death and the execution of His will, salvation could not be offered, or obtained, except by terms of His last will and testament. No man on earth has the right to offer salvation for less, or more, than the terms stipulated by the divine Testator in His last will and testament, the gospel of Christ, revealed in the New Testament, this will having become effective after the death of Him who made it.

### **Terms Fully Observed**

Would a person desire to change a will or testament simply because he did not fully understand the wisdom of the testator in certifying certain conditions for an inheritance?

It was reported several years ago that a person in

California died and left a will naming certain beneficiaries to receive a fortune upon complying with certain conditions of the will. The conditions included the unusual procedure of burning the body of the testator to ashes, then disposing of the ashes upon the waters of the Pacific Ocean. Can you imagine the heirs protesting, "We do not see the reason for such unusual actions, therefore, we refuse to follow the instructions. However, we serve notice of our claim and expect to receive the fortune stated in the will"? Can you imagine what they did? The beneficiaries, named in the will, cremated the body and threw the ashes upon the waters of the Pacific Ocean, as directed! The wealth of money was too important for them to question the wisdom of the testator.

How much more important it is for men today to completely submit their will to the Lord's will and, by faith, obey every command of Christ, even though they may not always fully understand the reason for certain conditions Stated in the will. The eternal inheritance is too important to forfeit. Man's wisdom is wholly incapable of judging the infinite wisdom of God and he does not have the right to dictate to the divine testator, Jesus Christ, the terms of God's will. Human dictation, or interpretation, may deceive honest souls who will be lost because they did not obey the will of God. There can be no doubt about the consequences of disobeying the will of God. Jesus declared: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven... " (Matt. 7: 21-23).

"In that day, " the judgment day, many souls will be lost for eternity. Surely, it would be well for every soul to Consider a most important question submitted by the testator of God's will: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

## THE BIBLE, THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD—No. 1

My friends, your attention is invited to a discussion of a subject of great interest to all men of earth. It is concerning the book, **the Book**, the greatest and most wonderful book in all the world. The subject, "The Bible, The Inspired Word of God." The text of this address is found in II Peter 1: 21, "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit. "

The soul of man demands the Bible. The inability of the things of this world to satisfy the aspirations and longings of the human soul is indicative of the need of the Bible, as a guide for man, in seeking a destiny of joy and happiness. Even the nature of man is to worship a being of Deity. His soul demands a guide. Take away the Bible as his guide and he will make another Bible, although it would, of course, not be of divine origin.

The Bible begins with God and ends with man. According to Gen. 1: 1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. " In the beginning was God (Rev. 1: 8). God was the beginning and the Bible begins with God. The Bible ends with man; In Rev. 22: 21 the Bible concludes with, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. " We might say that God is at one extreme end of the Bible and man is at the other. This glorious book, the Bible, is, therefore, a message from God to man to bring him back to God.

Originally, God and man were near to each other. In Gen. 1: 27 it is revealed that: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them. " However, man sinned against God, his

creator, and by reason of sin separated himself from God. Having sinned against God, Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amid the trees of the Garden (Gen. 3: 8). According to verses 23 and 24 of Gen. 3, "The Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man, and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of Life. " Since that day of rebellion against God, man has been separated from God because of his sins.

Ladies and gentlemen, the written word, the Bible, like the Word, Christ, stands in the midst of all the ages, between God and man, stretching one hand heavenward to grasp the hand of God, and with the other hand reaching below to grasp the hand of man and thus unite man with God.

### **Persecution of Translators**

We should thank God today for those great men of centuries past who gave their very lives that we might have the great and glorious privilege of reading our Bibles in our own language without the fear of harm and molestation. Go with me back to the year of about 1320, more than six hundred years ago. In that year John Wycliffe, the great reformer, was born. He was first to translate the entire Bible into the English language, requiring about twenty-two years to translate. Wycliffe's translation was divided into chapters and all of the many copies were written in handwriting. Each copy required about ten months to complete and a single copy sold for 40 pounds. Of course, only a few owned such copies of the Bible. Those who could not afford to buy a copy of the Bible would pay a considerable sum of money to be allowed to read it one hour per day. It is said that a load of hay was sometimes given for only a few pages of it.

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How precious the Bible was in those days. Think of it friends and neighbors, those people paid sums of money just for the privilege of reading the Bible one hour per day. I just wonder how many of you listening to me have the Bible in your home, but you haven't even read it for an hour for days and months, perhaps even years. The precious word of God in your possession, with freedom to read it and teach it to your children, friends and neighbors, the only guide for your soul, and yet it means so little to so many.

Yes, my friends, Wycliffe and thousands of other men and women cherished even the privilege of reading the Bible, God's word. Wycliffe was much opposed in his work of translating the Bible by the Roman Catholics who eventually forbade the reading of this English Bible under the penalty of death. History records a long list of martyrs who died at the stake rather than give up the blessed book, the Bible. Forty years after the death of Wycliffe, the Roman Catholic authorities dug up his bones and burned them, scattering the ashes on the River Swift. He had died of paralysis in 1384.

### **Catholics Burned Bibles and Men**

**In** the year of 1525, William Tyndale, one of the great reformers who was a contemporary of Martin Luther, made an English translation of the New Testament — the first to be printed. Like Wycliffe, his work was done under great difficulties. He found it impossible to carry on his work in England, because of the opposition of the Roman Catholic Church; so, in exile, poverty, and distress he did his work in Cologne and Worms. About fifteen thousand copies of the New Testament were issued and were secretly imported into England in bales of cotton, sacks of flour and by other means. Every effort, however, was made by the Roman Catholics to prevent this Testament from getting into the

hands of the people. All copies that were found by them were seized and destroyed, thousands being burnt at St. Paul's Cross. Finally, Tyndale suffered a torture of death at the hand of the enemies of the Bible, the Roman Catholic Church authorities. On Oct. 6, 1536, he was strangled and then burned at the stake. His last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!" His statue may now be seen on the bank of the Thames, in the very city in which he was not allowed to live. Thank God for those great men who, in the face of death heaped upon them by the enemies of God, helped so much to give to you and me an open Bible which we can read and study for ourselves—to know God's will.

### **Providence**

Sometime we may marvel at the existence of the Bible in the world today. Surely the providence of God made it so. The enemies of the Bible have made every effort in their powers to destroy the Bible, or keep it from man to read for himself. Before the Christ came into the world the oracles of God were committed to the Jews for safe keeping. Although the Scriptures abound with severe denunciation of their ways, foretelling their destruction and scattering them about the world, they religiously preserved the Word from their enemies. The enemies of the Jews were the enemies of the Bible. In all the dreadful persecution of the Jews one of the chief aims was to destroy the Scriptures that made the Jews what they were.

Infidels, from time to time, have devoted their life and spent their strength in trying to destroy the Bible. The hierarchy of Rome has done her best to burn the Bible and its readers completely out of existence. But, thank God, the Bible, unharmed by the unmerciful attacks of unbelievers and scoffers, stands in the world today as the book of all books. It is God's word and cannot be destroyed. I am reminded of a

story I read. It was said that an Irishman built a wall about his house and the wall was four feet wide and three feet high. A neighbor scornfully asked why he was so foolish to build a wall so much wider than it was high. The Irishman replied, "Bedad! I built it that way so that if the storms should come and blow it over it would be higher afterwards than it was before. "

Ladies and gentlemen, the Bible is always higher afterwards than it was before. In spite of all the storms of criticism and infidelity, in spite of all the efforts of Rome to burn the Bible and all who would read it, it holds higher place than ever before.

#### Efforts to Destroy in Vain

Did you know, my friends, that the British Bible Society, since its foundation in 1804, has issued more than 300, 000, 000 copies of the Bible? Hundreds of thousands of copies of the Bible have been distributed throughout the world even in the past few years.

Infidels and critics of the Bible would like to succeed with their high-handed efforts to destroy the Bible, and not a few even today attempt to do so. Voltaire, the noted French infidel, who died in 1778, said that in 100 years from his time Christianity and the Bible would be swept from existence and passed into history. But, do you know what happened? Only 25 years after his death, the British and Foreign Bible Society was organized and gave to the world more than 300, 000, 000 copies of this precious book, the Bible. Voltaire's printing press, which was used to print his infidelic literature, has since been used to print copies of the Bible! Also, the very house in which Voltaire lived has since been used for a storage room for Bibles—Bibles being stacked from the floor to the ceiling, leaving no room for his old infidelic atmosphere. Someone has truly said, "We might as



well attempt to put our shoulder to the burning wheel of the sun, and try to stop it on its flaming course, as to attempt to stop the circulation of the Bible. "

### **Divine Origin**

The Bible is of Divine origin. It is a revelation from a superior Being, revealing the origin, mission, and destiny of man and the origin of the world in which he lives. The Bible is the most majestic book ever known to man. It transcends the magnitude of all books of human origin combined. It is the source of our faith in the great God of Heaven and of the universe.

The finite knowledge and wisdom of man could never have originated this glorious, accredited volume, the Bible. If it were possible to collect all the wisdom of all the mighty men of earth into one master mind, it would still be impossible for such a master mind to even fully comprehend the infinite wisdom of God, revealed in the Bible, much less to presume to be the author of the Bible.

The Bible is the only book known to man that bears absolute and transparent truthfulness. Facts are stated without color or partiality, good and bad alike, concerning both the good and the evil. There is not a word of blame or depreciation of man heaped upon him by the author, regardless of how wicked man might be. Deeds are recorded, both good and bad, and the innermost thoughts and conduct of man's life are exposed without prejudice. There is not a word of praise or blame even of Jesus pronounced by those who recorded His life. With equal fairness it is recorded that some said He was a good man, even God himself, while others said He was of the devil. An uninspired author, writing the biography of Christ, would not have recorded such impartial statements. All books of human origin are partial—either praise or blame, according to the author and his subject

matter.

The Bible is the Word of God. Remember, "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." From this one verse it is evident that the Holy Spirit anticipated the controversy of men concerning the Bible and disposed of two points on which the controversy rests.

First, we are told how the Bible did not come from man. Critics of the Bible affirm that parts of the Bible did come by man, therefore, there are mistakes in the Bible. But the Holy Scriptures are an absolute denial of this claim. The Holy Spirit corrected this false conception more than 1900 years ago when He declared it came not at any time by the will of man. Secondly, we are told how the Bible did come by the Holy Spirit from God. Again, the critics denied the Holy Spirit as the author of the entire Bible. Did you know that there are many of those critics today who will stand in the pulpits of the churches of the land and pose as preachers of the word of God, yet, deny the inspiration of the Bible?

Ladies and gentlemen, think of it! Are you listening?... A preacher stands in the pulpit before the people, proposing to preach the word of God, while at the same time he denies the inspiration of the Bible! We might ask, why does he even presume to preach the word of God?

Many religionists today openly challenge parts of the Bible and deny its inspiration. No wonder they use their time in the pulpit to discuss current events, politics, social security, tall tales, and bed-time stories. It is no wonder that not a few are more concerned about a "social gospel" than they are concerned about preaching the gospel, the power of God to save believers. Many of them do not believe the word of God. But, before these critics came along the Holy Spirit had recorded His own testimony that holy men "spake from

God, being moved, " or inspired, by the Holy Spirit. I tell you that if there is one part of the Bible which is purely of human origin, as the critics declare, then it must follow that the Bible did come at some time by the word of men, and holy men were not always moved by the Holy Spirit when they spoke the word. If this were true, then this plain, solemn declaration of scripture is nothing more than fiction, therefore, unreliable. If this be true, then we may as well dispose of the entire Bible and declare it to be uninspired—just a profane product of man! But the Bible says, "Let God be **true** and every man a liar" (Romans 3: 14).

The products, or fruits of the Bible, are evidence of its credibility and inspiration. The Bible is a challenge to the world. Without the word of God, man has sunk to almost unbelievable depths of ignorance, sin and degradation. Where the Bible, or its influence is not known, men are groping physically, morally, socially, and spiritually in heathen darkness. Jesus issued the great challenge to the world when He declared, "By their fruits, ye shall know them. "

The Bible has lifted man up, quickened his energies, and directed his ideals to high and more noble things of life. The temporal and material blessings which come from the word of God, directly or indirectly, favor both the believer and unbeliever, but the spiritual blessings come only to them who obey the will of God revealed in the Bible, the word of God.

#### The **Bible** Verbally Inspired

The Bible is God's word and is verbally inspired. Nothing is imperfect with God. A very fine needle of the finest quality steel, with the very best of workmanship, under powerful microscopes, would appear as unfinished as the point of a fire poker in contrast to the little stinger of a common wasp. You know why? God made the wasp completely and in every detail, including his stinger. You

may place that wasp's stinger under the most powerful glass, but you will never be able to detect the slightest irregularity because God did a complete, perfect job.

From the beginning, His works were perfect in all details. In Deuteronomy 32: 4 it is revealed: "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. "

Ladies and gentlemen, if the Bible is not verbally inspired then we must conclude that parts of the Bible are from God while other parts originated with man. Then we would be forced to inquire what part of the Bible is inspired, and what part is uninspired? I tell you, my friends, the Bible is verbally inspired.

In spite of all the storms of criticism, in spite of all the combined efforts of infidels, atheists, agnostics, skeptics, modernists and liberals of all time, no error or contradiction has ever been proven to exist in the Scriptures as originally given by God. On the other hand, modernists and infidels have made fools of themselves by toy pop-gun blasts at the word of God and its inspiration. It must not be forgotten that the apostle declared: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1: 21).

Moses said, "God spoke all these words, " as you read in Exodus 20: 1. Furthermore, it was said that Moses wrote "All the words of the Lord" (Exodus 24: 4). When he repeated the words to Israel, Moses said, "These are the words which the Lord hath commanded" (Exodus 35: 1). God dictated His word to man! God said to Moses: " I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall

speak in my name, I will require it of him" (Deut. 18: 18, 19).

That, beloved, is verbal inspiration! There can be no doubt about it.

The prophet Jeremiah was told by Jehovah, "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth" (Jer. 1: 9). Verbal inspiration, indeed!

Modernists and infidel critics would say that the thoughts of the Bible are inspired, but not the words. Not a few modernists declare that the Bible contains the word of God, but the words are not inspired, just the general thoughts!

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? How in reason could a person express thoughts without words to express them? The modernists do not seem to know that words are thoughts! Words are the means of expressing thoughts. The modernists would have us believe that God inspired men to write the Bible, but left them free to clothe the divine thoughts with their words of their own choosing. This is a false conclusion. As a matter of fact, the exact reverse is the truth! God always gave the words to those men who spoke from God, but He did not always give to them the understanding of the thoughts revealed by the words.

When the prophets wrote of Christ, often they had to actually study their own writings to understand them because they were ministering, not to themselves, but unto us. Hear the apostle Peter, regarding this matter, when he said: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed. that not unto

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themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (I Peter 1: 10-12).

These men, who spoke from God, received the very words to reveal the thoughts from Almighty God. They themselves did not always understand the thoughts revealed through the words.

The Bible, therefore, bears indisputable evidence of its verbal inspiration. Don't you know, my friends, it would have been most unreasonable for God to have divinely chosen and qualified certain men to **receive** the **truth**, but leave them to communicate that truth to others by their own faculties and in their own **chosen** way!

God gave the words to express the thoughts to mankind! In Daniel 12: 8, 9, we read, "I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed **till** the time of the end. " Daniel wrote the words, given to him by inspiration, but he did not understand the thoughts!

### **Fulfilled Prophecies**

There are some 333 prophecies concerning Christ and His life on earth revealed in the Old Testament and all have been fulfilled to the letter. Only inspiration could be so accurate and without fault.

### **New Testament Proof of Inspiration**

The evidences of the Old Testament prove the inspiration of the New Testament and the evidences of the New Testament prove the inspiration of the Old Testament.

Jesus declared, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to

fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, fill all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but, whosoever **shall** do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5: 17-19).

From Matt. 7: 12 we again quote Jesus. Hear him! Are you listening?... "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. "

There can be no doubt about it. Christ affirmed the divine origin, the divine authority, and the inspiration of the Bible in every minute detail, every "jot" and "tittle, " even the "least commandments. "

Truly, the Bible is the inspired word of God!

**THE BIBLE, THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD—No. 2**

Ladies and gentlemen, we continue our discussion of the profound subject, "The Bible, The Inspired Word of God. " I submit to you the proposition that if it is proven that even a part of the Old or New Testament writings are not divinely inspired, then, of necessity, it must be concluded that the entire Bible must be classified as uninspired. It must be remembered that the Bible itself claims not one jot or one tittle is without divine authority. I say to you, beloved, this accredited volume, the Bible, is infinitely glorious and perfect, wholly inspired by a perfect being, God Almighty. The New Testament abounds with evidence that God spoke to those whom He had chosen to reveal His word to mankind.

In Matthew 1: 22 it is said, "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet... "

In Mark 12: 36, "For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, the Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. "

Luke 1: 70: "As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began. "

Acts 1: 16: "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. "

Christ promised His ambassadors, the apostles, the Holy Spirit from God to guide them into all truth. Hear the Master when He said, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that



## THE BIBLE, THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD—No. 2

“speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you” (Matt. 10: 19, 20).

Surely, there can be no doubt about it. These men spoke, or wrote, as God revealed the message to them. Christ, furthermore, declared: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of **truth**, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: For he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you" (ASV John 16: 13-15).

The Bible is verbally inspired. The great apostle Paul confirmed most conclusively that the words of the apostles were inspired. He said, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Cor. 2: 10-13).

Dr. James McKnight translates the 13th verse as follows: "Which things also we speak not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Holy Spirit explaining spiritual things in spiritual words. " The very choice and use of words, therefore, were directed by the Holy Spirit. God's **word, EVERY word**, is inspired. Paul, furthermore, declared **that the** gospel that he preached was a certified gospel,

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dictated and certified by divine revelation. He said, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1: 11, 12). The Bible, the word of God, is inspired, verbally inspired, modernists and critics notwithstanding!

My friends, the whole force and truthfulness of a single proposition may depend upon a single word spoken by God. To illustrate, in Luke 20: 37 our Lord affirms the doctrine of the resurrection by reminding the Sadducees of the very tense of the words God used, when He spoke to Moses centuries after their deaths saying, "I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. " He did not say I was, but present tense, I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

In Galatians 3: 16, the apostle Paul, writing by inspiration, presents the necessity of faith in Christ, referring to the words of the Old Law by calling attention to a single letter of a word of the Old Testament, the letter "S". He wrote: "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. " Yes, beloved, God inspired the very word, seed, in the passage, in the singular and not, seeds, plural. In this case just the simple change of one letter in one four letter word by man would discredit inspiration and make the Bible an uninspired book of human origin.

God inspired every word and every syllable of every word in the Bible in its original language. Man's attempt to discredit the Bible often times is a revelation of his lack of knowledge and lack of faith. How often have you heard men, who deny the inspiration of the Bible, seek to disclaim credibility of the Bible because of certain stories in the Bible?

### **Jonah and the Whale**

Modernists claim it is incredible that a whale should swallow a man. They claim that science will not hear of a

whale with a gullet capable of admitting anything larger than a man's fist. Such infidelic claims do not compliment one's wisdom and knowledge. In the first place the Bible does not state that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. For example, the word translated "whale, " from the record of Matthew 14: 40, means a great fish; or, translated in the foot notes of the American Standard version of the Bible, a "sea monster. " If we take the time to read the book of Jonah we would observe that the divine record specifically states that the Lord prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah (Jonah 1: 17). In Jonah 4: 6 it is said, "the Lord God prepared a gourd. " In verse 8 following it is said that "God prepared a vehement east wind. "

Now, my friends, why should it be so strange and unbelievable to scoffers and infidels that God could prepare a great fish to swallow Jonah and keep him alive for three days? If the Lord God could prepare a gourd, a worm, and an east wind for the purpose of teaching Jonah an unforgettable lesson, would it not be just as easy for God to prepare a great fish to swallow Jonah? The skeptic will have no more difficulty in explaining, or accepting, these facts than he would have to explain how he was conceived and born of his own mother. It would be interesting to hear the infidel intelligently explain how God prepared a worm. In fact, the infidel can't even explain his own existence.

Let us examine this favorite text of the infidel and skeptic a little more closely. The Hebrew word, translated "prepared, " in Jonah 1: 17, does not mean that God had to go out and get a special pattern for a special fish from a special factory for this special event. It could well mean that God, in His divine arrangement of things, had the great fish there at the right place at the right time to take care of Jonah. On a later occasion, Christ himself, the record says,

prepared or ordered a certain fish to be at a certain spot at a certain time with a certain coin in his mouth, ready for Peter to catch him when the Lord commanded Peter to cast his hook into the sea (Matthew 17: 27).

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Did you know that after all it is possible that this great fish was a whale that swallowed Jonah? In Frank Bullen's "Cruise of the Cachalot" one may get an idea of the mighty sea monster, the sperm whale. It is stated that there are whales of such gigantic proportions as over "70 feet long" and with a breadth in proportion to such a vast length. The head alone was estimated to weigh 15 tons. The idea that a whale's gullet is incapable of admitting any large substance is said to be a "piece of gross ignorance, " as it is reported that on one occasion a shark 15 feet in length has been found in the stomach of a sperm whale. My friends, I don't think Jonah was 15 feet long, do you? Mr. Bullen gives some other interesting information concerning the whale. He says, "that when dying, the sperm whale always ejects the contents of his stomach. " He tells of a full grown whale which was caught and killed, and how the ejected food from the whale's stomach was immense or enormous in size, larger than any they had seen on any voyage; some estimated it to be the size of a hatch house, that is 8x6x6 feet. The author, furthermore, describes the great fish as being capable of swallowing substances of enormous size, saying, "swimming about with the large jaw hanging down in its normal position and its huge gullet gaping like a submarine cavern, so much that Jonah could have slipped down so easily the whale would hardly have known it. " Beloved, I have given you this bit of human testimony to show how ridiculous men can be when they deny the inspiration of the Bible.

If we knew nothing about a whale, or the great fish,

other than the divine record, that is sufficient evidence of the inspiration of God's word. The very fact that Jesus used this incident to illustrate His death, burial and resurrection from the dead is divine evidence of the inspiration of the word of God. No other fact of history occupies a more distinct character, relating to the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord, than the story of Jonah. The modernist, who rejects this inspired narrative, is impelled to reject the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. My friends, hear me! Are you listening? Every other criticism and claim of error advanced by the infidels, atheists, liberals, and modernists is just as fallacious, ridiculous and unreasonable as is the critic's view of the inspired story of Jonah!

Truly, the Bible is the inspired word of God!

#### Bible and Science

The timely question for consideration is, "Do the Bible and science agree?" Now, if one means does the Bible agree with what man is pleased to call "science," based on his conclusions, gained from his imperfect knowledge, the answer is "No!" The term science in that case is mis-labeled. Human theories and conclusions are not necessarily true knowledge. Much so-called science is just as imperfect as man is imperfect himself. On the other hand, I submit that true science and the Bible are in absolute harmony. This is further evidence of the inspiration and credibility of the Bible.

All facts of science and archeology are evident proof of the inspiration of the Bible. To many people the term science is a frightening word, full of mysteries to be blindly accepted simply because somebody has said science has proven so much. The trouble is, too often man has a misconception of true science.

The word science means knowledge. The fact is that what man calls science is frequently nothing more or less

than theories and conclusions based upon the very limited and imperfect knowledge of man. When man tries to base conclusions on his findings and his limited knowledge, he often finds himself in direct conflict with God's infinite wisdom and perfect laws, the result being a misappropriation of the term "science, " causing many souls to deny God's immutable and perfect laws to their own shame and destruction.

Although the Bible is not a book of science, yet the sacred scriptures abound in scientific allusion, with the treatment of biology, astronomy, geology, ethnology, anthropology, zoology, and every other department of natural science.

Many great scientists attest to the truthfulness of this fact. Sir Oliver Lodge declared, "The region of religion is the region of completed science, they are one. "

Let us observe some of the facts of the Old Testament which are evidences of the inspiration and credibility of the Bible. In the Old Testament, it was foretold by God's prophet that the city of Tyrus would be overthrown. In Ezekiel 26: 4, 5, God said through the prophet: "And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and it shall become a spoil to the nations. "

More than two thousand years have passed, but the riches and splendor of Tyrus are no more. In the siege of Tyrus, by Alexander the Great, history recorded that "a mound was formed from the continent to the island and that ruins of old Tyre afforded ready material for the purpose. The soil and rubbish were gathered and heaped, and the mighty conqueror, who afterwards failed in raising again any of the ruins

of Babylon, cast those of Tyre into the sea, and scraped her very dust off from her. " Surely, evidence of the inspiration of the Bible!

It should be observed that the prophet declared of Tyrus, "It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea..." According to the author, Volney, in his work, "The Ruins, " the whole village of Tyre contains only 50 or 60 poor families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and trifling fishery. Also, the author, Bruce, describes Tyre as "a rock whereon fishers dry their nets. " These are mighty truths, foretold in the Bible, incredible to man, but evidence of the inspiration and credibility of the word of God!

Let us consider other facts of the Bible. Listen to Job 26: 7: "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. " The writer of this statement, Job, of his own wisdom could not have known the true meaning of this statement. This fact was not known by man until only a few years ago, and then only with the aid of a huge telescope which was not in existence until many years after the book was written.

Reputable scientists tells us that there is, in the vicinity of the Polaris, a spot in the heavens where the telescopes of the astronomers have never been able to find any visible body. We are told. "There is the only blank space ever to have been found, " discovered hundreds of years later by man after God stated this fact in the Bible.

In the same verse, quoted from Job, it is said, "And hangeth the earth upon nothing. " I ask the question, could Job have known this fact had his writing been directed by human wisdom? This truth was unknown by man during the days of Job. It was not until the days of Magellan and Columbus that it became known to man that the earth was

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suspended in space. These facts verify the inspiration of the Bible, the word of God.

Hear another statement from the Bible! Are you listening? In Isaiah 40: 33 the prophet of God declared, "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. " Could Isaiah have known the earth's shape was circular, when the rotundity of the earth was not discovered by man until many, many years later? I assure you, beloved, the prophet spoke by inspiration of God, as affirmed by the apostle Peter when he said: "Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit. "

It may also be observed that the germ theory of medical science is anticipated in the Bible. According to Leviticus 13: 45, the leper was to "cover his upper lip. "

Without the inspiration of God, Moses could not have known that infection and disease were spread by means of germs, which are carried largely by means of human breath. This fact was not discovered until the days of Louis Pasteur, which is further evidence of the divine origin and credibility of the Bible.

In the field of anthropology the Bible speaks with deliberate accuracy. In Acts 17: 26, the apostle Paul, when speaking before the wise men of Athens, declared that God "made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth. " In more recent years, it has been discovered, by means of anti-human precipitant, that all races of the earth are of the same blood. Thus, if a white man needed a blood transfusion, the blood of a red man, yellow, or black would serve the purpose that God intended in this case. Yes, beloved, this fact was stated by the man of God in the Bible a long while before it was a recognized fact by man,



therefore, proof of the inspiration of the Bible.

There is another fact relating to the proposition that people of all nations are of one blood. This same chemical substance, to which I have referred, shows there is a distinct difference in the blood of a human being and the blood of an animal, or beast. Blood in clothing, no matter how long it has been there, can be tested and identified as to whether it came from man, monkey, or a sheep. As proof of how satisfactory and reliable this test is, "G" men of the F. B. I. use this test in criminal cases and it is accepted in the courts as final proof of blood.

These facts, ladies and gentlemen, refute the theory of evolution of man, as taught by the skeptics, and establish proof that the Bible is the inspired word of God.

#### Faith, Earthquake and Walls of Jericho

In spite of all the abundant proof of the harmony of the Bible and true science, the infidels and skeptics keep trying to discredit the Bible with their feeble theories and suppositions. Only a few months ago some critics declared the Bible narrative of the fall of the walls of Jericho was untrue, because they "discovered, in the ruins of Jericho, that the walls really did fall, but it was because of a crack in the foundation caused by an earthquake and not caused by the marching, shouting and blowing of trumpets. Such a claim, ladies and gentlemen, serves only to reveal the ignorance of weak and frail men who are but worms and dust of the earth in contrast to the infinite wisdom of God. Scientists and archaeologists should know that their discovery only confirms the true Bible narrative concerning the fall of the walls of Jericho! Their findings admit:

- 1, The walls of Jericho did stand as stated in the Bible.
2. The walls of Jericho fell.

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If the scientists, through super intelligence, had been attempting to perform the task, perhaps they would have started at the top of the wall and tried to push it over. These men found a crack in the foundation, therefore, they say the Bible is untrue. An earthquake caused the walls to fall down and not the marching, shouting and blowing of the trumpets, they say! Why, my friends, God did not say the marching, shouting and blowing of the trumpets caused the walls of Jericho to fall down, as if the vibrations caused the fall. The Bible says; "**By faith**, the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been compassed about for seven days" (Heb. 10: 30). God exercised His **power**, (even an earthquake, if the critics choose to say so) to cause the walls to fall. But, my friends, hear it! Are you listening? The trumpets didn't blow down the walls of Jericho. It was the faith of the children of Israel that caused God to perform this mighty miraculous task. God did **what He said He would do**, causing the walls to fall, after the Israelites **did what God told them to do**. In fact, men are saved today "by **faith**, " but **by faith after** they have obeyed the commands of our Lord. The fall of the walls of Jericho was no greater miracle for God to perform than it is for Him to save man from his sins, by the blood of Christ, causing him to be born again, born of water and the Spirit, thus becoming a new creature in Christ, as we read in Acts 20: 28; Acts 2: 38; John 3: 5; Gal. 3: 27; Eph. 1: 7; 2 Cor. 5: 17.

The Bible is the inspired word of God, of divine origin, and the only book on earth that tells man from whence he came, how to live, how to die, and where he is going to spend eternity after death.

I beg you, cherish it, believe it and obey it, that it may . be well with your soul.

## THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE—No. 1

Greetings, my friends. Today we shall discuss "The Divine Authority of The Bible. "

One of the great needs of our time is respect for established authority. One of the factors involved in the demoralization and degeneration of our society is the disrespect and disregard for authority. We see the rebellion against what is called "the establishment, " which results in the rejection of all established authority, with the individual claiming himself to be the sole authority for himself—exercising his own selfish desires, satisfying the gratification of his own desires and needs to the deprivation of others. Our permissive society has failed to instill in individuals the consciousness of responsibility to others and the necessity of subjection of personal desires to constituted authority. As a result man turns to his own reason to satisfy his own selfish and sinful desires, which means degeneracy and chaos.

Not only is there the lack of respect for authority in the governmental and social realm, but also in the spiritual realm. Many religious leaders and teachers not only evidence their disrespect for the authority of the Bible, but openly and defiantly challenge the authority of the Scriptures. The lack of respect for Bible authority can only lead to spiritual chaos and apostasy. This has always been true and it is true today.

The Bible is the only authority in religion. Christianity is built upon truth and not upon myths and opinions of men. Christianity is a religion of authority. The Bible anticipated man's effort to rule the consciences of men. With the inevitable conflicts and differences among men, therefore,

God gave His word as final authority by which all spiritual matters are to be regulated.

While Christ was on earth He taught "as one having authority" (Matt. 7: 29). Just before His ascension to Heaven our Lord declared, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28: 18). The apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, with a message from Christ, admonished: "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3: 17). In the "name of the Lord Jesus, " in this Scripture, means by the authority of the Lord Jesus. In the preceding verse the apostle commanded, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. " It must, therefore, be concluded that whatever we do must be done by the authority of Christ, if acceptable unto God.

If all religions respected the divine authority of the Bible there would not be the confusion of denominationalism and sectarianism we have in the religious world today. The fact that there are so many denominations, even any denominations, is evidence of that fact that men do not always respect God's authority. The confusion and division that exists in religion today is not because men cannot understand the Bible alike; the trouble is, men will not accept God's appointed authority in all religious matters. When we come to respect the divine authority of the Bible, division will be eliminated.

All governments have their respective heads, and the authority is in the head of the government. The authority of the kingdom is within the king. The authority of the State is with the governor. By inheritance, election, or appointment, the people delegate authority to the head of their government. The authority is vested in the head. The divine revelation of God's authority for man today is unquestion-

ably revealed in the New Testament.

There are many authoritative documents in the world. For example, the Constitution of the United States is the authority for all our country, without partiality or favor for any citizen of any state. It does not just contain authority, but it is authority. The Bible is the authority in religion, the complete and sole authority in all matters of faith and practice in religion. The Bible does not just contain the word of God, it is the word of God. Many liberals and modernists claim the Bible has only relative authority—it just contains the word of God, or it becomes authoritative as one interprets it to fit his conscience.

John Burnaby asserts that "the authority with which inspired men speak can never be an absolute authority, imposing itself upon their hearers; for if it were so, the principle of free acceptance, on which their calling depends, would be violated" (Is the Bible Inspired, John Burnaby, pp. 89. 90).

Ladies and gentlemen, this theory of progressive authoritative revelation simply claims the Bible may contain the word of God, but is not necessarily the word of God. It is not authoritative unless accepted in man's own conscience. According to this false theory, a man's conscience is his authority, regardless of what the Bible says. This means that such men would reject God's authority and set themselves forth with authority above God's authority. But God says man's wisdom is but foolishness compared to God's wisdom (1 Cor. 1: 20, 21). The inspired apostle concluded, "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1: 25).

The Bible rejects human tradition (Col. 2: 8) and a perverted gospel (Gal. 1: 7, 8). The inspired apostle Paul affirmed that his teaching was divinely authoritative in source

and content (I Cor. 11: 23; 2 Cor. 13: 10; Eph. 1: 9; 1 Thess. 2: 13; 1 Cor. 2: 7). Because of the total, divine authority of the Bible, man must recognize that he has no alternative but to accept God's authority, the Bible. Man, himself, has no such authority (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17).

#### All Authority in Christ

Before Christ left this earth He chose the apostles as His ambassadors, His spokesmen, His representatives, as you may read in John 14: 25, 26; 16: 7-14 and 2 Cor. 5: 18-20. The apostles concluded that Jesus sent to them the Holy Spirit to reveal God's will. By miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, the teaching of Christ was brought to their remembrance and they were guided into full and complete revelation of all truth.

The gospel, God's authority for man's salvation, revealed by the apostles, was confirmed by the great miraculous works which accompanied their teaching of God's word.

Mark recorded, "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by signs that followed" (Mark 16: 10).

Christ is the only potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. He is the King of the kingdom, therefore, He has all authority in heaven and on earth.

In Ephesians 1: 22, 23, Paul declared "Christ to be head of all things to the church, which is His body. " The body of Christ is the church. He is the head of the body, the church. All authority, therefore, in the church is in Christ and not in the church. All authority is from Christ; therefore, there is no authority in the church, or in the kingdom, except from Christ, the head of the church. He has, by inheritance, obtained a more excellent name than any of the angels in heavenly places, and His name is above every name that is

named in heaven or on earth (Heb. 1: 3, 4; Phil. 2: 9, 10). There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby man can be saved (Acts 4: 12). Beloved, there is not even a trace of divine authority among men that did not come from Christ, directly or indirectly. Regardless of all the claims of individuals, or groups of individuals, there is no divine authority, except from Christ, the head of the church. There are men today who claim such divine authority, but let us examine some of these false claims.

#### No Succession

As far as I know, all men who respect the Bible recognize the fact that Christ did have authority while He was on earth, but He delegated that authority to the apostles and commissioned them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Never did the authority come from the apostles. The apostles received the authority from Christ!

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Nothing has done so much to blind the eyes of men and create unbelief and mysticism as the miserable and mortal claim of succession of authority in religion. Priests and founders of religious sects claim succession of authority from the apostles, even back to the apostle Peter, claimed to be the first pope, but such claims are without scriptural foundation and are in contradiction with both Biblical and secular historical facts.

In the first place, Peter did not have any authority that the other apostles did not have. Neither was the authority he had from Christ above the authority of any of the other apostles. The apostolic succession and the Romanish priesthood is the invention of the mind of man! No man on earth can prove by the Bible, tradition, or secular history, that Peter was ever in Rome, much less that he was the apostle

through whom succession of authority was to be handed down to mortal men of earth. There is no such thing as apostolic succession of authority.

According to the inspiration of God in the Bible, Paul, a fellow apostle, "withstood Peter face to face as he was to be blamed" (Gal. 2: 11). Instead of succession of apostolic authority, from the priesthood back to the apostles, there is not a trace, in all Biblical and secular history, of any priestly or papal authority during the first three centuries after the establishment of the Lord's church and the ministry of the apostles of Christ. No man need talk about succession of authority when there never existed such authority, except that given by our Lord to His apostles. This authority ended with the apostles and their gospel, which was confirmed by the signs, miracles, and the wonders of that time.

Jesus, the Son of God, plainly declared, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10: 16). Christ is called the chief shepherd. The original word from which the word chief comes is the word for "arch. " Christ is the head of the church, therefore, is the arch shepherd, the archbishop of His church.

Ladies and gentlemen, I say, are you listening? There is no other archbishop, or arch-shepherd in the Lord's kingdom. The Lord himself is **the only archbishop or chief shepherd** of His church. He has no successors on this earth. Claims to the contrary are claims of anti-Christ. The apostles were the chosen ambassadors of Christ. Listen to these divine words from II Cor. 5: 20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. "

The apostles were personally called and sent by the Lord. Their divine authority from Christ was established by the divine workings and direction of the Holy Spirit, who



guided them into all truth, as the Lord promised in John 16: 13. But the apostles had no successors. There is not one hint for the need for successors to the apostles. Christ, through the Holy Spirit, guided them into all truth. And that truth was written and confirmed as the Word of God. All truth is not part truth. The Lord guided these men, by the Holy Spirit, into all truth.

The Bible is a divine book. It is of divine origin. There is no divine truth not revealed in the Bible. To claim divine authority by succession, or otherwise, is to deny the authority of Christ and His apostles. There can be but one of two conclusions about this matter. One: men who claim to be successors of the apostles are ignorant of the authority of Christ and do not know what it means to presume to be successors of the apostles. Two: or, such is the claim of impostors, who are setting themselves forth as anti-Christ. Concerning such false apostles and impostors the apostle Paul wrote these words: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11: 13, 14).

#### Authority in Religion

Ladies and gentlemen, our religion, if acceptable unto God, must be by divine authority of Christ and His apostles. For this divine authority we cannot go to any man, or any group of men on earth. We must go back to the Bible, the New Testament, to Christ and His chosen apostles—there are no others. There is no authority in any man, or group of men, that may be recognized in religion, except that divine authority that comes from Christ and His apostles, revealed in the New Testament.

Paul, the inspired apostle, declared that the word taught by him was not from man, but came to him by revelation of

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the Holy Spirit from God. Read very carefully Galatians 1: 1-12. Furthermore, he made it known that no man, nor angel, dare pervert the gospel preached by the apostles. Hear him when he said, "Though we or an angel from heaven, should preach any other gospel unto you than that which we preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1: 8).

This, my friends, is apostolic authority! That is, there is no authority except that authority from Christ and His apostles. No man, nor group of men, who might claim succession of authority, can argue successfully otherwise. All men stand accursed before the Almighty God if they claim authority not revealed in the New Testament. The only authority of Christ in this world is the established and confirmed word of God, preached by Christ and His apostles—the teaching of the New Testament. It is the divine authority of God and the only authority of God. When men will decide to accept and abide by the authority of the New Testament, the divine teaching of Christ and His apostles, the divisions, which exist in the realm of religion today, will vanish away. Often times the reason men will not accept the gospel plan of salvation is the fact that they prefer to submit to the authority of mortal men and reject the authority of Jesus Christ. The reason for the existence of denominations today is the fact that men disregard the authority of Christ and His apostles and institute their own creeds and disciplines for their authority in faith and practice.

During the early days of the church, when men submitted only to the authority of Christ and His apostles, there was but one church, the Lord's church, as you read in Ephesians 4: 4-6. Denominationalism, which we have today, was positively unknown in New Testament times. Read your New Testament from the first verse to the last verse and you will observe the absence of the identity of modern denom-

inationalism. The very spirit of denominationalism was condemned by Christ and His apostles. Our Lord prayed for unity and oneness — "that they all may be one, " He said, "Father, as we are one. "

Surely, my friends, the divine authority of Christ, the infallible Son of God, cannot be transposed to mere mortal men, fallible creatures of God, by succession. Truth is from God. Only the inspired of God could reveal truth. The apostles of Christ were the only men on earth to be inspired of God. Truth cannot be turned into a lie, even if presented by a liar. Likewise, error cannot be turned into truth, even though claimed to be inspired, when presented by weak, mortal men.

What assurance of faith and hope could man have by resting his faith in authority from Roman, Greek and American institutions which are mortal and uninspired? To rest our faith and hope in such human agencies would mean our dependence upon them for salvation. Poor mortal man who would reject the expressed, revealed, simplified authority of Christ, offering man eternal salvation, and accept the authority and dictates of weak and unworthy men, presenting themselves as God's authority! The faith of a child of God that brings salvation is not in man, neither the traditions, commandments and doctrines of men. The faith of the saints of God is not in succession of mortal men, officers and representatives of churches who may claim to be God on earth. Our faith is in Christ, revealed only to us in the word of God. The Bible declares, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10: 17).

Friends, I beg you, reject the doctrines, commandments and institutions of men. Come back to the Bible. Believe and obey only the word of God taught in the Bible. The divine authority of Christ is the expressed word of God, revealed to

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us in the New Testament. Do not be misled by men of this earth; your soul may be lost. Remember, the Bible only makes Christians only. Jesus declared, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8: 32).

Don't you know that you must submit your will to the will of God if you expect to be saved? You must obey the will of God. Jesus, who claimed all authority from God in heaven and on earth, authorized His apostles to teach and baptize all who believed in Him, declaring that all who are baptized into Christ must continue to "observe all things commanded of the Lord" (Matt. 28: 18-20).

Jesus, the Son of God, speaks with authority for the saving of your soul.

### THE BIBLE

**"This book contains... the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true and its decisions immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, the Christian's charter. Here is paradise restored, Heaven opened and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its grand object, our good its design and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, freely and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be open at the judgment and will be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibilities, rewards and greatest labor, and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents. "**

## THE: DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE-NO. 2

Ladies and gentlemen, we continue our discussion of the most important theme, "The Divine Authority of the Bible. "

### **Truth Is Absolute, Not Relative**

There are those today who would have us believe that truth is only relative, not absolute. We are told by the liberals and modernists that one cannot know the truth. Not only is this a denial of the authority of the Scriptures, but it presents man as his own interpreter of God and His word. Actually, it makes God's word subject to the authority and wisdom of man. Is it not rather strange that man may claim such superior knowledge that he can judge truth? In his super wisdom (?) he claims that man cannot know the truth. What a paradox! The little insignificant creature of God, mortal man, claims that he knows **that man cannot know the truth** — **he knows** there is no truth, for truth is only relative. He says **he knows that you cannot know**. How absurd! If man **cannot know** the truth, then he cannot know **that there is no truth!** This is a false conclusion.

Our Lord taught absolute truth, not relative truth. It was not only truth that could be known, but must be known for man to enjoy freedom from sin. In John 8: 31, 32, Jesus declared; "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. " The knowledge of the truth, with faith and obedience to that truth, is the means of freedom from sin, our Lord affirmed. Christ, furthermore, stated a condition of truth—"If ye **abide in my word**, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8: 31). Obviously, to "know the truth" and "abide in my words" — the truth — one must

understand the truth. To "know the truth" and "abide" in the truth is to act and live by the truth. The apostle John wrote: "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby we know that we are in him: he that saith he abideth in him ought also to walk even as he walked" (1 John 2: 3-6).

Whom do you choose to follow, God or man? The modernist says man cannot know the truth, for truth is only relative. God says, "Hereby we **know** that we **know** him, if we keep his commandments. " God is unmistakably right! Man is unmistakably wrong!

### **Authority and Perversion**

It is no little matter to disregard the authority of God. To pervert the truth, God's word, is to "overthrow the faith" of men (II Tim. 2: 18). Paul declared that Hymenaeus and Philetus "concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already. " One might ask, what difference does it make about what these men taught? What they might say will not affect the resurrection one way or the other. It is true that this erroneous teaching concerning the resurrection will not affect the resurrection, but a perversion of God's word and a failure to be governed by the authority of Christ will affect the faith and destiny of men and "overthrow the faith of some, " the apostle declared.

The heresy of circumcision might seem insignificant to those who consider the matter of authority lightly. But the inspired apostle Paul declared that this perversion of Christ's authority resulted in falling "away from grace" (Gal. 5: 1-4). This was a matter of respecting or rejecting Christ's authority

in contrast to the authority of the Old Testament. What difference would it make whether a man were circumcised or not circumcised? What moral or ethical principle would be involved, so much that it might involve the destiny of one's soul, if he were circumcised, or not circumcised? The principle involved was the matter of accepting or rejecting Christ's authority. God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit were so sensitive about this matter that Christ, through the Spirit, inspired Paul to write: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. " (Gal. 1: 8-11).

My friends, modern theologians and religious liberals may scoff at the idea that the destiny of a man's soul may depend on what one believes, but there can be no doubt about the pronouncements in the Scriptures which are the final authority relating to man's eternal destiny. There is no room for misunderstanding the authoritative declaration of John when he said, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 9).

The divine revelation of God's authority for man today is unquestionably revealed in the New Testament. Before Christ left this earth He chose the apostles as His ambassadors, His spokesmen, His representatives (John 14: 25, 26; 16: 7-14; 2 Cor. 5: 18-20). The apostles were commanded by Jesus to wait until they received the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, which would "bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" and "guide you into all the truth" (Luke 24: 48, 49; John 14: 26; 16: 13; Acts 1: 4, 5).

The apostles followed the Lord's instructions and the gospel, God's authority for man's salvation, was confirmed by the great, miraculous works which accompanied their

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preaching. Mark records: "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed" (Mark 16: 20).

Authority or Anarchy?"

Without authority there is anarchy, whether it be in the home, the community, civil government, or the church.

Anarchy is said to be a social structure without government, or law, or order, hence utter confusion. Today many responsible leaders of the world are gravely concerned about gross disrespect for law and order, which is resulting in confusion, disunity and rebellion against righteousness and morality. Street demonstrations were only the beginning. Now mobs are trying to take the law into their own hands and pervert it to their own likes and dislikes. This is most regrettable. Unless order and respect for authority are restored, chaos and destruction are inevitable. This is true in civil government, and, ladies and gentlemen, I tell you the same principle prevails in the realm of religion.

It is, indeed, sad and regrettable that leaders in religion in many areas have little or no respect for the authority of the Bible. As a result there is confusion, division and unrighteousness, all of which is a defiance of Godly rule and order and is displeasing to God Almighty!

The principle of authority is simple and absolutely necessary to order, unity, and regulation. Think of the confusion which would exist in the absence of the authority of time, weights, and measurements.

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Authority in the Christian religion does not emanate from the reason of man, nor the traditions of men. One cannot look to man's reason to learn whether or not the Bible is right in what it says. No man is competent to pass judgment on God's divine word. On the contrary, we must look to the



divine Scriptures to tell us that man's reason is right or wrong on any Bible subject. The only way that men can be united in faith and be pleasing to God is for man to submit his will to God's will and not try to subject God's will to human reason. Faith must replace human reason and the only basis for faith is God's word (Rom. 10: 14-17; I Cor. **1: 21**).

### Tradition **and** Authority

We are not unmindful that many would have us submit to tradition as an authority in religion. This theory of authority is based on the assumption that the church has authority from God and the conscience of man is subject to the ecclesiastical authoritarianism of the church. According to this view of authority, the Holy Scripture is not God's complete revelation — not sufficient, nor self-contained, not self-interpreting. The Bible alone, according to this presumption, is **not** a safe guide. Through the claims of papal infallibility, the traditions of men have been imposed upon the conscience of men. This totalitarian power supercedes both human reason and God's voice of authority. There is no authority capable of judging tradition, according to the traditionalist's view. The church has the right to augment and declare the alleged meaning of Scriptures. Man, therefore, is not permitted to exercise the faith of his own conscience in determining what the Bible says. His faith is predicated primarily upon the premise of church doctrine. What the church teaches and what the church has laid down must be accepted without question. From the viewpoint of reason, man's responsibility is to receive, without question, church tradition and not think of testing it.

My friends, no principle of authority could be a greater repudiation of God's word, the Bible.

Who will you hear, God or man?

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is

profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17).

The apostle John declared by inspiration: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 9-11).

The last words of the Bible warn:

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22: 18, 19).

### **Authority and the Subjectivist**

In the realm of authority there is another perversion of God's order, that of the subjectivist. To the subjectivist the Scriptures, comparable to any books of human origin, are subject to mistakes, contradictions, and are not the complete revelation of God. Parts of the Bible are uninspired, unimportant, and have no relevance for this modern age. Mysticism and rationalism combine as a presumptive source of authority. The liberals and modernists revel in this area of attack on the inspiration and authority of the Bible.

The subjectivist is influenced by his "feelings, " what he has learned from sources apart from the Bible, such as history, science, and philosophy, more than by the divine

declarations of the Bible. He may even claim that the Spirit of God, through his own intellect, is his interpreter. In other words, it is necessary for God to use him, through his human reason and experiences, to determine what is authoritative and what is not. A thing is right only when his reason and conscience approve it. The faith, therefore, of the liberals and modernists is simply a matter of being loyal to one's own religious convictions and experiences, regardless of what the Bible says. How foolish man must be when he must rest his faith and hope on the finite knowledge and wisdom of men.

My friends, I say: Are you listening? Jesus warned against the traditions of men and speculations in theology.

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered; and many such like things do ye" (Mark 7: 6-13).

To the church at Colosse Paul wrote: "Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2: 8).

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The inspired apostle wrote most conclusively about the authority and traditions of men versus the authority of Christ. Hear him!

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which are to perish with the using; ) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (Col. 2: 20-22).

### Reject Authority—Reject Christ

For one to deny the authority of the New Testament scriptures is to deny the Lordship and Kingship of Christ. Jesus Christ is the head of His church (Eph. 1: 22; Col. 1: 18), and the apostle Paul admonished: "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3: 17). To do all things in the name of the Lord is to do those things by the authority of the Lord!

The teaching of Christ, through His divinely appointed apostles, rules the church; therefore, the church is ruled by the authority of the Scriptures. The church has no authority of herself. The authority is the head of the church, Christ, the Son of God, and no man, nor group of men on this earth constitute the authority in the Lord's church. Elders of a local church have a degree of authority as overseers of their respective local congregations, but their authority, like that of all other men, is subject to the authority of Christ.

Some religious leaders have attempted to pervert God's authority by contending that the authority is in the man, Christ, and not the plan, the Scriptures. This is a false conclusion. Christ was not merely a judge of the scriptures. He recognized the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures under which He lived and died. He obeyed the Scriptures. He

fulfilled the Scriptures. Both by word and deed, He endorsed the authority of the Scriptures. By His authority the New Testament scriptures were revealed and confirmed as God's authoritative word. Christ, through the New Testament scriptures, is the supreme and final authority for Christians. Christ, himself, announced to His disciples: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28: 18).

We beg you to submit your will to the will of God that it may be well with your soul! Our Lord pleads: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say" (Luke 6: 46).

## HOW GOD SPEAKS TO MAN

My friends, I wish to present a question for our thought and meditation: "How Does God Speak To Man Today?" Did you ever hear anyone say, "Well, God talked to me in a dream; " or another say, "I had a vision; " or someone declare, "Well, God talked to me while I was driving my car down the highway; " or, maybe, someone vows that God spoke to him and forgave his sins while he laid his hand on the radio? Have you not heard a preacher make the claim that God called him to preach—that God just spoke to him directly **from** heaven and he heard a still, small voice, calling him to go preach? Friends, let me tell you something. When you hear a man making such claims, you may be sure this is a mistake. Sometimes mysterious tales are manufactured. A man should know that he never heard any such thing that he could identify as God's voice talking to him. He might have heard something, but it was not God's voice, I can assure you!

Beloved, did you know that God tells us plainly in His word how He speaks to man today? Would you not like to know how God speaks to man today? If you don't know **how** God speaks to man today you shall not **know when** He speaks to you. Furthermore, it is important that we know how God speaks to us today in order that we may know the terms of forgiveness of our sins and when we have obtained forgiveness.

It is God who forgives sins. Regardless of one's feelings, there is no assurance of forgiveness except from God.

For example, suppose I should mistreat and offend my neighbor. It is obvious that forgiveness would occur with him and not with me. I might desire his forgiveness and seek his

forgiveness, but forgiveness would take place in the mind of the offended and not the offender. Even though I might receive a message from some source indicating that I have been forgiven, and I might feel that I had been forgiven, that is no assurance of pardon. Since the forgiveness is an option with the offended there is no absolute assurance of forgiveness until, by some means of communication from the offended, I, the **offender**, have been informed that I am forgiven.

Man is the sinner, the **offender**, and God is the **offended**. Regardless of man's feelings about the forgiveness of his sins, even though he may assume that he has been forgiven, there is absolutely no assurance of pardon until God speaks, revealing the conditions of pardon and assurance of forgiveness. The forgiveness of sins does not take place in the mind of the offender, but with the offended, God.

The serious question is, "How Does God Speak To Man?" How shall I know that God has spoken? Friends, this is not a matter of speculation. You must know that God has spoken. Let us appeal to the proper source, the Bible, to ascertain how God speaks to man.

### **God Spoke In Past**

In Heb. 1: 1, 2, it is revealed: "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds. "

In this inspired text, the apostle declared that God hath spoken. There is no doubt about it. He has spoken and He speaks today! The questions are: How does He speak to us today? How did He speak yesterday?

With reference to yesterday, or the past, the apostle declared that God spoke unto the fathers through the

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prophets by divers portions and manners. That, however, was yesterday, not today! But, perhaps someone is thinking, is not God the same yesterday, today, tomorrow and forever? Yes, my friends, very true. However, it must be known that God has not always spoken to man in the same way. The apostle very emphatically declares that in old times of the past God spoke unto the fathers through the prophets in divers portions and manners, but he said (now hear him), "At the end of these days, " referring to the last days, this age in which we now live, "He hath spoken unto us in His Son. " God has spoken in different ways to different people of different ages. That was God's choice, a part of divine wisdom. Who am I, or, who are you, that we should question God as to why He did it? The fact is, He did it! He does not speak to man today in this age of the world, the Christian age, or the last dispensation of time, like He spoke to the fathers of ages past, through the prophets, by direct revelation.

### Speaks Through His Son

Yes, there was a time when God spoke to man directly from heaven. Man heard the voice of God. Jehovah walked and talked with Adam in the Garden of Eden. Later, God revealed His word to the prophets, who, in turn, spoke to the people. However, God told the prophet and law-giver, Moses, that the time would come when He would no longer speak through the prophets, but He, God, would raise up one prophet, referring to His Son, Jesus, and He would speak the words which God would place in His mouth. This prophetic declaration is found in Deut. 18: 15-19. Hear the words of God as he spoke to Moses: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken... and the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have



spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. "

In this quotation, God declared that the time would come when He would raise up another prophet (one prophet — and not prophets) through whom He would speak to man. Beyond any shadow of doubt, this prophet was Christ, the Son of God. This truth concurs with the inspired statement of Heb. 1: 1, 2, where the apostle announced that God did speak unto the fathers, through the prophets, in the past, but in the last days He speaks through His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things.

While Christ was on earth, He taught the word of God. Actually, God put the words in His mouth. Remember? God declared that He would do so. Jesus himself stated, "Think not that I came to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. " Everything that Christ taught was from God. Jehovah put the words in His mouth. The doctrine of Christ is, therefore, the word of God!

My friends, there is no doubt about it, God not only spoke through Christ while He was on earth, but the apostle definitely declared that God still speaks to man through His Son in this last age of the world.

At the time of the writing of Hebrews, in which the apostle declared that God speaks unto us through Christ, it is obvious that Jesus was no longer on the earth. Christ had already ascended to the Father in heaven. Then, the question in order would be—since Christ is no longer on the earth, how does He speak to man today? Does Christ speak to man directly from heaven? Let us continue our study of the Bible

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that we may ascertain the scriptural answer to these questions. I am sure that you want to know the truth, don't you?

### **Speaks Through the Apostles**

While Jesus was upon the earth He chose certain men as His disciples and schooled them in the word of God. In II Cor. 5: 18-20, the venerable apostle Paul declared that they, the apostles, were ambassadors of Christ, God having given unto them the word of reconciliation. As ambassadors of Christ, the apostles were legally authorized spokesmen of the Lord. An ambassador of a government must have his credentials, having been legally and duly authorized to represent his government. The apostles of Christ were divinely chosen as authorized representatives and spokesmen of Christ to men of earth. No other man, or group of men, on this earth ever received such authority from God. Furthermore, as presented in our former address, there never was and never has been any succession of that authority.

### **Apostles Guided By Holy Spirit**

To be sure that the apostles of Christ, as His ambassadors, would speak only God's word and not misrepresent Christ upon the earth by teaching their own doctrine, as men do today, Jesus promised them He would send the Holy Spirit to bring to their remembrance the truth He had taught them while on earth; and, furthermore, guide them into all truth: "But, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said unto you" (John 14: 26). Also, in John 16: 13, 14, Jesus promised the apostles, His ambassadors: "Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he

Speak; and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you. "

From these two quotations it is evident that Jesus went back to heaven, but before leaving He chose the apostles to become His spokesmen. He promised them the Holy Spirit, who would come and bring the words of God from Christ to them. The Holy Spirit not only would bring to their **remembrance** the things He taught them while on earth, but would **guide them into all truth**. The Holy Spirit, declared Christ, would not speak of himself, but would take the words of Christ and reveal them unto the apostles whom Jesus chose as His ambassadors.

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? You may be sure the Lord fulfilled every word of every promise. Yes, He speaks to us today, but not directly from heaven. He chose the apostles as His spokesmen. By the Holy Spirit, He revealed His word unto the apostles. The miraculous works of the apostles, by the power of the Holy Spirit, were the inspired credentials of the apostles, establishing proof of the fact that they were the ambassadors of Christ, speaking only as Christ spoke through them. God, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit, spoke His word unto the apostles, the only revelation of God to men of this last age. The word of the inspired men was confirmed by the signs, miracles and wonders. Read Mark 16: 20 and Heb. 2: 3, 4.

### **Miracles Apostles' Credentials**

Notwithstanding the false and fantastic claims of false teachers today, some of whom will do just about everything in the book to extract money and support from innocent people, there are no such miracles, healings and wondrous works performed today **as** were done by **Christ and His**

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apostles. You may hear all the false claims by experts at deception over the radio telling you they can heal you of all manner of sickness and disease. They may offer to send you a so-called "healing cloth" with certain virtues of healing in it, but I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, such is a trick to extract money and support from you to support their own selfish interests. No man living on earth today can perform any one of the miracles performed by Christ and His apostles. In the first place there is no need for it. The purpose of such miracles in the apostolic age was to make people believe in Christ as God's Son, and to confirm His word spoken by the apostles. Once a thing is confirmed it cannot be re-confirmed. Once the word, spoken by the apostles, was confirmed to be God speaking through them, there was never a need for it to be confirmed again. You cannot re- confirm the word of God which has already been confirmed.

My friends, I tell you the only voice of God you will ever hear on this earth is God's word revealed in the New Testament. As evidence of this fact look to the heathens of lands where the Bible, God's word, has not gone. Millions are groping in darkness and despair. Where the Bible, God's word, has not gone men do not even have the word "Christ" in their vocabulary. They know nothing of God. God has not spoken to them because we have not taken His word, the New Testament, to them. In view of this fact, Christ's orders were: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature... " (Mark 16: 15). Surely God speaks to man today, but only through His Son, Jesus, in the written and confirmed word of God, the New Testament. When you reject the Bible, you have rejected God. Jehovah made man with an intelligence and the only way God has to reach man is through the intelligent teaching of His word.

May I again remind you, my friends, that God said a

long while before Christ came into the world He would send His Son to the world and He would put His words in the mouth of Jesus, the prophet, who would speak in His name. Furthermore, God warned that the soul that does not hearken to the words spoken by the mouth of this prophet, it shall be required of him!

### God Speaks

Beloved, hear me! Are you listening? Will you listen to some of the words that came from the lips of our Master, remembering that God put the very words in the mouth of our Lord? Hear him as He speaks, recorded in John 8: 24, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye BELIEVE that I am He ye shall die in your sins. " Who said that, my friends? Those are the words of Jesus. God put the words in His mouth!

But, listen again! I quote His words from the record of Luke, chapter 13 and verses 3-5. Hear him! "I tell you... except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you... except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. " Who said that? Surely, my friends, you must know the answer. REPENT or perish, Jesus declared!

Hear him, my friends, as God speaks His word through Christ, His Son. I quote from the gospel of Matt., 10th chapter, verse 32: "Whosoever therefore shall CONFESS me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven... " Those are the words of Jesus, God put the words in His mouth!

Ladies and gentlemen, whoever you are and wherever you are, I beg you to listen to the voice of God as He speaks to you. Hear him as recorded in Mark, chapter 16 and verses 15 and 16. Are you listening? And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED; but he that believeth not shall be damned. "

I ask you in honesty and sincerity, my friends, who said that? Who was it that commanded, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"? I assure you, beloved, those are not the words of Martin Luther. Those are not the words of John Wesley, or John Calvin. No, my friends, those are not the words of Alexander Campbell. Who was it that commanded, ' He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved'? Yes, you know, don't you? Those words came from the divine lips of the Son of God. The God of heaven put those very words in His mouth. God said that He would do it. Furthermore, my friends, you must not forget that God declared that the soul that does not hearken to words spoken by this prophet (the Christ), that soul shall be required of him! (Deut. 18: 15-19).

Not only did God speak through Christ, His Son, commanding all men to believe in Christ, repent of all sins, confess the name of Christ, and to be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins but He commanded that all who are taught and baptized must continue to observe ALL THINGS commanded of the Lord (Matt. 18: 19, 20).

The teaching of the apostles in the New Testament is the voice of God speaking to mankind. What the apostles taught is God speaking, as much as if Christ were on earth teaching the word of God. However, the quotations given on the matter of salvation from sin were from Christ, himself. God put the words in His mouth. To reject the words of Christ is to reject God. The penalty is severe! God said, "Whosoever will not harken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. "

Ladies and gentlemen, we plead with you in the interest of your own salvation, obey the voice of God revealed in His word, the New Testament.

## TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?

Ladies and gentlemen, "To Whom Shall We Go?" Truly, this is an important question. Should any one of you become seriously ill, to whom would you go? Would you not desire the most competent and most skillful physician? Should you need legal counsel, would you go to the man on the street, or would you not go to an attorney who was schooled and experienced in matters of law and government? But, my friends, there is a matter of much greater importance than any of those matters. This question concerns the destiny of your soul. To whom shall we go for salvation? To whom shall we go for the remedy that will cure the sin-sick soul? To whom shall we go for wisdom and counsel that will lead us in the right path? These are the questions of life and destiny.

In the 6th chapter of John, verses 60 through 69, we have record of an occasion that brought forth this great question, "To Whom Shall We Go?" Our Lord had made it known that except man lives in communion and fellowship with the Son of God, as set forth by the Christ, he does not have the promise of eternal life. When the disciples heard this, many of them were astonished and believed not. In verse 66 it is revealed that "many of His disciples went back and walked with him no more. " It hardly seems possible that those who had been walking and talking with the Christ would deliberately turn and walk away from Him. To whom could they go, when they turned and walked with the Lord no more? Beloved, has that question ever occurred to you? To whom can you go, when you reject the Christ? Do you realize where you are going?

### Disciples Turn Back

Surely this scene was one that touched the heart of our Lord. As He spoke to them words of hope and life, many of His disciples turned and walked away, "and walked with him no more"! Let us think of it from this viewpoint for a moment. Imagine you are speaking to a group of people concerning some very vital matter, one that concerns their very life and destiny, and as you speak to them, a great part of them turn and walk away. Surely that would be a lonely and forsaken feeling. I am sure our Lord was hurt deeply in His soul. When many of His disciples turned and walked away, He then turned and addressed Himself to the remaining twelve. In tenderness, and, no doubt, with a plea in His voice, He said, "Will ye also go away?" Immediately the answer came from the apostle Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life. "

There are some very vital issues involved in this question. Why do men today propose to walk with Christ, then turn and walk with Him no more? Why do some never even attempt to take one step with Christ; yet, they must know they cannot take even one step alone without fear of the judgment to come?

### **Follow for Loaves and Fishes**

During, the personal ministry of our Lord there were many who followed Him for the loaves and fishes they might receive. There were others who, no doubt, followed Him because the crowd was going that way. Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening?... There are those "fair weather" friends of our Lord today who propose to follow Christ and try to make the world think they are walking with Christ, but they are really walking that way for selfish reasons and for personal gain, not because of their devotion to the Christ. They want the loaves and fishes!



A few years ago a business man asked me a question that illustrates this very principle. He asked, "What do you think of my wife and I joining a certain church, that is, moving our membership from one denomination in this town to another denomination in the city?" My first answer was, "I think it is all right"; but then I explained, "You know, you say that one denomination is just as good as another, so why not be a member of one for awhile, then join another one for awhile? Of course, if you were a member of the Lord's church, you wouldn't consider such a thing. But since you prefer denominationalism to New Testament Christianity, it wouldn't make any difference anyway as to which denomination you are a member of. " But, I asked further, "Why do you prefer to change your membership from one denomination to another denomination?" He replied, "Frankly, in my business, most of my friends, my customers, are members of the other church, and from that viewpoint, I feel that I should make the change. "

My friends, here was a good man, a friend of mine, a successful business man, who was proposing to follow the Christ, but in reality he was interested only in the **"loaves and fishes"**! His **"churchianity"** was for selfish reasons. You might be surprised to know how many people there are in the world today who are members of this church and that church because of the dollar value to them and not because of any devotion to Christ.

### **The Largest Crowd?**

As was true during the days of Christ on earth, there are some today who propose to be followers of Christ, because the crowd is going that way. Many times I have had friends tell me frankly that they were members of this denomination or that denomination because they had the largest membership and the biggest crowds went there. Were they walking

with Christ? Certainly not! They stumble at the gospel of Christ and refuse the word of God. Friends, let me tell you. If you are anxious about the largest crowd, just remember that Jesus said that the largest crowd is on the wrong road, the broad way that leads to destruction (Matt. 7: 13, 14).

To whom shall we go? We cannot go with the largest crowd. We cannot go for the loaves and fishes! I can almost hear some of you saying now, "We must go to the Bible. " That's right! But, what do we mean when we say we must go to the Bible?

### **Not Go to Law and Prophets**

Someone will tell you we should go to Moses and the prophets. Others are likely to say, go to the ten commandments, or the law of Moses. Some are as likely to tell you to go to the book of Genesis, or the book of Deuteronomy, or the Psalms, or other books of the Old Testament, as to tell you to go to the gospel recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke or John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistles written to Christians, teaching man how to become a Christian and how to walk with Christ.

No, beloved, we are not to go to Moses and the Prophets. We cannot go to the law of the Old Testament to walk with Christ. That does not mean the Old Testament is not true. It is true. It is the word of God. But, the old law was given to the Jews who were delivered from the bondage of Egypt and the law was to be kept by them.

In Deut. 5: 15 it is revealed, "And thou shall remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah, thy God brought thee thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore, Jehovah, thy God commandeth thee to keep the Sabbath. " Of course, the Sabbath was only a part of that law. But the point is, the law was given only to

the Jews who were delivered from the land of Egypt. In verses 2 and 3 of the same chapter, Deut. 5, he said, "Jehovah, our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, BUT WITH US, EVEN US, WHO ARE ALL OF US ALIVE HERE THIS DAY. " To those of you who have been thinking that we should go back to the law of Moses for salvation, may I ask this question? "Are you a Jew? Were you delivered from the bondage of Egypt? Do you keep the Sabbath and observe other rituals of the old law, in memory of your deliverance from Egyptian bondage?"

Remember, Moses declared that the old law was not given to their fathers, and certainly not to us, but was given to them. He said, "WITH US, EVEN US, WHO ARE ALL OF US ALIVE THIS DAY. " The old law was given to the Jews only and was to govern them only until Christ should come, according to II Cor. 3: 7, Eph. 2: 14-16. In Hebrews, chapter 8, verses 8 through 13, it is revealed that the law of Moses was to pass away and a new law to be given instead, the law of Christ, the New Testament. Hear the apostle, as he quoted the prophet. Are you listening?

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in, the day that I took them by the hand to lead them forth out of Egypt. " Concluding the matter, the apostle declared, "In that he saith, a new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old is waxed aged and is nigh unto vanishing away. " When Jesus died on the cross the old law was removed, it was nailed to the cross, so declared the apostle to the Ephesians (Eph. 2: 14-16; Col. 2: 14). The apostle wrote, "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second" (Heb. 10: 9, 10).

To whom shall we go? Shall we go back to the law of Moses and the prophets? Or, shall we come to Christ, the Son of the living God, who has the words of eternal life? Those who turn and go back to the law of Moses reject Christ and find themselves walking in the smoke of the city of Babylon! We must, therefore, scripturally conclude that we must come to the New Testament, the new law, the law of Christ, in order to come to Christ and walk with him.

### Not Go to John the Baptist

But again someone has become confused. Someone will say, "We must come to John the Baptist for the beginning of the church, for the name we are to honor, and for salvation. " My friends, this is a mistake. Moreover, both John the Baptist and Christ make it clear and evident that John was only a forerunner of Christ. He was only to prepare the way of the Lord. When John preached, his message was "repent for the kingdom of Christ is at hand. " In John 3: 29, John himself declared that Christ was the bridegroom, while he, John, was only a friend of the bridegroom; that Christ must increase, but he, John, would decrease, that is, soon pass out of the picture. Furthermore, John declared that he was unworthy even to wear the shoes of our Lord. Concerning John, Jesus said, "Born of woman there is none greater than John the baptist, yet, the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11: 11)!

Truly, John the Baptist was a great man, but we can't go to him. The church did not begin with him. It was after the death of John the Baptist when Jesus promised, "**I will build my church**" (Matt. 16: 18). Christ's church was established after His death. Read very carefully Acts 1: 4-8; Acts 2: 36-47. We do not honor the name of John the Baptist by wearing it. He does not bring salvation to us. Even the least in the kingdom of Christ, the church of our Lord, is greater

than he, because of the exaltation of Christ and His church. Even those who had been baptized of the baptism of John were baptized again when they learned the gospel of Christ in its fullness and completeness. In Acts, 19th chapter, verses 1 through 5, it is recorded that the disciples at Ephesus, who had already been baptized by the authority of John the Baptist, were baptized again by the authority of Jesus Christ, after Paul preached Christ unto them. Obviously, John's baptism was no longer valid, therefore, the necessity of being baptized into Christ. Paul affirms that one is baptized into the name of Christ and not the name of some human being (1 Cor. 1: 12-15). The Bible says that the disciples "were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26).

#### Hear Christ Only

To whom shall we go? John the Baptist, or Christ? The law of Moses, or the law of Christ?

When our Lord took with Him Peter, James and John into the high mountains and was transfigured before them, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with them. The apostle Peter, who declared that there is none other to whom we can go, except Christ, became confused in his thinking. He suggested, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, I will make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. " But his speech was interrupted by a voice from heaven. The suggestion was contrary to the will of God. A bright cloud overshadowed them and the voice declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him. "

Ladies and gentleman, hear me! Are you listening? There was no place for Moses and the prophets, nor John the Baptist. It is Christ, or no one. There is none other. The voice from heaven corrected the mistaken idea of Peter when it declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well

pleased, HEAR YE HIM!" To whom shall we go? Without Christ you are walking not alone, but with Satan as your companion. Without Christ you are lost. Without Christ we are nothing and our hope fades into less than nothingness!

### **Go to Whom in Death**

Beloved, will you listen to me? Someday, how soon we know not, you must make your departure from this world. You must know that. Death is inevitable! To whom can you go when you realize that you must walk down into the valley of the shadow of death? To your mother, to your father, your husband, or to your wife? How far can they go with you? Have you ever thought about that? They can only go with you, perhaps, to your death bed. They can go no farther! They must part at the grave, the margin of eternity.

Maybe you have been trusting in your fraternity, your lodge, or your club. How far can they go with you? Will you call for them when your feet are being dipped in the cold, chilly stream of the river of death? They can only go with you to the bank of the river. There they must stop! But, oh, my friends, if you are a Christian; I say, if you are a Christian, you can go to one who will go with you, not only to walk through the valley of the shadow of death with you, but to walk with you down the street of gold in the city of God throughout all eternity. I must tell you there is none upon this earth to whom you can go for salvation. If you are relying upon the faith and tradition of your father and mother, just remember the words of Jesus. It was He who declared: "He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10: 37, 38). To whom shall we go? There is only one answer! Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all that obey Him

(Heb. 5: 9). His invitation is to all men of earth, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. "

Through faith and obedience to His word, by repenting of all your sins, by being baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins, and by living a faithful, consecrated Christian life, you may walk with Him and live with Him in the beautiful city of our God (Mark 16: 16; Matt. 28: 19; Acts 2: 38). Will you not trust and obey? Go with Christ all the way!

## THE MISUNDERSTOOD CHRIST

Ladies and gentlemen, have you ever considered the seriousness of being misunderstood? I wish to discuss, for your consideration, "The Misunderstood Christ. " The text is taken from John 8: 43, 44. Jesus declared: "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do... "

To these same Jews, in verses 31 and 32 of this same chapter, Jesus had stated, "If ye abide in my word then are ye truly my disciples and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. "

### **Understanding Essential**

A knowledge and understanding of the Christ and His word was essential to salvation more than nineteen hundred years ago and is still essential today. In this text our Lord declared that those Jews did not understand His speech because they would not hear His word, and they could not hear or understand His word because they were too stubborn-hearted. Christ therefore. concluded: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. " They were determined to do what they wanted to do regardless of what Jesus commanded them to do. Unfortunately, there are many people in the world today with the same disposition, and, therefore, are—without proper understanding of Christ and His will. Surely, every responsible person regrets to be misunderstood. What shame and disgrace have been brought about by misunderstandings. What daggers of destruction have been thrust through the hearts of innocent people because of misunderstanding!



The tragedy of one's own misfortune many times may be attributed to misunderstanding. Surely, beloved, we should make every effort to understand and not close our hearts to the truth. Our Lord declared, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. " Of all characters to have graced this world and of all that have ever been taught by men, perhaps Jesus, the Christ, and His great plan and message of salvation, has become the most misunderstood. Yet His knowledge and counsel excel of the combined wisdom of all humanity because He is divine. His wisdom was infinite and from above. As far as was recorded, He never wrote but one sentence and wrote that in the sand. Yet, His words and His works are recorded in the books of all civilized people of the earth. The greatest minds of the world engage in discussions of His life and His teachings. Yet, when truth is expounded, it must always be admitted that Jesus was the author of this truth, long, long ago. One may search the very lengths of the earth and not one additional truth can be found that would make more complete the system of religion as revealed and taught by Christ and His disciples.

It must be understood that in Christ are combined the perfect humanity and perfect divinity. With one hand He reaches heavenward to the throne of God; with the other He reaches below to man's lowest estate, thereby bringing reconciliation between man and God. He stands in the midst of the ages to proclaim, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. "

#### Traditions

Yes, Christ is the very embodiment of truth. But how often He is misunderstood. There are at least two reasons for misunderstanding the teachings of our Lord. First, many misunderstand because of the **traditions of their foreparents.**

They believe what they believe and do what they do because their parents did likewise. Concerning this Paul wrote to the Colossians (chapter 2, verse 8) this admonition: "Take heed lest there should be anyone that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ. "

### **Please Self**

Secondly, many have misunderstood Christ because it was their desire to please themselves, to believe what they want to believe rather than what the Lord wants them to do. In the text of this address Jesus asked, "Why do ye not understand my speech"? At the same time He answered the question, "Because ye cannot hear my word. " Then He explained why they could not hear His word; "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. " They were determined followers of Satan because they believed and practiced what they wanted to believe and practice. They were too stubborn-hearted to understand the word of truth.

### **Circumstances Vs. Conditions**

In the gospel plan of salvation, many have misunderstood the conditions of salvation; yet, they are so plain and self-evident. Many have confused the attendant circumstances of conversions, recorded in the New Testament, with the conditions of salvation. Let us briefly analyze some of these attendant conditions and circumstances. Certainly we all recognize that the attendant circumstances are not related to salvation, while the conditions are always essential. Many have misunderstood.

In Acts, the second chapter, we have the conversion of the 3, 000. First, let us observe the circumstance, verse 2: "Suddenly there came from heaven the sound as of a mighty

rushing wind and it filled all the house where they were sitting. " Surely, we must understand that these were not conditions of salvation; if so, then every time that one is converted to the Lord there must—suddenly come from heaven a sound as of a mighty rushing wind. No, those were not conditions but were attendant circumstances.

Again, verse 3: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. " Now, were those conditions of salvation, or attendant circumstances? If they were conditions of salvation, then every time one is converted to Christ there must appear unto them cloven tongues like as of fire and sit on each one of them! It must be obvious that such was a peculiar circumstance on that particular occasion, not a condition of salvation.

In verse 4 of the same chapter (Acts 2), it is revealed: "And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. "

Again, we must understand that these were attendant circumstances of that particular occasion; otherwise, when one is converted to Christ, he would be miraculously filled with the Holy Spirit and would speak in tongues such that every man of every nation could understand him in his own language.

Not a few people are confused and misunderstand the Bible. I ask your attention to this quotation, Acts 2, verses 15 through 18: "For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day, but this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall

prophesy. "

Those words have been read and misunderstood by many people. Many will contend today that they have the baptism of the Holy Spirit and can prophesy, because they say that in Acts, the second chapter, Peter revealed that Joel, the prophet, declared: "I will pour forth of my spirit upon all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. "

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? It is true, Peter did give the quotation of Joel's prophecy, but if you will read the text you will understand why he quoted the prophet. The baptism of the Holy Spirit had come upon them, the apostles, and evidently some of the people thought they were drunk. It was then Peter said, "These are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day but this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. " Did you hear him? He said, "This is that. " This prophecy does not apply to people two thousand years hence. The apostle declared, "This is that, " this which you now see and hear; This is that" which was spoken to the prophet Joel. Many people today have misunderstood! This very event, then, on the day of Pentecost—this prophecy was fulfilled.

My friends, these incidents just related were no part of the conditions of salvation; nor even related to salvation. Many have thought so, but they have misunderstood Christ. They have mistaken the attendant circumstances for conditions. The conditions of salvation, in this case of conversion; are stated in verses 36 and 38, the same chapter. Acts 2. Having told them to believe on Christ, that is, to know assuredly that He is the Christ (V. 37), in reply to the question, "Men and brethren what shall we do?", the apostle commanded them to "repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (verse

38). The conditions were: "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. " Surely, beloved, you can't misunderstand that.

Let us briefly review another case of conversion. (The 9th and 22nd chapters of Acts) Saul of Tarsus was converted to Christ. In Acts 9, verses 3 through 9, it is revealed that suddenly there was surrounding him a light out of heaven and he heard a voice saying unto him: "Saul. Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He arose from the earth and opened his eyes. He saw nothing for he was blind and was three days without sight. For three days and nights he prayed and did without food and drink before he was told what he must do to become a Christian. My friends, how could any person understand these peculiar circumstances were a part of conditions of salvation? As yet, he had not been told what to do to become a Christian. These are peculiar circumstances attending Saul's conversion.

If we do not understand and mistake these circumstances for conditions of salvation, then every time one is converted to Christ he must be struck blind by a bright light from heaven and for three days and nights he must pray and do without food and water. Being blind, or not blind, has nothing whatever to do with man's salvation. Such whimsical ideas are ridiculous!

#### Conditions of Salvation

The conditions of Saul's salvation are the same as those for men today. He believed in Christ, he repented of his sins and confessed the Christ as Lord. In Acts 22: 16 Saul was told, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on his name. " Baptism was not a circumstance. Baptism was a condition. "Be baptized and wash away thy sins, " was the command.

Another case of conversion in the New Testament is

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recorded in Acts 16: 26-34. Let us understand the difference in the circumstances attending this conversion and the conditions of conversion. Paul and Silas were beaten with rods and placed in prison, according to verses 25 and 26. After praying and singing hymns to God, suddenly there was a great earthquake. The jailer was awakened from his sleep, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, thinking his prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried: "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here. " It was then the jailer brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" If we should make the attendant circumstances of conversion the conditions of salvation, then it would be necessary for the preachers of the gospel to be beaten with rods, put in jail, and every time there was to be a conversion there would be an earthquake!

Ladies and gentleman, I am sure that you can see what an absurd position one places himself in if he does not understand the difference in circumstances of conversion and conditions of salvation. The jailer was told what he must do to be saved. In verse 31 of Acts 16, he was told to believe on the Lord. In verse 32 of the same chapter, it is revealed that they "spake the word of the Lord unto him and all that were in his house. " In other words, after they told him to believe in verse 31, they then told him what to believe in verse 32 — "They spake the word of the Lord unto him. " It would be foolish for one to tell a person that he could be saved by believing on the Lord Jesus and then not tell him **what** to believe and what to do!

Question: What did Paul and Silas tell the jailer when they spoke the word of the Lord? We turn to the gospel of Mark, chapter 16, verse 15 and 16, and here we read that Jesus, when He gave the great commission, said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that

believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. " Did they tell the jailer that Jesus said one must believe and be baptized to be saved? Evidently they did, for the record reveals that they "**spake** the word of the Lord" unto him. They could not be true to the word of the Lord if they had not told the jailer that Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. " Christ stated those conditions were to be given when the gospel was preached, offering salvation to mankind.

My friends, there is positively no doubt about this matter. The very next verse, verse 33, states that he "took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his straightway. " Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Why were they baptized the same hour of the night? There is but one answer. It was an urgent matter! Jesus commanded, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved " Believing on the Lord and being baptized were conditions of salvation. They were not attendant circumstances!

#### Kingdom Misunderstood

Not only are there those who misunderstand the plan of salvation, as taught by Jesus and His apostles, but many misunderstand the purpose of Christ's mission to this earth. There are those who would have us believe that Christ came to this earth to establish a literal kingdom in which He was to reign as king on earth. Even some of Christ's own disciples, misunderstood His mission and the significance of His kingdom. They thought it was to be a literal kingdom on earth. This was a definite misunderstanding of Christ and His teaching.

Before Pilate, Jesus declared, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews"

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(John 18: 36). Christ has been misunderstood. It was never His mission to establish an earthly kingdom upon this earth. He came to build His church, establish His kingdom, through which all people might be saved. To Peter He declared, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16: 18, 19).

The church of the Lord is the kingdom of the Lord. In Acts 20: 28, it is revealed that the church purchased with the blood of Christ. In Rev. 1: 5, 6, it is recorded that the kingdom of the Lord was purchased with the blood of Christ. Those who are delivered from the darkness of the night of sin are translated "into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col. 1: 13). In John 3: 3-5, Jesus declared that those who are born again are in His kingdom.

There are some definite conclusions from these scriptures which should not be misunderstood:

1. All who are saved by the blood of Christ are in the kingdom of Christ, the church of Christ. If the kingdom is not in existence then none can be found who have been saved by the blood of Christ.

2. Those who have been delivered from the "power of darkness, " the night of sin, are "translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love. " If the kingdom does not exist today, then none have yet been delivered from the power of sin.

3. All who have been "born again"—"born of water and the Spirit" — are in the kingdom. If the kingdom does not exist on earth today, then there are not children of God on earth because all who are "born again" are in the kingdom. All who are in the kingdom have been born again.

Christ is coming again, but not to establish His kingdom.



In I Cor. 15: 23, 24. Paul declared that Christ is coming at the end of the world. at which time He shall deliver up the kingdom to God. Let us not misunderstand Christ. Your soul may be lost because of misunderstanding!

### **Christ Misunderstood**

Christ is not only the personification of love and mercy, but His authoritative voice condemns the sinner and reveals the justice of punishment for the disobedient. Some religious leaders and teachers have misunderstood Christ. They would have us believe that Christ is such a sweet-spirited, honey-dripping, apologetic teacher that He would offer the olive branch of peace to the opponents of truth and speak soft words of comfort to the ungodly and disobedient. What misunderstanding! It was our Lord who drove the money changers out of the temple. It was He who was provoked because of the hardness of men's hearts. Read the 23rd chapter of Matthew. Jesus did not fail to expose the synthetic forms of religion practiced in His day.

It was Jesus who declared, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matt. 23: 13, 14).

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, " our Savior declared! "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisee hypocrites!" the Lord pronounced over and over again—seven times in this one chapter. The penetrating indictments of the hypocritical, religious preachers of error were expressed in unmistakable terms and with precise meaning: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt. 23: 33).

It is true that Christ was a person of love and compassion. And, it is also true that He was one whose spirit could be moved with righteous indignation. He was no

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compromiser! He did not hesitate to tell men of their sins and their hypocrisy. He did not fail to expose false teachers and denounce false doctrines. He did not fail to tell evil men and religious hypocrites that that they **would not "escape the judgment of hell. "**

Christ has been misunderstood by the liberalist who would have men believe that Christ was so good, so kind, and so lovable, that He would not condemn sin and expose error. Christ manifested God, the Father, while on earth: "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5: 30). "God is love" (I John 4: 8), but to conclude that God so loves that He condemns not, is to misunderstand both God and Christ. The Bible also says that, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10: 31), and "For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12: 29). Let no one misunderstand the love of God and conclude that Christ was a compromiser and a crowd pleaser. Christ did not avoid controversy and apologize for the truth. In John 8: 31-44, Jesus engaged a group of Jews "that had believed him" in a controversy on the subject of truth. Our Lord did not relent by saying that truth is a "relative" thing, that no one can really understand truth. He concluded the controversy by saying, "Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do... "

Let no man misunderstand Christ. He is meek and gentle like a **"lamb. "** He is also the **"lion** that is the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5: 5).

Evidently, Christ has been misunderstood. Today there are some strange voices being heard. "Let us love all the way. Let us eliminate the **negative** and accentuate the **positive. "** But, when we properly understand Christ and His teaching,

both His personal teaching and the inspired teaching of His apostles, we must accentuate both the positive and the negative! Although it is not always the most pleasant thing to do, when one teaches the **"whole counsel of God"** the **"negative teaching"** is as much a part of the gospel as "positive teaching." The inspired apostle Paul didn't misunderstand Christ. In his charge to Timothy, a gospel preacher, he declared, **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables"** (II Timothy 4: 2-4).

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5: 17), is a divine admonition worthy of all consideration.

The tragedy of misunderstanding Christ is the tragedy of lost souls. Jesus said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name; and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7: 21-23).

Just think! What if you should stand before the Lord in the day of judgment having misunderstood Christ, having disobeyed His will. Then it will be too late! Do not allow anything to cause you to misunderstand Christ. Obey His will that it may be well with your soul!

## THE LOVE OF GOD

The most wonderful, most encouraging, most profitable statement ever made was: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3: 16).

For some 4, 000 years previous to the supreme gift of God's Son for the redemption of mankind, the history of man was characterized by sin, ungodliness, transgression and disobedience. When this gracious gift of God's love and mercy was presented, corruption, crime, iniquity and rebellion toward God were in evidence by all men of earth. All were lost in unbelief, transgression and disobedience. There were none justifiably good. All were sinners before God! This condition of fallen man was ever before God! Yet, God so loved the world that he was willing to give His Son as a sacrifice for sinful man. How immeasurable is the love of God. What a lesson for His people today! The apostle John wrote conclusively of this sublime truth when he declared: "If God so loved us, we ought to love one another" (I John 4: 11).

### **Man's Need for God's Love**

Every soul should be filled with joy and appreciation of God's love for man. Unspeakable gratitude should characterize our hearts to know that every sinner, though trodden down, dejected, oppressed, and despised by men of earth, is loved by the great God of Heaven and earth, our Creator. God, whom I serve, and the God before whom you will stand in the judgment some day, loves your soul and desires to save your soul from hell. How wonderful it is to know that the infinitely pure, holy, and righteous God was moved with

compassion as He looked down upon poor fallen, lost men. What amazing pity! What boundless mercy! He loved man, His creation, and expressed that incomparable love by saying, "I will have mercy on their iniquities. " Yes, God resolved to extend divine mercy in the gift of His Son to save, to purify, to glorify, to redeem humanity.

#### The Priceless Gift

The gift of God's Son was the only answer for man's salvation. The cattle on a thousand hills would be far too feeble, too poor, too little, as an offering for man's sins. The blood of animals could not take away sins. All the gold, the riches and the wealth of the world combined could not pay the price for sin. Where was a sin offering rich enough and precious enough to purge man from his sins? What sacrifice would atone for the sins of the world?

#### Love and Sacrifice

When God, the Heavenly Father, determined to make a sin-offering for the redemption of man from the curse of sin, He searched His vast dominions and selected His most adored possession, the richest jewel, one nearest His own bosom, His own Son, who was on equality with the Father, full of grace and truth, to become the one sacrifice for all men of earth. No doubt, the apostle Paul alludes to this great sacrifice of wealth, in the person of God's Son, when he wrote: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet, for your sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8: 9).

Yes, the richest possession of Heaven became so poor that on one occasion He declared, "The foxes have dens and the birds have places of repose, but the Son of Man has not where to lay his head. "

Oh, how great should be the depth of our appreciation

for the love of God, revealed and expressed in the person of His beloved Son. Truly, the offering of the richest gem of heaven, who became so poor that He did not have a place to pillow His head for a night's rest in His own house, enabled wretched, sin-cursed man to become a rich heir to the kingdom of God, the kingdom possessing the greatest riches ever contemplated by man.

How can you, my sinner friends, rest for a day or sleep for a moment in view of the fact that you are eternity bound, lost, and facing inevitable ruin? You are to suffer that awful punishment being reserved unto that day when the disobedient and ungodly men shall be committed to bottomless pits of anguish, despair, desolation, and punishment! Yet, our eternal God of love and mercy does not wish that anyone should perish, but that all should be saved through the knowledge of truth and obedience unto God (2 Peter 3: 9). The incomparable love of God made possible your salvation!

### **Manifestation of Love for Man's Soul**

The love of Christ is the manifestation of the love of God. Follow Him during His personal ministry upon this earth. His words and acts on every hand are evidence of His great love, pity, and mercy. See Him as the vast multitudes follow Him along the way He traveled. There is a poor, blind man sitting by the wayside whose interest is stirred by the concourse of people passing that way. Unable to see the Son of God, because of his sightless eyes, he evidently inquired, "What is it? Tell me, who is it?" Someone took time to explain to him, "Jesus is passing by. " What a blessing someone was to this poor, blind man; perhaps someone even unknown to him just took the time to tell him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by. "

Hear the imploring cry of this pitiable object of mercy,

"Jesus of Nazareth, Son of David, have mercy on me. " Hear it, beloved! Are you listening? The Lord of Heaven, the gift of God's love, stops the march of time for a moment, long enough to reveal the love of God toward this poor, unfortunate creature of God. "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" came the compassionate answer of the Son of God. The words of faith and hope came, "Lord, that I may receive my sight. " At that moment Jesus demonstrated the love of God and the benevolence and divinity of His own Being, giving sight to the blind in response to a plea of mercy. Can you not feel the joy that must have completely possessed this man, the object of Christ's love and mercy? See him as he must have looked up to behold the beautiful sight of the heavens above, created by the God of love and mercy, the God who created him and brought such joy to his soul through the person of His beloved Son.

Perhaps through this act of benevolence and love of the Christ, this poor man was thrilled to look upon the faces of his mother, his father, his sisters, and his brothers, who were known to him by their voices and not their faces. Had you been there, would you not have fallen at the feet of the Master, as some did on other occasions, and cried: "Lord, have mercy on me, for I am poor sinful man. " Would you not have been made to breathe in your soul, "I thank thee, oh God, that thou did so love the world that you gave your only begotten Son to save the world, even me. "

### **Compassion in Action**

Go with me a little further with our Lord on one of His journeys, as revealed in John 11: 1-45; see His love and tender compassion. Lazarus is dead. Mary and Martha evidently were left alone. Perhaps the family, before Lazarus' death, consisted only of the brother, Lazarus, and his sisters, Mary and Martha. Probably the father and mother, and maybe

other brothers and sisters, were already dead. The sisters and brother were devoted to each other in the quietness of their home circle. But then the summons of death took away their brother. The sisters are grief-stricken and heartbroken. Their brother is gone. He had been dead four days.

Jesus is passing that way. As He draws near, one of the sisters, overwhelmed with grief, ran to meet Him and tearfully declared, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now whatever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Jesus answered, "Your brother shall rise again." But Martha, perhaps desiring more immediate comfort, replied: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Again, Jesus, sustaining her faith and giving her comfort, said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" "Yes", she replied. "Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." Then she went away and called her sister, Mary.

Mary, too, was overwhelmed with grief and sorrow. She fell at the feet of the Lord, saying, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." It is revealed that "when Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled." He then inquired, "Where have ye laid him?" It was then we are told, "Jesus wept"! A brief statement, but with profound meaningfulness, understood by every man on earth, for all men must die and every person must, sooner or later, experience the sadness of the death of loved ones. As the Jews looked on, they said, "Behold, how he loved him."

How grateful we should be that our Lord and Saviour is one who is touched with our infirmities. Yes, He is moved by



the sorrows, the bereavements and tears of God's children and He shares our joys and gladness.

Now we see our Lord of love as He goes to the grave of Lazarus. "Take away the stone, " He commanded. But Martha, gaining more composure, said, "Lord, by this time his body has become offensive for he hath been dead four days. " But Jesus explained, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe thou shouldst see the glory of God?" He then lifted His eyes to the heavenly Father, the God of love and mercy, and said: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; and I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. " Then, with a loud voice He cried, "Lazarus, come forth. " This was the voice of love and compassion; the voice of authority speaking to the dead!

Beloved, I ask you, have you not heard someone address the dead? Have you not heard a bereaved and heartbroken mother or father speak to the dead son or daughter? Have you not heard a grief-stricken husband or wife speak -to a departed companion, who could not answer? I have many times. The coffin remains silent. There is no response. But, thanks to our God, who loved the world, even so much that He gave His only Son for our salvation, there is a voice whom the dead will hear.

Lazarus heard the voice of the Master. He came forth. Christ demonstrated His love and His divinity to all mankind. What a source of comfort to the child of God to know that he has a Saviour who can make the dead alive. "Because I live, ye shall also live, " declared the Lord. "I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore"!

## THE LOVE OF GOD AND BROTHERLY LOVE

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us" (I John 4: 7-12).

Ladies and gentlemen, I invite you to consider with me, "The Love of God and Brotherly Love. " Love is the divine link between God and man—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3: 16). If man had to make God love him, then salvation would be competitive, merited, and beyond the reach of fallen humanity. It is an indisputable fact that God does love us, even in our unworthiness. It is this great love of God which gives us hope of salvation.

### God Loves All Men

Yes, beloved, God loves all men. Nothing can ever be done that would cause God not to love, for God is love. If all of us could fully realize this sublime fact and hold this truth in our hearts, it would banish all real loneliness from our hearts and make us walk in closer fellowship with God and with each other. God's word is abundant with illustrations of the tenderness of God's love.

The prophet of God declared, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (Isaiah 66: 13). Oh, yes, my friends, how many of us would love to go back even today, just for awhile, and revel in our memories of those wonderful days of childhood that live only in our memories. The center of every reasonable and true picture, which memory and imagination paints of those rare, unforgettable days, is the loving figure of mother and a mother's love.

Yes, I remember, in times of trouble, as a child, how natural it was to go to mother for comfort—and I never went in vain. And even now, since we are men and women, with children and grandchildren of our own, there may be days of trying circumstances, cruel disappointments, and wounded hearts, when we find ourselves wishing we could go back—back just for a little while to mother, as we did when we were children, and put an aching head and sobbing heart in her tender embrace and feel her caressing hand upon our head and her kiss of love upon our cheek. But those days will never come back to us. In many cases mothers are separated from us, by perhaps thousands of miles and maybe the river of death itself. The only comfort is that which memory holds. But, my friends, hear me! Are you listening? I can tell you there is one who is the same yesterday, today and forever. God, who is the very essence of love, and as the prophet declared, "whose comfort is that of a mother's." God is love!

### **God Is Love**

God is love. He cannot help but love, for God is love. The sun cannot shine upon the just and refuse to shine upon the unjust, for the sun is light and it cannot help but shine. God cannot withhold His love from man, though evil he might be, for God is love, just as the sun is light. God loves when we are good and loves when we are bad. He loves some

with love of pity, some with love of pride, some with love of compassion, and some with love of justice. But in spite of God's love for man, and even His own children, not all the recipients of God's love will be saved. Some will be lost because they did not appropriate unto themselves the blessings of God's abundant love, but rejected the overtures of God's love and mercy, refusing to walk in fellowship with God and God's people.

God does not want anyone to be lost. He gave His Son as a supreme sacrifice for man's redemption. Reciprocating the love of God, the sinner surrenders his heart and life to God, through obedience to the will of God; thus, he becomes a child of God, a member of the family of God. It is unthinkable that a person should declare that he loves God while at the same time he disobeys God. God's family is united in the bond of love. Where there is the lack of evidence of that love in God's family, the love of brethren for one another and lack of obedience to God's commandments, it is evident that Satan has disrupted the love, harmony and fellowship of God's family, thereby, alienating God's own people from His fellowship.

### **To Know God Is To Love and Obey God**

To know God is to love God. To love God is to know God: "And hereby we know him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith I know him and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected" (I John 2: 3-5).

Knowing God, loving God, and keeping His commandments, as God's children, are absolutely essential to salvation. Knowing God is not simply a matter of intellectual understanding of certain doctrines about God. Although knowledge of God embraces the intellectual, this knowledge is

both moral and spiritual. It is not necessarily the highly trained intellect that knows God, but the pure in heart are they who have come to know God. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Matthew 5: 8). This knowledge of God, beloved, is intimately related to love. Hear the apostle! Are you listening? "Beloved, let us love one another for God is love and everyone that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love" (I John 4: 7, 8).

Again, hear the apostle, 1 John 5, verses 2 and 3: "Hereby we know that we love the children of God when we love God and do his commandments for this is the love of God that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not grievous. ""

Listen, my friends, to the apostle: "We love because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 John 4: 19-21).

The waters of Niagara Falls cannot be contained in a drinking cup. Neither can the finite mind of man fully comprehend the infinite mind of God. God is the great fountain of love. "We love because he first loved us, " declared the apostle. Love is an eternal stream flowing from the fount of God. Our love to God and love toward each other are the effects of God's love for us.

#### **A Liar?**

It is the joyous obedience to God's commandments, which springs from love, that bears evidence of our love for God. Even a child of God, thoroughly indoctrinated with truth, who does not love God and obey the commandments of God, may claim to know God, but the Bible says he is a

liar. Yes, my brethren, even a child of God may claim to know God, love God, and keep His commandments; yet, if he hateth his brother the Bible says he is a liar, "for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen cannot love God whom he hath not seen. "

It is tragic indeed that many brethren have an intellectual knowledge of God and a partisan zeal. They claim to know God and claim to obey the commandments of God; yet, they hold hate and malice in their hearts toward their brethren. They bite and devour, crucify and seek to destroy those who may differ with them. Some brethren will not even speak to each other. Yes, they claim to know God, claim to love God and keep His commandments; but God, who knows all, says such men are liars. You just cannot love God and hate your brother in Christ. Your soul will be lost in a devil's hell!

#### Love **and** Light, Hate **and** Darkness

The absence of brotherly love is evidence of a darkened and sinful mind. "He that loveth his brother abideth in light. " But, "He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now" (I John 2: 9-11). John does not leave any middle ground condition between love of brethren and hate of brethren. Though a brother may boast that he is walking in light, and perhaps think himself to be a light unto others, if he hates his brother, or has lack of love for his brother, he is in darkness.

It has been known that persons who were long imprisoned in darkness frequently lost their physical vision. No doubt, some have walked so long in darkness of the night of sin, ungodliness, hate, malice, envy, jealousy and self-righteousness that they have become spiritually blind. Their spiritual vision having been destroyed, they even imagine they are walking in the light. What a tragic delusion! My

friends, it is not enough to say we are walking in the light. A condition of spiritual darkness is stated by the great apostle of love when he said, "But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1 John 2: 11).

My beloved, the sad and tragic fact is that some brethren, who harbor hate and malice in their hearts, think they are walking in the light, but, as the apostle said, because of hate for a brother they walk in darkness and know not where they go, because the darkness has blinded their eyes. The surrounding darkness keeps one from seeing himself and others about him. But the tragedy of it is, the darkness in which one is constantly moving is operating to completely destroy his spiritual vision. It is said that fish in darkened caves have become eyeless for having been so long in darkness without use of their eyes. May God help us to open our eyes to the light and not become spiritually blinded through ignorance, hate, and disobedience to God until it is too late. Unfortunately, many people have become alienated from God "because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. 4: 18). Blind hearts are lost in darkness.

### **Heart Not Right**

In the absence of love, man's heart cannot be right before God. When one's heart is not right, the devil is the host in the chamber of the heart, from which emanates evil. The heart that is not right produces hate, envy, jealousy, strife, selfishness, greed, covetousness, malice, murder, and every other vile deed. When man has this kind of heart trouble, he is really in trouble. The apostle Peter describes the gravity of this condition of the heart when he declared to Simon: "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of

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this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8: 21-23).

A person's heart is not right when devoid of the love of God. Is your heart right toward God, toward your brother in Christ, toward your fellowman? There is no more tragic condition of the soul of man than to be found in the **"gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity"**!

The apostle admonished: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice" (Eph. 4: 31). It is most regretful that a child of God should allow his soul, his life, his personality to become contaminated with bitterness, wrath, anger and malice. As a child, having been reared on a farm, I recall many times when the milk was so distasteful, so bitter, that we could hardly drink it. The cows ate **"bitter weeds"**, which was digested into their system and produced **bitter milk!** One who allows **"bitterness"** to remain in his **heart will be a bitter, distasteful character!**

### Love and Forgiveness

"How can I forgive? is a question often asked. Really, the question is, "Do I have the love of God in my soul?" The simple matter is, if a person is not willing and anxious to forgive, how could he expect to be forgiven. The person who has trouble forgiving should ask himself the question, "How could God forgive me?"

The willingness to forgive is the real measurement of love in one's heart. Tenderheartedness is an overflow of love in the heart. The Christian, whose heart is characterized by love, will follow the admonition of Paul when he wrote: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4: 32).



The apostle furthermore wrote: "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3: 13).

### **True Love Expressive**

Genuine love is always expressive. For example, in moments of honor and success one might "love" even his enemies. But in moments of disappointment and defeat one might express contempt, even for a friend. When one's heart is free of hate, malice, jealousy and envy, it is love, and love only, that is so richly expressive in words and deeds. For example, a person who has been waiting for the crisis of a loved one near death, hardly has any room in his heart for hate and malice. As those anxious moments pass, hoping and praying for the best, the heart is completely void of evil thoughts. Then the doctor reports: "The crisis is over. Your loved one will live. " At such a time and circumstance the heart is melted in love. One could love everybody and hate nobody!

Yes, I have seen those who were one time enemies embrace each other and weep for joy in moments of forgiveness when hearts were melted in love.

True love is the greatest power and affords the greatest happiness that man can experience. Love is from God—for "God is love. "

A heart without love must be a lonely and selfish heart. There should be less quarrels and more love and forgiveness among brethren. Brotherly love will give no occasion of stumbling. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. " Where pride may painfully stumble, love gracefully walks uprightly! May brotherly love prevail among brethren.

## **LOVE WITHOUT FEAR**

Ladies and gentlemen, there are two great, motivating principles of life which may characterize a person and determine his destiny; the principle of love and the principle of fear. The greatest, strongest, and most everlasting power known is love.

Hear the apostle: "And we know and have believed the love which God hath in us. God is love and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him. Herein is love made perfect with us that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, even so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment, and he that feareth is not made perfect in love" (I John 4: 16-18).

There is no power or force comparable to love. I should not want to be misunderstood, however. Truly, we must fear God. We are taught in His word to "fear God and keep His commandments. " In Heb. 12:28, 29, Paul concluded: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire. " It is incredible that the infidel, atheist, agnostic, and skeptic presume to have no fear of God and may even make pretensions that there is no God. We stand in fear, reverence and awe before our great and eternal God. In this respect we are to fear God!

### **Love Vs. Fear**

Truly, I would be afraid to approach the shadows of death and stand on the margin of eternity without fear and love of God and Christ and without faith in His word.

However, a devout Christian loves more than he fears, especially "fear that hath punishment. "

In perfect love there is no fear. The inspired writer declared in our text, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear. " The more we love God, the more we love Christ, the more we love the truth, the less we fear. Fear spoken of in this text is "fear that hath punishment, " which is a pronounced contrast to love!

Kingdoms have arisen and kingdoms have fallen governed and directed upon the principles of fear, but the kingdom of God, predicated upon the great principle of love, shall never fail. You cannot kill the power and the force of love. The citizens of Christ's kingdom may be burned at the stake, their heads may be severed from their bodies, but the church of God will march on because it is basically built upon and governed by the principle of love.

Throughout history there have been those who have entertained the idea of ruling the world by an iron rod of fear. In our generation, Hitler, Mussolini, and others learned it could not be done. Fear cannot demand loyalty and devotion that love commands. Fear, "that hath punishment, " must rebel sooner or later! On the other hand, love will sacrifice for the cause to which it is devoted and committed. Love is stronger than fear. The great Napoleon once said, "Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I myself have founded great empires; but upon what do these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love and to this very day millions would die for him. " Yes, my friends, how true it is, "Perfect love casteth out fear. "

Surely, love is the motivating factor that leads men to become Christians. The gift of God's love in the person of His Son and the wonderful story of love must cause man to fall in love with overtures of God's love and mercy and humbly

submit his will to the will of God. The church is the bride of Christ. Truly, love is the tie that binds. When a young man and a young lady have decided to become companions for life, surely the marriage is based upon love. Hardly would a young man marry a lady because he was afraid of her. Love should be the bond of matrimony.

### **Love and Obedience**

Our Lord declared: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: Continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love" (John 15: 9, 10). From these inspired declarations, it is evident that love and obedience to God's will are inseparable.

No person can truly love God and disobey the Lord's commandments. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, " Christ admonished. In fact, our Lord positively states, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14: 15). The question is: "have we obeyed the commandments of our Lord, which is the only true evidence of our love for God?"

To love God and to know God is to keep His commandments. Hear the apostle John: "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him" (1 John 2: 3-5).

The test of faith and love is revealed in one's obedience to the gospel. Jesus commanded: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 15, 16).

## Commandments Not Grievous

Beloved, God's commandments are not grievous, if we love God. Nothing can be withheld, if we truly love the Lord. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5: 3). There is a great difference in serving the Lord because of love and pretending to serve Him because of fear.

Every command of Christ, without addition or subtraction, without murmur or complaint, will be obeyed by those who truly love God. Love will lead man to "observe all things" commanded by the Lord (Matthew 28: 19, 20).

My friends, show me a member of the church who presumes to serve the Lord basically because of fear, "that hath punishment, " and I will show you one who is not faithful and loyal to Christ. May I ask, do you try to serve God just because you are afraid you will go to hell if you don't serve Him? If so, most likely you are irregular at the Lord's house and are not dependable for service. If the service one renders is motivated primarily because of the fear of hell, it will not be difficult to observe the lack of a dedicated service. Isn't that true?

A good question to consider is, do you attend all the worship services of the church regularly? Another question, do you attend Bible study regularly? I'll tell you, beloved, those who attend Bible school and worship services regularly are they who do so because they love to do it! They do not do so just because they are afraid they will go to hell if they don't attend.

Someone may say, "Well, you show me in the Bible where I must attend Bible school or go to hell, then I will attend because I am afraid to go to hell. " Some people attempt to serve God because of fear, not because of love.

Beloved, hear me!... Are you listening? The Lord's

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people who are most regular in worship and service to God are they who do so because of love and not just because of the fear of hell. Those who are irregular in their service to God are not motivated by love. If the church had to depend on those members who render a little service because of fear, soon the time would come when the doors of every church building in the land would be closed for a holiday for Satan.

### **Love In Action**

There may be seen many examples of love versus fear in the lives of Christians today. May I relate an example. More than thirty-five years ago I enjoyed a pleasant and profitable work as minister of the Hazel Street church in Hot Springs, Arkansas. I recall one devout Christian woman, then in her eighties, who was never absent from any of the services of the church. During the four years' time I do not recall that she was absent from Bible school on Sunday morning at 9: 45, unless, on very few occasions, she was hindered because of illness. She was always present for worship. This devout Christian was always present for Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night services. She was never absent, unless actually hindered by illness. Even though in advanced years, there were a few times when she walked, in undesirable weather, to the church building for worship. Finally, just before I left Hot Springs, she called me to her home to talk with me. She said, "Brother Howard, I won't be here much longer. My time is gone. I don't have very much goods in this world—only my home. I have always loved the church. I love the truth and I love to hear it preached; therefore, I want to give my home, the last possession I have, to the church. At my death I want the church to have my home for the preacher's home. "

Since that time, that great Christian soul has gone on to a better home than this world can afford. Today, a preacher

in Hot Springs, Arkansas is living in her former home.

My friends, may I ask, do you think that Christian woman attended Bible school every Sunday morning because she was afraid she would go to hell if she didn't? Would you tell me that she was always present for worship every Lord's day morning and night, just because she was afraid she would go to hell if she didn't? Would you try to tell me that this great soul gave her home, the last earthly possession she had, to the church—just because she was afraid she would go to hell if she didn't? You would never make me believe it! I think I knew that Christian woman. She did it because of love; it was a joy and inspiration to her. She loved the church. She loved the truth. It would be unthinkable to say that she ever said, "Well, I guess I HAVE GOT TO GO TO CHURCH TODAY!" No, it was not a toilsome task performed because of fear, but a grand and a glorious privilege enjoyed because of love. In love there is no fear. Love casteth out fear!

## **LOVE WITHOUT FEAR IN WORSHIP**

God's people are to worship and serve Him with all their being: soul, mind, and body. To love God is to worship and serve God in spirit and in truth (John 4: 24). Worship that is motivated and directed by love enables the child of God to pour out the feelings and emotions of his heart in sincere devotions to God. The spirit of the worshipper must be in tune with God to reach the throne of His divine grace and mercy. The love of God motivates man to honor God and worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The authority of the Scriptures is the standard by which man's faith, through which love is expressed, is regulated. The apostle Paul declared: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3: 17). In the "name of the Lord," in this text, means "by the authority of the Lord. " Faith that is predicated upon the doctrines and commandments of men can only mean vain worship (Matthew 15: 8, 9).

### **The Lord's Supper**

The observance of the Lord's Supper on each first day of the week, as communion with the body and blood through the bread and fruit of the vine, is a manifestation of the love of God in the hearts of God's people (Acts 20: 7). It is recorded that Christ, the personification of God's love, declared: "For as often as ye eat this bread; and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11: 23-26). Surely, those who do partake of the Lord's Supper most regularly, as commanded by the Lord, do so acceptably because of love, and not because of fear— afraid



they will go to hell if they don't.

### **Giving**

Faithful Christians do not give of their money for the cause of Christ because they are afraid they will go to hell if they do not give. Dedicated Christians give of their material substance as they have been prospered, freely and cheerfully, because of love "... for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9: 7). The one who gives because of fear is he who usually gives just as little as possible, perhaps just enough to try to satisfy his conscience which has been pricked by fear. Perhaps he is afraid not to give a little something. He might go to hell if he didn't give something, he concludes.

Is it reasonable to say that a wife or mother who saved and sacrificed here and there, in order to present a loved one with a special gift, did so because of fear? Or, was it not because of love? When you do something because of love, no one is going to rob you of your reward.

### **Rich Reward**

Consider most seriously the question, "Do we love, or fear?" Remember! "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear. "

Ladies and gentlemen, may I give a personal testimony of a rich experience in this matter? Many years ago, while visiting some prisoners in the county jail, in Greenville, Texas, where I lived twenty-five years, I was introduced to a young man who had been released from the penitentiary of another state. He arrived in Greenville at night time, hungry and cold, with bare clothing on his body. He threw a stone through the window of a small grocery store, then called the Sheriff to come get him and put him in jail so that he might have a place to sleep and some food to eat. Through the goodness and compassion of the sheriff, the unfortunate

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young man, who was far away from his home and the loved ones of his family, found that strangers and officers of the law could love a man who had spent time behind bars. He was simply a guest at the jail with no charges filed against him.

I talked with the young man about becoming a Christian. As I was walking away, he said, "Sir, if I had some clothes I would go to church. "

My heart was moved with compassion. I went home, got a suit of clothes, a shirt, a tie, and a pair of shoes and returned to the jail. I requested the jailor to please inform the young man that the clothes were from my closet for him, and I would be pleased to know that he did go to church.

The following week I was out of the state. It is difficult to explain to you how I felt when I received a letter from my wife, stating, "I was deeply moved this morning when I saw the young man from the jail, walking down the aisle at church with your clothes on. " Yes, it was a very richly rewarding experience!

My friends, you can't help getting something out of something when you put something into something because of love! One of our greatest problems in the church today is the fact that so many people have put so little into the work of the Lord and His church, and have gotten so little in return. They have little sincere interest in the church!

I ask you to meditate upon these divine words of truth: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear. " Do you love, or do you fear?

One of the greatest tests of love is that of giving. God, the most perfect and greatest giver, gave the most perfect and greatest gift, His own Son—"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. " It was love that brought God's gift to man!

To the early Christians, Paul wrote that their giving was to "prove the sincerity of your love" (2 Cor. 8: 8). Even in deep poverty some gave beyond their power, the apostle revealed in II Cor. 8: 2, 3. The secret of their joy and abundance of giving was that they "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8: 5). Obviously, they gave because of love and not because of fear.

### **Singing, Teaching and Prayer**

The child of God whose worship is motivated by love is greatly inspired, edified, and spiritually strengthened through worship in song, teaching, and prayer.

A great fortitude, refuge, and spiritual strength in the Christian worship is prayer. Prayer is a most intimate relationship with God, Who is warmly and sincerely addressed as, "Our Father who art in heaven. "

A father who loves his children, and children who love their father, experience a pleasantness and nearness that is rich and lasting. Do you really love God, my friends? Are you on speaking terms with God, the heavenly Father?

God's children, who love Him, love His word. Christians love the truth. They love to hear it. They love to teach it to others. It is the only means of God's power unto salvation. The apostle Paul declared, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth... " (Rom. 1: 16).

### **Keep in Love of God**

Although God's love is always abounding, man has the obligation of keeping himself in the love of God. Jude wrote: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping yourselves in the love of God looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 20, 21).

We have learned from the Bible that "this is the love of God that we keep his commandments. " For one to keep himself in the love of God, therefore, is to maintain a spiritual balance through obedience to the word of God. The individual is responsible for keeping himself in the love of God. God does not do this for man, although God loves every soul. Man himself has this most serious responsibility.

### **Separate From Love of God?**

A most assuring passage of scripture is found in Romans 8: 35-39. The inspired apostle concluded that nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. "

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God. God loves His children. God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son to die for the sins of all men. But that does not mean that salvation is unconditional. Remember, "This is the love of God that we keep his commandments. "

### **Man May Separate Himself from God**

God, through the prophet Isaiah, declared: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear" (Isa. 59: 1, 2). Man, even a child of God, by reason of his own sins, can separate himself from God.

The message from our Lord in Heaven revealed that the church in Ephesus had fallen because they had departed from their "first love. " The admonition was: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and I will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2: 4, 5).

### **Love of World, a Conflict**

The Christian must divest himself of conflicting affections and interest. The attractions of the world, which appeal to the lusts of the flesh, alienate the Christian from God. Language could hardly be plainer, or more meaningful, than these words of inspiration: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him" (1 John 2: 15).

Regarding the matter of conflict of affection,. James declared: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4: 4).

### **Love in Death**

The power of love reaches beyond the river of death. Cherished memories flood our soul as we think of loved ones who have gone on into eternity. The chambers of a heart that loves are never vacant. The Christian whose life has been characterized by love and faithfulness to our Lord has no fear of death.

A few years ago I had the privilege of visiting a saint of God who had attained the age of 102 years. She was a great Christian woman who had been an inspiration to many, many people. She loved the Lord and had served him most faithfully more than 75 years.

While talking with this precious soul the thought occurred to me, what would it be like to have lived beyond the sunset of life on this earth, to have lived more than one hundred years, and for more than 75 years to have lived in fellowship with the Lord and his people. I asked this beloved Christian, "Tell me, what is it like to have been blessed with such a long and fruitful life in the Lord's kingdom? May I ask

you, as the sun is near its setting on the horizon of your life, do you have any fear of death?"

In response, after a moment of meditation, the gracious Christian woman looked at me with a smile of gladness and replied: "I love the church. I love my children, my grand-children, and all my family. They have all been so gracious to me. I love my Lord. " Then, after a brief pause, she concluded: "Now, I am just waiting to go home. "

What an expression of the fond anticipation of the joys and pleasures of the home of the soul for one who had loved the Lord so long! Not one note of fear was in evidence. Love "casteth out fear"!

The great apostle Paul must have experienced that degree of perfect love as he lived in the evening shadows of his very fruitful life for Christ. While standing on the margin of eternity, and in anticipation of the future, he declared: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain... For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil 1: 21-23).

Surely, this was the grand and glorious thought expressed by David, in the 23rd Psalm, when he said:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. "

There is no fear in love. Perfect love casteth out fear. Do you love God?

## IS THE CONSCIENCE A SAFE GUIDE?-No. 1

Ladies and gentlemen, is your conscience a safe guide?

Conscience is an evaluation, approval or disapproval, of what is right or wrong. Conscience does not determine what is right and wrong, but it is a sense of the right and the wrong, according to moral judgment. A person's moral judgment is the mainspring of his conscience. Conscience approves or disapproves what one's moral judgment dictates to be right or wrong. Cruden's concordance defines conscience as: "That faculty within us which decries as to the moral quality of our thoughts, words, and acts... a conscience can be educated or trained to recognize good and evil, but its action is involuntary. "

One's conscience is that faculty of the inner man which approves that which he feels is right and disapproves that which he feels is wrong. Conscience is regulated by our moral judgment. Moral judgment is based on education or environmental influences. One's moral judgment, therefore, may be right or wrong, according to the teaching or influence. A man's conscience, therefore, may say "this is right" and "that is wrong" because that is his judgment based upon the information received. But suppose the information is wrong, which so often is the case. Then his judgment is wrong and his conscience is wrong, even though the conscience may have said it was right. If one is taught that something is right, even though it may be 100% wrong, he may expect the conscience to conclude that it is right. **But if it is wrong, it is not right!** The conscience simply acted on wrong judgment based on wrong information. The conscience is not always a safe guide! An opinionated conscience may totally disqualify

one to render proper judgment. The opinionated conscience results in self-centered, self-interest judgments based on one's own standards of right and wrong, regardless of truth upon which all judgments should be predicated.

There, can be no doubt that God endowed man with a conscience when He created him. Man was given the capacity to judge what is right and what is wrong. Man was told by God what was right and what was wrong when he was placed in the garden of Eden. He sinned when he violated God's law.

#### Perverted Conscience

My friends, the evaluation of right and wrong may become distorted and perverted by evil environments and false teaching. Under certain influence and teaching a child could be taught to believe that it would be proper to commit almost any sin known. Surely, no sensible person would contend that to commit such offenses would be no sin because the person did so in all good conscience.

#### Feelings Not Safe

Not infrequently do we hear the statement, "Let your conscience be your guide. " This is a mistake. The office of the conscience is not that of a guide. The office of the conscience is not to judge. One's feelings are no evidence of his salvation. "When one says, "I feel like I am saved, " he is predicating his hope of salvation on the wrong premise. A person's conscience may be perfectly clear, "void of offense, " his feelings entirely satisfactory to himself, and yet be entirely wrong. Saul of Tarsus declared of himself, before he became a Christian: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26: 9). If his feelings were a safe guide, then he was right in persecuting the church. But he later declared that he was "chief" of sinners. The passengers on the great



Titanic had a feeling of absolute safety and security, thinking it was a ship that would not sink, but with their false feeling of security their doom was none-the-less a reality. They went to the bottom of the ocean!

### **Motive and Conscience**

Beloved, motive is a predominant factor in the process of education of the conscience. Actually, thousands have been taught to believe that it is right to rob, steal, and murder because such acts, as a means to an end, are justified. Who would say that such actions are right, because the men who perform the deeds believe them to be right?

All religious persecutions are the results of perverted and distorted consciences. The perversions were inspired by motives which concluded that the means to the end were justified. Men, in the name of religion and in honor of God, have resorted to robbery, persecution and murder, their motives being to defend what they believe to be truth and to destroy the opponents of that truth. The stronger the conscience, in such cases, the greater the persecution.

No Bible character serves to illustrate these facts more vividly than that great man of God, the apostle Paul, before his conversion to Christ.

### **Conscience Alone Not Safe**

Saul of Tarsus was a fierce and a bitter enemy of the church of Christ before his conversion. He breathed threatenings and slaughter. He delivered Christian men and women to prison. He consented to the death of Christians! Yet, he was very conscientious and deeply religious. His motive was to please God.

Hear the apostle in his address before the Sanhedrin. Are you listening? "Brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23: 1).

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According to Acts 22: 3, 4, the apostle furthermore declared, "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day: And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. "

Here is a man who acted in all good conscience, "**zealous**" for God, but his conscience and zeal for God led him to sin against God. After he became a Christian, when referring to that period of his life before his conversion, he wrote: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1: 15). He was very sincere, with a conscience void of offense, full of zeal for God, but "chief of sinners. " His conscience was not a safe guide when he was an unsaved man, while the "chief of sinners, " while persecuting God's people.

### **Truth Produces Safe Conscience**

Saul's conscience was not a safe guide because his moral judgment was wrong. His judgment was wrong because he was improperly taught. No one would, dare question Saul's honesty and sincerity. No one would challenge his motives. He thought he was serving God, when in reality he was serving Satan! In gratitude and humility, after he became a Christian, he said, "I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (I Timothy 1: 13).

Saul's conscience was pure, his motive sincere and his zeal admired, but a conscience improperly taught, ignorant of the gospel of Christ, ignorant of the identity of the Lord's church. For the lack of proper teaching his conscience led him to be classified as the "chief of sinners. "

My friends, let us observe the change which occurred in

the conscience of this great man, Saul. I invite **you to** read very carefully Acts 9: 1-6, part of which I quote:

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? and the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. "

As Paul reported his conversion in the 22nd chapter of Acts, verses 10-16, it is recorded, "And I said, what shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. " In Acts 9: 6, Luke records, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. " Saul's conscience is now being properly educated and, in the process of education, his conscience is being completely reversed. His conscience, which once **led** to persecuting Christ and His **church, now cries out, "What shall I do, Lord?"** The answer came, "It shall be told thee **what thou must do.** "

Saul's conscience, which had always been pure, honest and sincere, must now be taught and changed. "It shall be **told thee what thou must do,** " the Bible says.

An honest and sincere heart immediately resulted in changed convictions. He was made to realize that, while he

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thought he was serving God, he was persecuting Christ. What a terrible sin his conscience led him to commit!

Oh, my friends, many sincere people there are in the world today who think they are serving God because of a pure conscience and sincere motive, but in reality they have never even become children of God; Their conscience has been improperly taught. Like Saul of Tarsus, their convictions must change. The conscience must be directed by truth. The question, "What must I do to be saved?" must be answered in all good conscience. The truth must be obeyed, even though it means a complete reverse of the former dictates of the conscience.

Saul did not argue the case, as many religious leaders do today. If he were like some men he might have said, "I am right because all these years I have endeavored to serve my God with all the zeal of my being, out of sincere conscience; therefore, I am not interested in making a change. I will not hear those things which will change my conscience. I am satisfied. " But, my friends, Saul did not say that! That is the philosophy of many religious people today!

On the contrary, Saul cried: "Lord what will thou have me do?"

### **Conscience Right, Soul Saved**

The Lord did not leave Saul with a conscience of despair. Through the process of education his conscience was changed from the belief of error to the belief of truth. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8: 32). Again, he said, "If any man willeth to do his will he shall know of the teaching... "

Now let us observe the change of Saul's conscience, his change from a sinner to a saint. In true faith and deep penitence, Saul waits and prays; he waits to be told what he must do to be saved!

Ananias, the preacher, was sent to preach the gospel to this conscientious man — a gospel which would completely change his conscience and transform his life — a gospel which would direct his conscience to contend earnestly for those things he formerly endeavored to destroy.

When Ananias came to Saul, he found a man who was willing to change his conscience, a man who realized that his conscience had not been a safe guide in the past because he had been improperly taught.

The preacher said, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22: 14-16).

Here is a man whose conscience led him to be baptized into Christ, to "wash away thy sins, " as commanded by the Christ who died for his sins. Previously, his conscience had forbidden him to be baptized into Christ; now his conscience leads him to obey his Lord in baptism. Previously, his conscience led him to persecute the way of Christians; now his conscience leads him to be persecuted for the name of Christ. Before his conversion, Saul was the "chief of sinners. " Now, in all good conscience, but a changed conscience, he becomes a tower and a strength in the church of the living God.

Through a converted conscience Saul became a truly converted man. He spent the rest of his life fighting for the true principles of Christianity, directed by a pure conscience — the same principles he once fought against, dictated by a pure conscience. The difference? His conscience, although pure and sincere, was influenced and directed by religious

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error before he became a Christian, but when he became a Christian his conscience, which reversed itself in many respects, was directed and dictated by the truth. A man's conscience, therefore, is a safe guide only when it is guided by the truth.

### **Shall One Follow Conscience?**

In view of these facts, the question presents itself, shall a man follow his conscience?

There is no alternative but to follow one's conscience. Man cannot please God and violate his conscience. Actually, when a man sells his conscience he has sold out himself. It is obligatory that man keep his conscience clean and pure. Paul declared, "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean" (Romans 14: 14).

In this text the apostle declared that man cannot do those things which his conscience forbids without sinning. However, he does not say what some men would have him say, that is, there is no sin in doing anything which you do not believe to be sinful. The example of Saul himself is evidence of the fallacy of such reasoning. The apostle is saying that if a man's conscience says a thing is sinful, to him it would be sinful to violate the conscience. God does not accept a hypocritical conscience.

In this text Paul was discussing the matter of eating meats, which, within itself, was no sin whether one ate or didn't eat! Actually, a man may commit sin by doing a thing which is not sinful within itself, by violating his conscience and doing that which his conscience forbids. Paul's argument is concluded in verse 23 of Romans 14, when he said, "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. "

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? God refuses any service which is not directed by a good conscience. Furthermore, God refuses service which is not in accord with His will, even though such service may be dictated by a sincere conscience. Man cannot serve God acceptably without a pure conscience. Yet, a pure conscience may lead a sincere man to openly violate God's will to the extent that such a man may be lost. Would one contend that Saul would have been saved without changing his conscience and obeying the gospel of Christ? Did not the apostle state that he was "chief" of sinners before his conversion? Who would contend that Saul was saved before his sins were washed away, when he was baptized into Christ (Acts 22: 16), even though he had lived before God in all good conscience before his conversion?

Ladies and gentlemen, don't you know that it takes a pure conscience, properly influenced and directed by God's word, to be acceptable to God? In 1 Timothy 1: 5, Paul wrote, "Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure "heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. " Love is the fulfilling of the law of Christ. The objective of God's law is to lead man, with a pure conscience and an unfeigned faith, in obedience to God's will.

#### Conscience Alone Not Safe

My friends, if conscience alone were a safe guide, then the Jews who crucified our Lord some 2, 000 years ago were right in their evil deed. They put our Lord to death in good conscience. Jesus prayed for them, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23: 34).

Jesus prayed for all of them, "for they know not what they do, " but, obviously, all of them were never saved. Peter preached to them saying, "Him... ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2: 23). About

3, 000 repented, were baptized, and were saved by the blood of Christ, a complete reversal of their conscience. Many were not converted. Stephen preached to some of them who crucified Christ. He charged them as being "the betrayers and murderers" of the Son of God. Instead of their conscience being "pricked" and changed, they cast him out of the city and stoned him to death. Stephen prayed for them, "for they know not what they do. " These men likewise acted in good conscience, but a conscience that led to "condemnation and not salvation!

To be consistent many of our modern teachers today would be impelled to say, "The Jews who crucified Christ were right because they believed they were right. " Conscience is not always a safe guide!

### **Conscience and Infallibility**

A sincere conscience does not always mean that a person will accept the truth when he hears it. It is dangerous, indeed, for one to conclude that he is safe, just because he is true to his conscience. Such a false sense of security makes one indifferent to the teaching of Christ, which might be contrary to the dictation of his conscience.

For man to contend that his good conscience is always a safe guide is to contend that his conscience is an infallible rule; therefore, man himself is infallible and divine. When man makes his own conscience the rule of safety, he does not worship God as God, but worships the creature rather than the creator! To make one's conscience the standard for right and wrong is to defy the authority of Christ and dethrone God. To honor and worship Jehovah as God is to recognize Him only as the supreme law giver. Every man's conscience, therefore, is subject to the dictates of God's will and not man's own will!



## IS THE CONSCIENCE A SAFE GUIDE?-No. 2

### Conscience and Human Reason

Ladies and gentlemen, the doctrine of human reason, which claims man's conscience is a safe guide, is both infidelity and idolatry. To honor man's conscience rather than God's will is infidelity. To displace God and His divine authority with human reason, man's conscience, is nothing short of idolatry. Paul declared, "Because that, -when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Romans 1: 21).

The apostle concludes in verses 22 through 25, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. "

The wisdom of man is incomparable to the infinite wisdom of God. Hear the apostle as he declared, "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1: 20, 21).

Beloved, God and Christ cannot be found through a telescope, or a microscope. Salvation from sin cannot be

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secured by solving some scientific or mathematical problems. Man's wisdom is but foolishness in contrast to God's wisdom. Every man's conscience must be in subjection to the will of God.

The conscience of some men today would say it is foolish to hear the preaching of the gospel. To them the gospel of Christ is foolishness. Faith can not be substituted for reason, they would declare! But, my friends, hear me! I tell you that unless your conscience is willing to follow the divine instructions of Christ, your soul will be lost! Divine wisdom says, "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11: 6).

Many religious leaders would say follow the dictates of your conscience, or the traditions of your parents. Suppose the Lord did say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, " we would say, he that believeth and is NOT baptized shall be saved! Our conscience says baptism in water for remission of sins is foolishness.

But, beloved, hear the Lord! Are you listening? Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. " Peter, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, commanded: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins... " Does your conscience agree? Saul was told, "Now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22: 16). Does your wisdom conflict with God's wisdom in this instance? Divine wisdom says, "Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God" (1 Peter 3: 20, 21).

What does your conscience say? Would you say that baptism does not save? God's wisdom says, "**baptism doth** also now save us. "

### Good Conscience Toward God

It would be possible for a person to go through the form of every act of obedience unto God, and still not please God. He might presume to obey God simply because the wife, or father, or mother wants him to do so. He might presume to obey God because many of his friends are Christians and it is pleasant and gratifying to be associated with them. But such motives would not be a true conscience toward God, therefore, vain in God's sight. The true conscience toward God, which pleases Him, is a sincere conscience, directed by God's word, motivated by the desire to please God and not man. Salvation is promised to those who, out of a pure and good conscience, seek to please God by doing His will, without addition or subtraction (Matt. 7: 21-27; 2 John 9).

Surely, no person would affirm that he has never made a mistake in following his conscience. All must admit that many serious mistakes have been made by following a misguided, misinformed conscience. Furthermore, the serious consequences of following a misguided conscience are never lessened. Honesty and sincerity in the belief of a proposition of error never alter the consequences. It is the truth that makes men free (Jno. 8: 32). Error can only bring condemnation, even though believed to have been the truth (2 Thess, 2: 11, 12; Eph. 5: 6).

### Seared Conscience

It is a most dangerous thing for one to "play with his conscience. " The conscience may become seared as "with a hot iron" (I Tim. 4: 2). If a hot iron were applied to one's hand the pain would be so severe that he could hardly bear it at first. But if the hot iron were allowed to remain until the flesh became "seared, " then the feeling would become dead! It is possible for a person to allow his conscience to become seared so much that the gospel of Christ will no longer prick

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the heart. Such, indeed, is a destitute condition of conscience, with no hope of salvation!

Let no man conclude, however, that because his conscience has been seared that he is not guilty of his sins and need not fear the punishment of hell. Just because he is no longer sensitive to his sins, does not remove the guilt of his sins. It is all the more dangerous! The burn is there. The damage is there. Although the pain is not presently acute as it was when the burn occurred, the pain will become even greater and it could be necessary to amputate the hand if the proper remedy is not applied. One can play with his conscience so long until he is no longer sensitive to his sins, but there will be a sad day of awakening when the eternal pain of punishment in torment will be his experience. A person may sleep with a "seared" conscience, as with a seared hand, but when he awakes the horror of his condition may be a million times more dreadful than the pain first endured, The rich man in Hades begged: "Have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I, am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16: 24). It will be too late in eternity!

### Satan Will Not Disturb

It is not Satan's business to disturb a man's conscience when he disobeys God. The devil pretends to be a friend to the sinner. He would never block the path of a sinner whose conscience is leading him down the road of life to eternity in torment. Satan would never disturb the slumber, apathy, and slothfulness of a child of God whose conscience has ceased to be directed by Christ.

We should be thankful to our God that the gospel of Christ still pricks the conscience of honest souls, as it did the first time it was told, offering remission of sins in the name of Christ, when some 3, 000 souls were saved by repenting

and being baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2: 37, 38). If your conscience is awakened by this glorious truth of the gospel, do not risk another day, but obey Christ! If your conscience, as a child of God, has been stirred by exhortations and admonitions to a new awakening of your duties and responsibilities, do not play with your conscience. It would be a sad day for you in eternity!

### **Conscience and Danger Signal**

Conscience may be compared to a clock, while the divine law, to guide the conscience, may be compared to the sun. The clock is right only when it keeps time with the sun. The conscience is right only when directed by the divine law of God. Or, like a compass, the conscience may be out of order by reason of improper influence. The needle of the compass may point due south, if a powerful magnet is placed before it in that direction, when it should be pointing due north. So often man's conscience is pulled in the wrong direction by powerful influences which are in opposition to truth. On the other hand, conscience may pull strongly in the right direction while the magnetic power of evil influence and error pull in the wrong direction.

Man's conscience is a signal, a warning of the dangerous pitfalls on life's pathway. The conscience is a check to the beginners in sin. With the first drink of intoxicating liquor, a person's conscience most likely will sound a danger signal. He will try to hide his deed, A young man or woman guilty of this deed will at first try to avoid the presence of his mother or father; he will avoid the presence of Christians; he would not attend a church service while under the influence of intoxicating drinks.

A person, when first guilty of stealing, will attempt to deceive, falsify, and cover up his unjust deed. A habitual thief, however, who has violated his conscience so often,

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refusing to heed the danger calls of his conscience, may even boast of his unlawful deeds. Oh, that men would heed their consciences before it is too late! A young plant, bent in the wrong direction, or bearing bad fruit, may be easily corrected or rooted up; but if allowed to grow into a big tree, it may become most difficult to uproot.

Do not be deceived by a false sense of security because you may say, "My conscience does not bother me." This calmness may be a false peace. A false peace may be like the slumber of Samson in the lap of Delilah — when he awoke it was too late! It could be like the calm before the storm! Remember the word of God, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion" (Amos 6: 1).

Goodspeed's translation of Paul's statement to the Corinthian church, I Cor. 4: 4, is most enlightening: "For while my conscience does not bother me at all, that does not prove that I am innocent. It is the Lord who must examine me." A clear conscience does not always mean justification!

The inspired apostle declared in this text that his conscience was not a safe guide. Although his conscience might justify his actions, that did not prove him to be right, or to be "innocent."

### No Compromised Peace

There can be no compromised peace of conscience. There is no compromise between truth and error. There is no fellowship between sin and righteousness. There is no negotiated compromise between light and darkness. The peace of conscience, dictated by divine truth, is not negotiable. Either man is right or wrong in his relationship with God! There is no neutral ground. Jesus, the author of salvation, declared: "He that is not with me is against me..." (Matt. 12: 30).

The cry for peace where there is no peace is a fateful

delusion! The prophet of God announced the tragedy of a compromised peace when he said: "For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6: 13, 14).

Let no man deceive you with his plea for a compromise between truth and error, between sin and righteousness. Do not be misled by the cry for, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace. "

### **The Peace of Conscience**

Surely, there is no peace for a troubled conscience. God, in the long ago, said through the prophet, "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked" (Isa. 48: 22). Again, He said: "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it can not rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Isa. 57: 20).

How often has your soul longed for that peace of conscience, so that you might close your eyes in sleep at night with no fear of meeting God in the Judgment, should the sunlight of another day not be yours to experience? Has not your soul been troubled because of the consciousness of your sins? To every unsaved person I say, is your heart not fearful because you have not obeyed the gospel of Christ? Surely, you must be disturbed! Satan has offered you everything in the world to satisfy, but you still have a conscience and you must know that the sinful things of this world can **never** satisfy an honest and sincere conscience that tells you that the Judgment day is coining — that the judgment is just as inevitable as death itself. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9: 27).

### **The Christian at Peace with God**

The peace of conscience is a cherished attribute of a Christian. It is an accented joy and comfort to the faithful child of God. Observe these expressions of peace:

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink: but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14: 17).

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom 15: 13).

"Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (2 Cor. 13: 11).

In ecstasy the apostle Paul declared: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice... And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil 4: 4, 7).

The obedient child of God, whose faith is "much more precious than gold that perisheth, " is the only person who can endure the trials and temptations of this life and still "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. " This is because of the promise: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1 Peter 1: 6-9).

The promise of the Prince of Peace is most assuring to the faithful child of God: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (John 14: 27).

When a child of God is asked to give a "reason of the hope" that is within his soul (I Pet. 3: 15), there is nothing more assuring than to be able to open the Bible and read chapter and verse from whence comes the divine wisdom that directs his conscience.



### A Shipwrecked Conscience

Ladies and gentlemen, the great tragedy of the human soul is a shipwrecked faith which is the result of a deceived or misguided conscience. Such a shipwrecked faith and conscience can only be found in the devil's wrecking yard!

Paul, truly a man of unimpeachable convictions, admonished: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (I Tim. 1: 19, 20).

No doubt thousands, whose shipwrecked faith was piloted by a conscience void of divine dictation into the devil's wrecking yard, would like once again to have the pure and simple faith in God and Christ which was experienced before their faith was shipwrecked.

Beloved, hear me! I say, are you listening? Beware of the storms of the world that would deceive, misguide, or deaden your conscience and make shipwreck of your faith! Often faith that has gone to the devil's wrecking yard is never renewed, but wrecked for time and eternity.

### Dead Conscience

A live conscience may be "pricked" (Acts 2: 37, 38), "discerned" and "pierced" (Heb 4: 12). A dead conscience is hopeless. A dead body is unaffected by a knife that may cut deeply. A dead conscience is hardly pricked by the sword of the Spirit. A dead conscience is unaffected by the tender mercies of God and warnings of judgment by an eternal God!

Hear the words of our Master when He said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name

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have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7: 21-23).

A conscience, dictated by divine truth, assures hope which is an anchor of the soul. Unlike faith that is shipwrecked, tossed to and fro and sinking in a sea of doubts, skepticism, worldliness and ungodliness, the hope of a faithful Christian is an "anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast" (Heb. 6: 19).

Man's conscience is not always a safe guide. If conscience alone is a safe guide, then it is wrong to preach Christ and His gospel to heathens who worship idols in all good conscience in many parts of the world. Any religion that man may profess, if done with a good conscience, regardless of moral and spiritual values, even if anti-God, must be acceptable to God, if the conscience is always a safe guide.

The conscience, if acceptable unto God, must be predicated upon proper judgment directed by divine wisdom!

"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice" (Prov. 21: 3).

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14: 12).

## FOREORDINATION AND PREDESTINATION—No. 1

My friends, did God, before the foundation of the world, foreordain and predestine the soul of every individual person before he was born?

This theory is affirmed by some religious denominations. One church creed declares: "God, from all eternity, did, by most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatever comes to pass" (Presbyterian Confession of Faith, Chapter III Section I). Furthermore, this creed declares:

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished" (Confession of Faith, Chapter ID, Sections 3, 4, 5).

It should be observed that the predestination theory asserts that God did "unchangeably ordain whatever comes to pass. " If a thing is unchangeable, it cannot be changed by God or man. This theory, therefore, would make it impossible for man to err, while, at the same time, it would make God both good and bad. Man can do no evil because whatever he does, good or evil, God "unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass" (Larger Catechism). Man could not be responsible for evil, if God unchangeably foreordained that it should be done. On the other hand, if God "unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, " then God is both evil and good. God would be

responsible for all evil as well as all good. This theory would make God man and man God, God being guilty of both evil and good, while man could be responsible for no evil. My friends, this is a false theory!

God is wholly good and knows no evil. "The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works... The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Psa. 135: 9, 17).

### **Is God Contradictory?**

If God is not wholly good, then He is responsible for original sin and all the calamities of the world, since He "unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, " according to the predestination theory. This theory not only makes God the author of evil, but necessarily makes God a bundle of contradictions. For example, God commanded: "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20: 13-16). Yet, Cain killed his brother, Abel, because God "unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. " Can you imagine God commanding, "Thou shalt not kill", yet, God foreordained and predestined that Cain should kill his brother, which he could not avoid because God "unchangeably foreordained" that he should kill him?

Beloved, can you imagine God having unchangeably foreordained that every man on earth, on a certain day, do a certain thing in absolute disobedience to certain commands to be obeyed, then punish man for doing that very thing which was predestined that he must do — all of which could not be changed? This is not imagination. God commanded, "Thou shalt not kill. " Man kills every day. God commanded, "Thou shalt not commit adultery, " but man constantly commits adultery. He commanded: "Thou shalt not steal, " but man steals every day. The inspired word of God declares that "The powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever

therefore that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation" (Rom. 13: 1, 2). Could one imagine God to be so contradictory as to command man to obey His ordinances, which by "unchangeable" decree he must disobey, then punish him for doing what he could not avoid doing? In this divine revelation Paul exhorts Christians to resist not "the ordinance of God. " How could one successfully resist something which God has "unchangeably foreordained"? What confusion! The Bible says that the powers that be are "ordained of God" (Rom. 13: 1).

Could it be that man disobeys the God-ordained civil power because God "unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass"? According to this theory, by God's decree man must resist civil power. Then he is told that he will receive damnation for resisting that which was "unchangeably foreordained" by God in the first place. Surely, this is a false theory.

### **The "Unchangeable" Changed**

The "unchangeable" decrees of God have not always been "unchangeable. " For example, God pronounced the doom of Nineveh, saying, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3: 4). This decree was changed. The Bible reveals: "God saw their works, and they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not" (Jonah 3: 10). Was not this decree changed? If the theory of foreordination and predestination were true, then here is a case of an "unchangeable" decree of God changed by God himself! Remember, my friends, the theory of foreordination and predestination asserts that God, not only from all eternity ordained, but He "unchangeably foreordained, " not just some things, but absolutely everything — "whatever

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comes to pass. "

In Gen. 6: 5, 6, it is revealed that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great on earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. "

Observe the conclusions of the false theory of predestination. God "unchangeably" foreordained that He create man; then, "unchangeably" decreed that the "wickedness of man" should be great in the earth, the result being the Lord was "grieved at His heart" because He, by unchangeable decree, made man, who, by immutable decree, became wicked and evil. All of this would certainly suggest that rather than God being "grieved" because of the wickedness of man, whom He created, it would seem that God was grieved at His own foolish decrees.

Furthermore, if God "unchangeably" foreordained whatever comes to pass, " then observe the plight of both God and Adam. God "unchangeably" decreed Adam's creation, placed him in the garden, commanded him not to eat the forbidden fruit, yet, foreordained that he should eat the fruit and be punished for doing what was "unchangeably" decreed that he must do. He must eat the forbidden fruit and violate God's immutable law, or not eat the fruit and change God's "unchangeable" decree! Surely, this theory of foreordination and predestination is false!

### **Does God Choose To Know All Things?**

Our Lord God did not "unchangeably" foreordain whatever comes to pass. " In fact, the Bible reveals that, although God is omniscient, He did not always choose to know all things. In Jer. 19: 5, God declared: "They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor

spake it, neither came it into my mind. "

Again, it is recorded that God said that the children of Judah had "built again the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart" (Jer. 7: 31).

If the theory of foreordination and predestination were true, then God "unchangeably foreordained" these idolatrous acts which did come to pass. Yet, God declared that He did not command them, He did not speak it, and it did not even come into His mind. How could any person conclude that God "unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass" when, in this case, it would be evident that the Lord "foreordained" things that never came into His mind? From these texts it must be concluded that, contrary to the theory of foreordination and predestination, God does not always choose to know all things, although He is an all wise and all powerful God.

### **Objections Considered**

It should be understood that the advocates of the "predestination" theory honestly believe that certain passages of the Scriptures sustain their doctrine. Although time would fail me in this presentation for an examination of all "**proof** texts" of this theory, I do invite your attention to an investigation of some of the major scriptural references as alleged proof texts of the theory.

#### **Jacob Loved, Esau Hated**

One of, the most familiar Bible examples cited as alleged proof of the doctrine of "unchangeable foreordination" is referred to in Romans 9: 10-13:

"And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by father Isaac, (for the children

being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; ) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, But Esau have I hated. "

From this text it is erroneously concluded that God "unchangeably foreordained" that He should love Jacob and hate Esau before they were born. The misunderstanding of the Scripture is due to the lack of knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures. The quotation from Paul is actually a reference to two different quotations from the Old Testament and does not refer to Jacob or Esau as individual persons whom God loved or hated.

Let us observe the two quotations to which Paul referred. One is from the book of Genesis and was spoken before Jacob and Esau were born. The other reference is from Malachi and was spoken long after both men were dead. Before they were born their mother "was informed, "the elder shall serve the younger" (Gen. 25: 23); while the other quotation, from Mai. 1: 1-3, declares: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. " The two quotations put together, without an understanding of the two original texts, makes the Bible say something it did not say.

This is the statement before the sons were born. Hear it! Are you listening?

"And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: And the Lord entreated him, and Rebekah his wife conceived; and the children struggled together within her, and she said: If it be so why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the



younger" (Gen. 25: 21-23).

It must be observed that nothing is said in this text, before they were born, about God loving Jacob and hating Esau. Furthermore, it must be understood that the Lord did not say that "the one **man** shall be stronger than the other **man**," nor that the "elder man shall serve the younger man." The Lord did say that there were "**two nations**" in Rebekah's womb and that "one **people** shall be stronger than the other **people**." God, in this instance, refers to two nations of people and not to two individual brothers. This prophetic declaration was not fulfilled in the actual persons of these two brothers, but in their descendants, the two nations, Israel and Edom, represented by Jacob and Esau.

But what about Paul's reference to the quotation from Malachi, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated"? This is the text:

"The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi: I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: Yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places" (Mai. 1: 2-4). This statement of God, through the prophet, was made some 1400 years after the death of Jacob and Esau and referred to the nation of Edom, the descendants of Esau upon whom God had administered His wrath, and Jacob's Israel. The Lord blessed Jacob's descendants, Israel, but "hated" Esau, Edom, in that He "laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." There can be no doubt that God spoke of the nations of Israel and Edom and not Jacob and Esau as individual persons.

These declarations from Almighty God in no way

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affected the destiny of either Jacob or Esau. They were not personal considerations. In fact, there was a time when Jacob feared Esau and referred to himself as the servant of Esau. There is no evidence that Esau, as an individual person, ever served Jacob. Read Gen. 32: 3-11. As far as eternity is concerned, there is no reason to conclude that all of Jacob's descendants will be saved, or that all of Esau's posterity will be lost. In fact, no one could prove that Esau himself will be lost! There is not a word about eternal life, or eternal damnation, in these prophetic declarations about either of the brothers. As far as we know the last years of their lives were spent in brotherly love. It seems that with the passing of time and circumstances anger and distrust faded away and love melted their hearts into one. On the occasion of the meeting of Jacob and Esau, when returning from Padan-aram, the Bible records a most heart touching scene: "Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept" (Gen. 33: 4). Surely, that was brotherly love!

## FOREORDINATION AND PREDESTINATION - NO. 2

### The Potter and the Clay

Friends, ladies and gentlemen. Is man foreordained to be saved or lost? An example, usually cited in support of the theory of foreordination and predestination, is that of the potter and the clay. To the Romans, Paul wrote: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory" (Rom. 9: 20-23).

Without an understanding of this parable, as originally given in the Old Testament, many honest people have been led to believe that God, as the great potter, so formed the clay that whatever happens it was "unchangeably fore-ordained" for eternity that it could not have been otherwise. But, my friends, this is a mistake. Let us examine the original text to which reference is made:

"The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with

you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up; and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them" (Jer. 18: 1-10).

This is a parable concerning God and the nation of Israel. God is the potter and Israel is the clay. Notice the explanation: "Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel. "

This parable does not teach that any man, or nation of men, are eternally and unchangeably formed by the potter's hand and he has no choice of his destiny. Actually, this parable teaches just the opposite. This example does present God as the potter who forms the clay. He has the power to bless or destroy a kingdom. But this power is not predicated upon unchangeable decrees made before the worlds began. A kingdom of people is not left without choice in the matter.

The parable of the potter and the clay most positively denies the doctrine of foreordination and predestination. God declared that, as the potter who forms the clay, He had the power over a kingdom, "to pluck up and to pull down; and to destroy it. "

Hear it, ladies and gentlemen! I say, are you listening? God specifically declared, in the very same verse, that a nation is not left without choice in the matter. He said, "If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. "

On the other hand the Lord made it known, concerning a kingdom which He had blessed: "If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them. "

From these divine quotations it is evident that God did not unchangeably decree the destiny of a man or a nation of men. Although the Lord may have revealed His wrath against a nation, even so much as to purpose to destroy it, yet, if such a condemned nation should repent God would show mercy and refrain from the curse of destruction. Or, if a nation has received the blessings of the Lord, yet, should change and do evil, God's blessings would be withdrawn.

The reference to the potter and the clay reveals the fact that Israel, as a nation, failed to accomplish the mission God intended, therefore, as clay, was marred in the hand of the potter. Israel was given a less honorable form of clay in the hands of the potter, but not completely destroyed. This nation of God's people was carried away in Babylonian captivity where they were punished as slaves for seventy years. Afterwards they repented and God, the potter, took them, the vessel, and formed them into a nation of honor again by restoring their nationality.

The parable of the potter and the clay positively denies the doctrine of "unchangeable foreordination" and affirms the free moral agency of men and nations. Paul's reference to the example of the potter and the clay was for the purpose of reminding the Jews that they were marred in the hands of God, the potter, because of their own rebellion and wickedness, having brought destruction upon themselves. Furthermore, by their rejection of Christ they had rejected the beauty and honor of the oneness of the body of Christ in which both Jew and Gentile were to be united in Christ.

The apostle leaves no doubt about the application and

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conclusion. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As he saith also in Hosea, I will call them my people; which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto thee, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God" (Rom. 9: 22-26).

The following conclusions are inescapable!

1. The clay that was marred in the hands of the potter was not "unchangeably foreordained" by the potter to be so formed, because the potter intended to make a good and honorable vessel. God is not willing that any man or nation should perish. Hear the divine testimony:

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2: 3, 4).

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3: 9).

The doctrine of foreordination and predestination asserts that all of the non-elect, those doomed to be lost, are vessels of wrath, "unchangeably" formed in the potter's hand, with no choice to be saved. This is false!

2. The potter did not form a vessel so that he might destroy it. On the contrary, the clay that was marred in the potter's hand was made over into a vessel of less honor so that it might be of use and not destroyed. The false theory of "unchangeable foreordination" affirms that God, the

potter, made of the clay in his hand the non-elect to be vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, with no possible choice of salvation.

3. The doctrine of "unchangeable foreordination" completely contradicts the parable of the potter and the clay. According to the theory, by "unchangeable" decree from eternity the vessels must unchangeably come out of the potter's hand as he designed them, therefore, the clay could never mar in the potter's hand. To fit the doctrine of foreordination and predestination it would be necessary for the potter to have two lumps of clay; one, the elect; the other, the reprobate. If the clay came out the elect, it couldn't possibly be made a reprobate vessel for there is no remote possibility the potter used the same lump to make another vessel, which is a refutation of the theory of foreordination and predestination.

This theory of life and destiny is false, my friends. It would make every man on earth either an elect lump of clay vessel, in God's hand, or a reprobate lump vessel, "unchangeably foreordained" by God before time began, and he must remain so through the endless ages of eternity.

### **Chosen Before World Began**

My friends, the advocates of the predestination theory have misunderstood Paul in his writing to the Ephesian church.

Let us observe verses 4 and 5 of Ephesians 1: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world... " To sustain the theory of foreordination the text should have stated that each individual was unconditionally and unchangeably elected to be saved or to be lost, but the inspired text does not even intimate this principle of life and destiny.

Question: For what were they chosen? The answer:

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"That we should be holy and without blame before him in love. " Next question: Who was chosen? The answer: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. " From this statement it is evident that the apostle wasn't speaking of an unconditional election of an individual, but of a class of people: "the adoption of children, " not an individual, the apostle said.

Next question: how shall predestinated children be adopted into God's family? Answer: "According to the good pleasure of his will. " But what does the "good pleasure of his will" mean? Christ, himself, gives the answer: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 15, 16).

There can be no doubt about it; the good pleasure of the Lord's will is that every man on earth should hear the gospel, believe and be baptized to be saved. This is in direct conflict with the theory of unconditional, "unchangeable foreordination" of each individual, pre-elected to be saved, or to be lost, before the foundation of the world.

Paul teaches that God, before the foundation of the world, foreordained and predestined that Christ, His Son, would be the Saviour of the world and that all men, as a class of mankind, not a specific individual, might be adopted as God's children through Christ (Eph. 1: 3-13). Individuals who obey the gospel compose this adopted class (Mark 16: 15, 16; Acts 2: 38).

This is the inspired apostle's conclusion concerning the matter: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.



## FOREORDINATION AND PREDESTINATION—No. 2 201

In whom ye also trusted, after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1: 11-13).

Paul left no doubt that faith and obedience are essential to the eternal inheritance; therefore, salvation is conditional and every responsible person on earth is a subject of the gospel. The doctrine of the "unchangeable foreordination" of the predestined reprobate to be lost, is false.

### **Ordained to Eternal Life**

In Acts 13: 48, it is revealed that "When the Gentiles heard this they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. "

The meaning of the term "ordain, " as stated by Crudens, is "To command or enjoin. To appoint or design to a certain end or use. "

God has ordained that obedient believers shall inherit eternal life. As previously pointed out, salvation is conditional. Luke does not even imply that the salvation of the Gentiles was unconditionally predestined and foreordained. According to this theory, if "as many as were" FOREORDAINED (the Bible says "ORDAINED, " V. E. H. ) to eternal life believed on that day then all other persons were predestined sinners, doomed to everlasting punishment, and the preaching of the gospel to them was useless.

In preceding verses, 46 and 47, it is revealed that "Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing that ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, so, we turn to the Gentiles... That thou shouldst be for salvation to the uttermost part of the earth. " It was "**ordained**" that the Jews should be saved by obeying the word of God. Likewise, it was ordained that the Gentiles

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should be saved by obeying the gospel of Christ. Paul declared, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1: 16). How foolish it would be to preach the gospel of Christ, to Jew or Gentile, as God's power to save the believer, if it were **foreordained** and **predestined** that salvation is not conditional.

In this text it is revealed that one class of people in Paul's audience believed while the other class did not believe. To believe and obey the gospel, or not believe, is the choice of man himself. The responsibilities and consequences are on men and not on God.

My friends, the apostle Peter first preached the gospel to the Gentiles after having been convinced by the Lord that "**God is no respecter of persons.** " The Lord instructed the Gentile, Cornelius, to "Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words whereby thou and thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11: 13, 14). His salvation depends on "WORDS, " the gospel, which he would hear! Christ commanded, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16). Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10: 48). The Gentiles, therefore, were "**ordained**" to eternal life through obedience to the gospel. The apostle Peter wrote to the Jews whom he had converted (Acts 2: 38), admonishing them to be faithful to the Lord, "receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (I Pet. 1: 9).

Man is a free moral agent. He may choose to serve God and live with Him in eternity; or, he may choose to serve Satan and spend eternity in torment (Joshua 24: 15; Matt. 11: 28; II Thess. 1: 7, 8).

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24: 15).

## HEREDITARY TOTAL DEPRAVITY - NO. I

### **Are Babies Born in Sin?**

A theory that is very closely associated with the theory of foreordination and predestination is the doctrine of hereditary total depravity. Many honest and sincere people have been led to believe that since the fall of Adam every living soul is born with a corrupt nature, that is to say that every person on earth is born under condemnation of heaven. Regarding this theory one creed states that all persons are "born positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse" (J. M. Pendleton, Art. 3, in Church Manual designed for Baptist Churches). It is affirmed that those who sin, and there are none who -do not sin, bear evidence that all men have a corrupt nature. According to this theory, if Adam had a corrupt nature he must have inherited it from his father. Now, since Adam was a "son of God, " that would make God corrupt in nature. This is a mistake!

### **Inherit Sins of Adam?**

Adam sinned through temptation. God cannot be tempted. God cannot sin. Adam sinned through temptation like men sin today. Satan first appealed to him through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain glory of life. Satan said, "Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The woman, who obviously understood God, replied: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. " The subtle tempter then falsely declared: "Ye shall not die. For God doth know that in the

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day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. "

The temptation was alluring and far reaching. It appealed to the lust of the flesh and the eyes, "was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes. " It appealed to the vain glory and pride of life. "A tree to be desired to make one wise, " was the appeal.

Adam and Eve, deceived by Satan, through distrust, disobeyed God and became the first sinners. The first man and woman, through their own choice and volition, became the first sinners. Their sins were not inherited! Neither were they foreordained and predestined by an unchangeable decree of God that they should become sinners. If Adam and Eve were foreordained and unchangeably predestined by God to sin against God, then they were irresponsible and God was responsible for their sins. According to this theory, if they had not sinned then they would have changed the "unchangeable" decree of God; and since they did sin they did so without choice in the matter, therefore, God is responsible for sin in the world. But, my friends, this is a false premise and false conclusions!

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Adam was a creature of volition and so is every human being born on this earth. Adam acquired his sins by choice and not by inheritance. God forbade the eating of the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden. Adam and Eve had a choice. They could obey God by refusing to eat, and live. Or, they could choose to eat, and die.

Adam's sin was not something he inherited from his father; neither were his sins transmitted to his children. The doctrine of hereditary total depravity asserts that every child, every infant born into the world, is totally depraved, wholly sinful by nature, having inherited the sins of his parents, ever

the sins of Adam. The theory falsely assumes that Adam's nature was corrupted by sin and all men inherit a corrupted and sinful nature from Adam. Surely, we must understand that the law of procreation, the law of birth, is from God and for the perpetuity of the human race. Could one possibly believe that God, through procreation, brings a baby, a human being, into this world with corrupted nature which leads him to sin, without choice, and then punishes him for sinning, which he could not avoid? This false theory, affirmed in several religious creeds, pronounces the infant at birth under "just condemnation" by reason of his inherited corrupt nature.

### **Babies, Children of the Devil?**

Are babies born of the devil? One author states: "That man is totally depraved is evident from his being a child of the devil — fathered by the devil, of the same moral nature, without salvation, destined to the same hell to which the devil is destined" (Dr. W. A. Jarrell, a Missionary Baptist, in his *Gospel in Water*, pp. 251, 252). On page 260 of the same book the author declares: "Inasmuch as children partake of the nature of their parents, and Satan is totally depraved, it is very certain that all infants and children are totally depraved, being born of their father, the Devil. " It is difficult to understand how any father or mother could believe this false theory.

God declares, "All souls are mine" (Ezekiel 18: 4). The advocates of the theory of hereditary total depravity assert that all souls at birth are children of the devil. What a contrast!

A passage of Scripture often cited as alleged proof of hereditary depravity is Psalms 51: 5, in which it is stated: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. " From this Bible statement it is concluded that

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David was born in sin; as an infant, he was born totally depraved. This is a false conclusion!

There are two parts to this statement of David. One: he speaks of the condition of his mother, not himself: "In sin did my mother conceive me. " Two: David speaks of himself: "I was brought forth in iniquity. " David did not say that he was born with a corrupt, sinful nature. The Bible says that people were born in a language (Acts 2: 8). This obviously does not mean that they were born speaking a certain language. David's statement that he was born "in iniquity" simply means that he was born into a world of iniquity; he was brought forth into a world where sin prevails.

### **Sinners By Inherited Nature ?**

**It** is false to conclude that infants inherit sins from their parents, therefore, are born into the world depraved sinners. Of Jacob and Esau it was said, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil... " (Rom. 9: 11). From this statement it is evident that they were not sinners before they were born. They became sinners after they were born, when they began to do "evil. " Their sins were not inherited. Before they were born they were innocent, free from sin, having done no "evil. "

Another passage of Scripture of concern in this matter is Eph. 2: 1-3: "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. "

From this Bible quotation it is erroneously concluded

by many sincere folks that all people are born sinners, and, by "nature, " are children of the devil. It must be observed, however, that the inspired writer declared that those people addressed had been "dead. " Could it be possible that they were born dead? Certainly not! They were dead because of their "trespasses and sins. " They were dead because they "walked according to the course of this world. " They were dead because they were directed by a "spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, " the Bible says. They were not born dead in sin; but they became dead in sins because of their disobedience to God.

These people, to whom Paul directed these divine truths, were not depraved infants, but they were of such maturity and accountability that they chose to walk "according to the course of this world. " Could one possibly conceive of a sweet, innocent baby disobeying God, when he is totally incapable of obeying or disobeying anyone? Could one possibly imagine an infant, or a child, being guilty of "walking" in the course of this world of sin, including drunkenness, adultery, theft, malice, hate, idolatry, murder and other acts of unrighteousness and ungodliness which are referred to as "works of flesh"? (Read Gal. 5: 19-20).

### **Sinners By Choice**

My friends, Adam sinned, not because he inherited sins from his father, God, but because he "walked according to the course of the world, " which included the "lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. " Satan, the prince of this world, was the great deceiver. Could one possibly imagine the inspired apostle John addressing babies as, "My little children" who were born in sin, totally depraved by nature and dead in sin? It is unbelievable!

### **Dead in Sin**

Those who were addressed as being dead in sin (Eph. 2: 2, 3), were separated from God by reason of their own choice of transgressions and worldliness. The apostle John explains what it means to walk "according to the course of this world" by his admonitions to Christians in these words:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world " (I John 2: 15, 16).

The apostle Paul declared in Eph. 5: 1, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. " If children were born of the devil, totally depraved, then it must be concluded that God inspired the apostle to declare that those who follow God are children of the Devil. This is truly a false theory!

**"Dead in sin"** refers to a **relationship and not to a state** of one when he is born into this world. As of Old Testament times, so it is today, man's own sins separate him from God. Jehovah, through the prophet, declared: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you... " (Isa. 59: 2).

### **By Nature Children of Wrath**

But someone inquires, "Did not Paul say that man is by nature a sinner?" No, beloved! This is a false conclusion. Paul did say to the Ephesians that they were "by nature children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2: 3). The term "nature" in this Scripture cannot mean innate nature of man. The Bible declares that man by nature honors God, not that man is by nature totally depraved. In Romans 2: 14, 15, Paul wrote: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the



law, are a law unto themselves... "

Of the law of Moses it was said to be "holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous and good. " The Gentiles were said to do by "nature" the things of the law, therefore, it is in error to say that man is by nature a sinner, totally inclined to do evil. Man is by nature good because man basically does things which are right even without a written law to command the right or prohibit the wrong. The apostle declared of the Gentiles that God gave them a conscience so that they by "nature" might do the "things of the law, " not evil.

When Paul declared to the Ephesians that they were "by nature" children of wrath, he was referring to their relationship with God, being dead in sin, while in their unconverted state. Both the Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians were once in an alienated relationship with God, therefore, the objects of God's wrath, because they were yet in sin, having not obeyed the gospel of Christ.

But the Ephesians did obey God. When they obeyed the gospel, Christ saved them from their sins. They were purchased by the blood of Christ and added to the Lord's church (Acts 20: 28). The Ephesian Christians lived in favor of God as they continued, by their own will, to walk in truth.

## HEREDITARY TOTAL DEPRAVITY - No. 2

My friends, if man is totally depraved he cannot obey God. The doctrine of "hereditary total depravity" declares that man is totally passive in regeneration. The late Dr. Ben M. Bogard, a Baptist minister, declared, "The depraved sinner cannot act except by Enabling Grace of God through the spirit" (Total Depravity, p. 13).

Dr. Jarrel, a Baptist author, said: "The necessity of repentance and faith after regeneration is very obvious" (Gospel In Water, p. 509). The theory of "inherent total depravity" makes man totally under the power of the devil, with no choice, nor ability to reject Satan and obey God. The sinner is so depraved that he "cannot act except by enabling grace of God through the spirit, " we are told. The theory then, of necessity, leads to the false conclusion that man is incapable of "repentance and faith" until "after regeneration. "

### **Depraved Regenerated Without Faith?**

If this religious theory were true, then the Bible is false when declaring: "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2: 40). The Lord was in error when He commanded, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13: 5). If this theory of total inherited depravity were true, and "repentance and faith after regeneration" is a necessity, then the Holy Spirit misguided the apostle Peter when he commanded: "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38).

If a man were already "regenerated, " why should he be told to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, or to

be regenerated? How could a person possibly be regenerated without first believing in the Lord? The Bible declares that man cannot please God without faith, Heb. 11: 6; therefore, if faith follows regeneration, as affirmed by the advocates of hereditary total depravity, then man is regenerated without pleasing God. Furthermore, if this theory were true, then man is regenerated, born again, saved from his sins, without ever having repented of his sins, for the false theory claims that repentance and faith are of necessity "after regeneration. " What a conflict with the command of our Lord when He declared, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. "

### **Babies Born in Sin Could Not Be Reconciled unto God**

If the doctrine of hereditary total depravity were true, man could not be reconciled to God through conversion. Let us briefly consider the matter of reconciliation. In II Cor. 5: 18-20, Paul, the apostle, to whom had been committed the "word of reconciliation, " exhorted: "Be ye reconciled unto God. "

The word "reconcile" implies a separation and a reunion. The word means "to bring back to harmony. " The prefix, "re, " means "back; back to an original or former state or position" (Webster's Dictionary). For example, a husband and wife may become separated; and, afterwards, they may become reconciled, that is, be restored to their former relationship. They go back to their state, or relationship, that existed before the separation.

Now see this! Suppose an infant is born in sin, born of the devil. If he ever departs from that state, being a child of the devil, which way could he go? The answer is, to God. To depart from the devil is to go to God. To depart from God is to go to the devil. Now what happens when reconciliation occurs?

Let us suppose an infant born into this world is a child

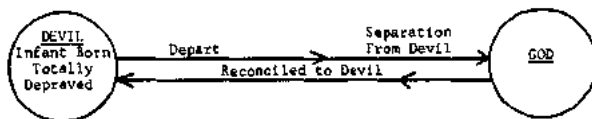
of the devil, as affirmed by some religious creeds. When he departs from his original state, or relationship, the only opposite direction to go is to God. Now, if he does receive the "word of reconciliation, " to whom is he reconciled? There is but one answer. If he is restored to his former relationship, returned to the former, or original union, he is brought back to the devil. To preach the word of reconciliation, to restore one to his original state, therefore, would be to make him twice a child of the devil, rather than a child of God. This would be the inevitable conclusion, if the doctrine of hereditary total depravity were true. This is a false conclusion!

Paul, the apostle, declared that God had given to him the ministry of reconciliation, the means of the reconciliation being the word of God. The truth of the matter is: every soul, every infant born into this world, is born without sin, free from sin, innocent of any guilt of sin, and is in complete and perfect fellowship with God. When, by reason of accountability and his own choice, he sins, he becomes separated from God. Man's own sins separate himself from God. The prophet of God declared: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59: 2).

Man becomes a sinner by reason of transgression, thus becomes separated from God. When the gospel of Christ, the "word of reconciliation, " is taught the sinner, and the sinner responds by faith and obedience to the Lord, he becomes reconciled unto God; he is restored to that unity and fellowship with God which existed when he was born into this world,

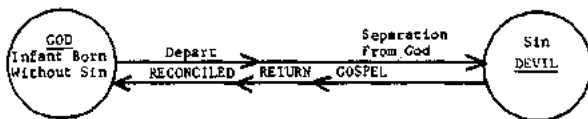
Study carefully the chart and its accompanying statements on the next page for an illustration of the point concerning reconciliation.

Reconciliation  
 ERROR: All Infants Totally Depraved  
 Born of the Devil



If born totally depraved, when reconciled is back with devil and totally depraved.

TRUTH: Born Without Sin, Fellowship With God



If born free from sin, when reconciled to God, then a state of freedom from sin again.

He may choose to be saved, or he may choose to be lost. He may accept Christ or reject Christ!

**Are Infants Who Die Lost?**

Ladies and gentlemen, are little children lost who die in infancy? If all infants born into the world are totally sinful, having inherited their sins from their parents, if one dies in infancy, will that child go to Heaven or go to Hell? If an infant is totally depraved and he dies in infancy, his defilement must cause him to be lost in torment, or go to Heaven with his defiled and sinful nature.

But the advocates of the theory of hereditary total

depravity seek to theoretically avoid the dilemma by asserting the "elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh with and where, and how he pleaseth" (Presbyterian Confession of Faith, Chapter 10: Sec. 3).

My friends, the fallacy of such unscriptural reasoning is easily ascertained. Question: What happens to the non-elect infant who dies? Or, do only the "elect infants" die? One of the two conclusions is inevitable! The only infants who die are the "elect infants, " or, the non-elect infants who die must spend eternity in hell. Can one truly believe that a sweet, innocent baby must spend eternity in torment?

It should, furthermore, be observed that this theory of the direct operation of the Spirit upon the depraved infant who dies, in order to save the infant from hell, leaves the infant, who does not die, totally a depraved creature. Is it not strange that this theory claims that Christ, by the Spirit, removes the depraved, sinful nature of the dying infant, but allows the living infants to remain totally depraved? Could one possibly conclude that Christ considered little children to be sinful, even totally depraved, when He publicly blessed them? In Luke 18: 15, 16 it is recorded:

"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. " If the doctrine of hereditary sin were true, then Jesus should have said: "Forbid them not for these little children have corrupt, totally depraved souls and we must prevail upon the Spirit to burn out their sinful, Adamic nature before they die. " If all these things were true, then Jesus was saying His kingdom was to be composed of subjects, wholly and completely defiled, body and soul,

totally depraved in sin, because of children He said, "Of such is the kingdom of God. "

One Baptist author stated: "Infants dying in infancy must by some process known or unknown, be freed from depravity — morally renewed or regenerated, or they can never be saved - never participate in the joys of heaven" (Jeter's Campbellism Re-examined, pp. 51, 52).

Mr. Jeter furthermore declared: "I shall now proceed to show that, in the case of dying infants and idiots, regeneration takes place by the agency of the Spirit, without the Word" (Ibid, p. 49).

### **Total Depravity Denies the Gospel, God's Power To Save**

The Bible teaches that the "gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1: 16). The Bible says nothing about Christ sending the Holy Spirit directly to an infant, or anyone else, to save him from sin. The Bible says the gospel is the power of God to save the believer. Question: Could an infant possibly be a believer? The answer is obvious! Could an infant be taught the gospel? No infant is capable of being taught the gospel, or, believing the gospel. Yet, the Bible plainly teaches that these are the essential conditions of salvation.

To the Romans Paul wrote: "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher" (Rom. 10: 14).

The apostle, furthermore, wrote to the Corinthians that it "pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1: 21).

Ladies and gentlemen, hear it! Are you listening? If every person born into the world were born totally depraved, and that by an unchangeable decree he is foreordained and

predestined to be born totally depraved in sin, why should the gospel be preached to him and how could the gospel be the "power of God unto salvation?" The theory is false, beloved.

Man is a creature of volition, with a heart to believe or disbelieve the gospel of Christ. The man who does choose to believe and obey the gospel shall be saved. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, " our Lord said in Mark 16: 16. Otherwise, the person who chooses to disbelieve and disobey the gospel will be lost. Christ declared: "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 16). The apostle Paul warned, concerning Christ's coming and man's choice of destiny:

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 1: 7, 8).

### **Total Depravity Denies Purification**

The theory of hereditary total depravity denies that the gospel of Christ purifies one's soul through his obedience to the gospel. The Presbyterian Confession affirms that "this corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those who are regenerated" (Chapter 6, Sec. 5, p. 41).

The Bible says that the apostle Peter addressed fellow Christians as: "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear' the gospel and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15: 7-9). The same apostle also declared: "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth" (1 Peter 1: 22).



The inspired apostle declared that those who have obeyed the gospel and obtained forgiveness of sins have had their souls purified. The theory of hereditary depravity contends that "this corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those who are regenerated. " What a contrast!

My friends, if the theory of inheritance of nature were true, what about the matter of an infant inheriting a "purified" heart from his Christian parents whose hearts had been purified? If one could inherit a corrupt nature from the wicked, why could not one inherit a purified, clean heart from a regenerated soul? But this is a mistake! Neither a state of sinfulness, or righteousness, is inherited.

No man has any sins, except his own. In New Testament times Peter commanded: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3: 19). It was their sins which were to be blotted out; not the sins of Adam, or their parents.

In the day of Judgment every individual person will be judged according to his works, not the deeds of Adam, nor the deeds of one's own parents. The apostle Paul spoke most conclusively about this when he wrote: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5: 10). Surely, this statement cannot be misunderstood by one who desires the truth. In the day of judgment every person will be judged according to the deeds **"done in his body, according to the things he hath done, whether it be good or bad!"**

### **Babies Know To Do Good?**

Those who advocate the theory that babies are born sinners, totally depraved, would do well to consider the divine statement of James: "Therefore to him that knoweth

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to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4: 17).

Question: Does an infant know to do good? Where is the person who would actually affirm that an infant is a sinner because he does not do that which he knows to be good?

A baby is not a sinner. He does not yet know to do good or evil! (Read Rom. 9: 11).

This doctrine did not originate with Christ, for it was He who compared the spiritual conditions of those who enter the kingdom of God to the original purity of little children (Matt. 18: 3). If babies are born sinners then Paul exhorted Christians to be sinners. To the church at Corinth he wrote: "In wickedness be ye babes. "

The apostle James denies the doctrine of inherent original sin by affirming that sin originates in temptation, is conceived in lust, and is brought forth sin (James 1: 13-15). Who would affirm that a baby is tempted and "is drawn away of his lusts, and enticed? "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. "

The theory of hereditary total depravity denies the fact that sin is acquired. If inherited, then sin is not acquired, therefore, Adam and Eve inherited their sins from God. If acquired characteristics of parents are transmitted to children, then children are irresponsible and parents are totally responsible for the sins of their children. Actually no one is responsible but God; therefore, there is no such thing as sin, according to the false theory of inherited sin.

Paul wrote to Timothy that "evil men, and seducers shall wax worse and worse" (2 Tim. 3: 13). If man is born **totally** depraved, how could he possibly "wax worse and worse"? Furthermore, if he is already **totally depraved**, how could he be "seduced"?

Christ told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he

cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3: 3). If man is born a total sinner, by natural birth, must he be a total sinner when born into the kingdom of God? According to the theory, the new birth would make one two-fold a child of the devil rather than a child of God!

The prophet, Ezekiel, declared that sins are not inherited but man is responsible for his own sins: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his transgressions that he hath committed shall be remembered against him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? saith the Lord Jehovah; and not rather that he should return from his way, and live?" (Ezekiel 18: 20-23).

Beloved, every responsible person must choose his own destiny. In the long ago Joshua declared: "Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the god of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord". (Joshua 24: 15).

If you are lost in eternity it will be your own choice. God will send no one to hell. No one will be in hell who didn't choose to go there. Furthermore, all responsible people who go to Heaven will be saved because they choose to go there. The question is, where do you choose to spend eternity?

### **DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE—No. 1**

Ladies and gentlemen, question: Does it make any difference what a man believes? What does the Bible say? "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preach stand; by which ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also vain" (1 Cor. 15: 1-4, 14). Does it make any difference about what one believes? In this text Paul states conclusively that a man's faith is in vain if he does not believe in the resurrection of Christ.

A man's belief or disbelief in the resurrection will not affect the resurrection, but what one believes will affect his destiny on the day of the resurrection.

What difference does it make about one's religion, if he is honest and sincere? What difference does it make about the church one belongs to, if he is honestly endeavoring to serve God? Does it make any difference about what one believes? These are questions for serious consideration.

Surely, there must be a difference! We would not be so foolish as to say, "It doesn't make any difference, " when it comes to material things of this life. There is a difference when we purchase an insurance policy. Does it make any difference about the premium, the benefits, or exclusions? There is a difference when we build a house. What about the plans and specifications, the blueprints? Does it make any

difference when we violate the law? How could men say, "But it makes no difference what a man believes?"

### **Make Any Difference About Belief?**

While in India a few months ago, I learned of an **unusual** brand of religion — that of worshiping rats. In the state of Rajasthan, India, it is said that the rat population exceeds the human population: 25 million rats, 20, 100, 000 people. In the town of Deshnoukh there is an ancient temple which serves as a rat sanctuary. The rats are considered to be holy. No man, tourist or otherwise, is permitted to harm the "holy" rats. A priest warns: "If you should kill a rat you will be required to present the temple with a statue of a rat cast in gold, or the equivalent in cash, " in the amount of 3, 000 rupees, or \$400. 00.

Here, thousands of honest and sincere people worship rats in the "holy" rat temple, chanting: "Jai Maharaj, Jai Maharaj" (Glory Be, Glory Be). One observer explained, "This worshiping of rats goes on day in, day out. They are not ordinary rats. These rats are the divine mounts of the Holy Ganesh. " The "Holy Ganesh" is a Hindu god, with the head of an elephant, who is the "god of prosperity. " What irony! What a delusion! Thousands of honest, deeply religious people, worshiping rats as the god of prosperity, buying food for thousands of hungry rats, in one temple, at a cost of 24, 000 rupees, or \$3, 250. 00 per year, while many of their own people die of starvation.

No responsible person would question the honesty and sincerity of these people with such deep, religious convictions. But, ladies and gentlemen, question: does that make it right because they believe it to be so? Does it make any difference about what a person believes?

On this trip around the world I was moved with pity as I looked upon thousands of depressed people of India, some of

whom were near starvation. In a country of 550 million people and a rise of one million per month, where the per capita income is only \$40. 00 per year, where 80% of the population suffer from malnutrition, in spite of the fact that the United States has contributed EIGHT BILLION DOLLARS since 1951, we are so greatly impressed that it does make a difference about a man's religion—what he believes and what he does. How could any reasonable person conclude that "it doesn't make any difference about what a person believes"?

A falsehood, when believed to be the truth, may produce the same effect upon one as if it were the truth, though completely false. A person may honestly and sincerely believe a falsehood, but his honesty and sincerity in the matter does not change the falsehood, nor the consequence of believing the falsehood. From earnestly desiring a thing to be untrue is only a step to believing it to be untrue. A person who wants to believe a proposition may find it easy to bribe his conscience, even if it means perverting truth and facts.

### **Truth and Error — Any Difference?**

Does it make any difference? Actually, we should say, "Is there any difference in truth and error?"

Hear the answer from the word of God! Are you listening? "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8: 31, 32).

In II Thessalonians 2: 11, 12, Paul wrote, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. " Does **that make any difference? Is there any difference between truth**

**and error?** Jesus said, "The truth shall make you free. " Paul said, "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth. " What is the difference? Believe and obey the truth and obtain salvation—"Ye shall be free, " Jesus declared. Or, believe a falsehood and suffer condemnation. **Does that make any difference?** Truth and salvation! A lie and condemnation! Surely, there must be a difference. The difference, ladies and gentlemen, is the difference between truth and error. The difference is that of being saved, or that of being lost!

There are many Bible examples which answer the question, "Does it make any difference?"

### **Believing A Lie**

In I Kings, 13th chapter, we have a conclusive answer to this most important question. Jehovah instructed a prophet of God, out of Judah, to go to Bethel and destroy the altar by which King Jeroboam offered incense. God instructed the young prophet not to go home with anyone, neither eat bread or drink water, nor return the route over which he went to Bethel. The instructions were simple and easily understood.

The prophet obeyed God. The altar was destroyed. The king reached forth to lay hands on the prophet of God, but his hand dried up. He then besought the prophet of God that his hand should be restored. The prophet favored him by asking God to restore his hand, and it was restored. The king then invited the prophet to go home with him. The prophet declined the invitation. The king insisted, but the prophet said, "If thou will give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the Lord, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water in this place" (I Kings 13: 4-9).

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask, what could have been wrong with the prophet's acceptance of the king's invitation? Don't you know that the prophet must have been tired, hungry, and thirsty? Would he not have appreciated the hospitality of the most humble home, much less that of a king's palace? Surely, there could be nothing morally wrong, within itself, for the prophet to have gone home with the King. There was just one thing wrong. God said do **not** go home with anybody; do **not** eat or drink with anyone! Does that make any difference? My friends, it makes all the difference!

We must obey God in all things He has commanded, even though we may not understand the full significance of such actions. We dare not disobey God, regardless of what others say or think. We must not disobey God! Man cannot alter God's word, regardless of circumstances. But, we continue the story.

#### Deceived by a **Lie**

There was an older prophet who lived in Bethel. His sons came home and told their father what the man of God had done in Bethel and how he had declined the invitation of the king. The elder prophet then went to find the younger prophet. He found him sitting under an oak tree. He invited the young prophet to go home with him and "eat bread. " The young prophet declined, saying God had forbidden him to eat or drink with anyone there. But the elder prophet said, "I am a prophet also as thou art: And an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water" (I Kings 13: 18). The young prophet believed the older prophet. He believed the old prophet was telling him the truth. But the Bible says the old prophet "**lied unto him**" (I Kings 13: 18).



Oh, how often honest and sincere people are misled by placing their trust and confidence in men of earth. Someone may say: "But, I believe Dr. Bill because he is an educated man and he is a man that knows God; I am willing to follow his instructions, regardless of what the Bible says. " What a tragic mistake! We would not encourage distrust of our fellow man. Neither would we recommend unqualified trust in man, regardless of God's order! One cannot put his trust in any man for salvation.

Friends, hear me! Are you listening? When any man contradicts God's word, we have no alternative but to believe God and reject man. In this case, the elder prophet declared that he spoke by the authority of an "angel" who spoke unto him the word of the Lord. The young prophet was deceived by a falsehood. Does it make any difference? What happened to the young prophet?

### **Consequences of Falsehood**

The young prophet accepted the invitation of the old prophet. He believed the old prophet was telling him the truth. The very conscientious young prophet went home with the old prophet and, as they sat at the table, God caused the elder prophet to reveal the fact that he lied to the young prophet. Furthermore, God made it known through the old prophet that the young prophet must pay the penalty of his disobedience to God; the penalty of believing a lie, in this case, was death!

The young prophet mounted a donkey and started on his way back home, having been deceived by a lie, sincerely believing it to have been the truth. As he traveled on the way, a lion leaped upon him, dragged him from his donkey, and crushed the life from his body - **all** because of his disobedience to God. He believed the old prophet was delivering

to him a message from God. He believed it was the truth, but it was a lie. The young prophet's believing this was a message of truth from God did not change the fact that it was a lie. The honest and sincere belief of a lie cost the young prophet his life! **Did that make any difference?**

**It** should be observed, in this case, that the man who told the lie was not the man who was punished. The man who believed the lie was the man who paid the penalty. Yes, liars will have their part in the lake of fire (Rev. 21: 8), but those who believe a lie, even though they believe it to be the truth, must also suffer the consequences. It does make a difference!

Why did the elder prophet lie to the young prophet? We do not know. Perhaps he thought God would overlook the falsehood since he was doing a good deed by inviting the tired, and, no doubt, hungry young prophet to his home. We can imagine that the elder prophet had sincere sympathy and interest in the welfare of the young prophet. Surely, he was wanting to do good! But, sincere and honorable motives and deeds will not atone for disobedience to God's commands. Many sincere people have concluded that God will overlook their disobedience because of the good deeds they do. Honest people are often deceived. The motives of the elder prophet may have been good, but the belief of a falsehood by the young prophet was fatal! It cost his life! **Does that make any difference?**

### **Honesty Doesn't Change Error**

The belief of a proposition, though honest and sincere one might be, does not make it right. We are told that in Japan there is a group of religious people who believe that if they write their prayers on a piece of paper, put the paper into the mouth and chew it into a "paper wad, " then throw the paper wad, on which the prayer had been written, at an

idol god, that if the paper wad sticks, God is supposed to answer the prayer; if it doesn't stick, God is not supposed to answer the prayer. Who would say that these Japanese are not honest and sincere in this practice? But, I ask, my friends, does that make it right because they believe it to be so? They honestly believe they are right in this practice, but obviously their honesty and sincerity in the matter does not make it so!

In Japan I have seen hundreds of pieces of paper, on which prayers were written, tied to the branches of a bush in the Buddhist temple areas. There can be no doubt about the honesty and sincerity of the people who wrote their prayers on the pieces of paper and tied them on the branches of a bush, expecting their idol god to answer them, but that does not make it so!

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you in all sincerity, does it make any difference?

## DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE—No. 2

### Belief and Practice Changed

My friends, does it make any difference about your religion? Have you obeyed the gospel of Christ? Are you a member of the Lord's church? Don't you know that it does make a difference! Let us consider the conversion of the Ephesians (Acts 19: 1-5).

"And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coast came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. "

It is said of the Ephesians that they were "**disciples.** " A disciple is a "learner, " one who has been taught. They were not ignorant. The religion they practiced was the religion they had been taught. Does it make any difference about one's religion?

The Ephesians were disciples who **were believers.** Paul asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit **when you believed?**" They were honestly and sincerely endeavoring to serve God, according to what they believed. They were believers! Does it make any difference?

Some religionists would affirm that man is saved by

faith only; they say it doesn't make any difference what one believes! As we meditate upon this case of conversion, I ask: "Does it make any difference what one believes?"

Not only were the Ephesians disciples who were believers, but they were **believers who had been baptized**, having received the baptism of John, the Baptist. They were, therefore, baptized believers. Question: Does it make any difference about one's baptism?

### **Baptized the Second Time**

Paul, the apostle, taught them the way of the Lord more perfectly. He said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe oh him that should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. " The Bible records: "When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19: 4, 5). They were baptized the second time. Really, does it make any difference?

Here is a group of honest and sincere people, who were believers, who had been baptized of the baptism of John, the Baptist; but, obviously, their faith and practice was not acceptable unto God. The baptism of John was no longer valid. Paul taught them the truth more completely. He taught them that there is ONE baptism. Later, in his letter to the church at Ephesus he very appropriately reminded them that there is "**one baptism**" (Eph. 4: 5). They had been baptized the second time in order to comply with the teaching of the Master, who declared baptism in His name as being essential to salvation (Matt. 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16). Baptism that is not in the name of the Lord and "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38) could not be the "one baptism" which the inspired apostle required of the Ephesians. This matter was so important to these sincere believers that they were baptized

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the second time. Honestly, does it make any difference?

One may ask, "What difference does it make about baptism?" Let the Bible answer. Are you listening?

### I. WHO IS TO BE BAPTIZED?

Does It Make Any Difference?

1. Believers only. Not infants.

- (1) "Teach all nations" (Matt. 28: 19, 20)
- (2) "He that believeth" (Mark 16: 1 6)
- (3) "Understandest thou?" (Acts 8: 30. 31)
- (4) "If thou believest" (Acts 8: 36-39)
- (5) "Hearing, believed and were baptized" (Acts 18: 8)
- (6) "Baptized... rejoiced, believing in God" (Acts 16: 33, 34) "
- (7) "All that believed" (Acts 2: 44)

### II. WHY BE BAPTIZED?

Does It Make Any Difference?

1. "For remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38)
2. "Wash away thy sins" (Acts 22: 16)
3. "Shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16)
4. "Baptized into Christ" (Rom. 6: 3; Gal. 3: 27)
5. "Baptism doth also now save us" (I Peter 3: 21)

### III. HOW IS ONE BAPTIZED?

Does It Make Any Difference?

1. "Baptizo" (Greek) always meant to immerse, dip, cover up, overwhelm, bury.
  - (1) "Was much water" (John 3: 23)
  - (2) "They went down both into the water... come up out of the water" (Acts 8: 38, 39)
  - (3) "Buried with him by baptism" (Rom. 6: 4)
  - (4) "Planted together in the likeness of his death"

(Rom. 6: 5)

- (5) "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him" (Col. 2: 12)
- (6) "... likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6: 5)

### **Religion Changed**

My friends, when Paul taught the believers at Ephesus, who had previously been baptized of "John's baptism, that they should be baptized into Christ, which necessitated being immersed the second time, can one imagine them replying: "Paul, do you really think it makes any difference?" They did not say, "Paul, we are satisfied about what we believe; we are satisfied with our baptism; we prefer the baptism of John the Baptist, therefore, please do not disturb us. " No, my friends, they didn't say that. They didn't say, "It doesn't make any difference, as long as one is honest and sincere in what he believes. " They were honest and sincere and it did make a difference with them! The baptism of John, obviously, was no longer valid after the baptism authorized by Christ in His gospel, offering remission of sins in His name, was instituted. Until they were taught the word of the Lord more completely, as revealed in the gospel of Christ, and they obeyed the gospel, by being "baptized in the name of Lord Jesus, " their faith was insecure.

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Do you ask, "Does it make any difference?" Surely, there must be a difference! It is the difference between truth and error, the difference in being saved and being lost. Remember, Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. " Paul warned, "That they should believe a lie: That they might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2: 10-12). Does that make any difference?

Does It Make Any Difference About the Church?

My friends, does it make any difference about the church one belongs to? Did you ever hear anybody say, "The church doesn't make any difference"? But, does it not make any difference?

If this question were to be settled by the opinions of men, there is hardly any doubt about the conclusion. Many honest people would say: "What difference does it make about the church, as long as one is honest and sincere in what he believes?" But, ladies and gentlemen, hear me! What does the Bible say? Remember, Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8: 32). Paul warned that to believe a "lie" is to be damned (2 Thess. 2: 11, 12). Don't forget, the young prophet was most honest and sincere; he desired most of all to obey God, but believed a "lie," thinking it was the truth, and it cost him his life (1 Kings, 13th chapter).

False Teachers—False Doctrines

From the early days of New Testament Christianity, honest and sincere people have been deceived by false teachers. The apostles warned Christians of the false prophets. Peter declared: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction and many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not" (II Peter 2: 1-3). Does it make any difference?

It does make a difference with the inspired apostle John



about what a man believes. Hear him! Are you listening? "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4: 1).

A man's religion, his faith and practice, even his worship, is vain when dictated by the doctrines of men. Jesus our Lord, declared: "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15: 7-9). Does that make any difference?

### Christ's Church

Christ, the Son of God, died for His church; He purchased it with His own blood. (Read Eph. 5: 25-27; Acts 20: 28). If the church is nonessential, then our Lord died in vain and His blood was shed in vain. Does that make any difference?

If Christ has a church and He died for His church in order that men might be saved, would you not want to be a member of His church? It does make a difference!

Before our Lord died, He announced, "Upon this rock I will build **my church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. " Read very carefully Matt. 16: 13-18.

This divine promise was fulfilled when Christ established His church, in the city of Jerusalem, on the first Pentecost after the Lord's resurrection from the dead, the record of which is found in Acts 2: 36-47.

"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved, " is the conclusion of the matter. Who were they who were saved? According to verses 38 and 41, they were the 3, 000 souls who "gladly received His word and were baptized, " having been commanded: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the

remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "

### **Christ Added Saved To His Church**

The Lord added the saved to the church from the beginning (Acts 2: 47). Whose church? "**My church,** " Christ declared (Matt. 16: 18)! If the Lord did build His church, and the Lord did save the people from their sins, and it is our Lord who adds the saved to the church, whose church are the saved added to? Would you say that it doesn't make any difference? Surely not! Evidently, with Christ it does make a difference. You must want Christ to add you to His church, since it is He alone who can save you from your sins.

### **Church Purchased By Blood of Christ**

Does it make any difference about the church, if there is **one** church that was purchased by the blood of Christ?

In Acts 20: 28, the divine record reveals the admonition, "feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. " To be purchased by the blood of Christ is to be a member of the Lord's church. To be a member of the Lord's church is to have been purchased by the blood of Christ. May a responsible person expect to be saved without having been purchased by the blood of Christ? The Bible teaches that "without the shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9: 22). To affirm that it makes no difference about the church, or to declare that one does not need to be a member of the Lord's church to be saved, is to affirm that one can be saved without the atoning blood of Christ. This divine text declares that to be purchased by the blood of Christ is to be a member of Christ's church—"**My church,** " Jesus said. A person may as well talk about being saved **without the blood** of Christ, as to conclude that one may be saved without

being a member of the Lord's church! Does that make any difference?

### One Body, One Church

The apostle Paul wrote a letter to the church at Ephesus, the church which he declared was purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20: 28), and made the positive declaration that there is one church, one body. Hear him!

"And he hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all tilings to the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1: 22, 23). The apostle made the same affirmation in Col. 1: 18, declaring that Christ "is the head of the body, the church. "

Now, since it is clearly stated that the church is the body of Christ, the question is: how many bodies, or churches, are there? Does it make any difference? Let the Bible answer! The same apostle, Paul, to the same church, the Lord's church in Ephesus, wrote in the same letter, Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 4-6, that there is "ONE BODY, " therefore, ONE CHURCH. The same inspired writer who declared that there is "ONE GOD, " verse 6, also declared "there is ONE BODY, " (verse 4). The same inspired man of God who declared there is "one body, " also declared in the same epistle that the body is the church (Eph. 1: 22, 23).

Christ has one church and that is His church (Matt. 16: 18; Acts 2: 47; 20: 28; Rom. 16: 16). Really, does **that** make any difference?

### Christ To Save His Church

The venerable apostle Paul, who declared that Christ has one church, one body, which was purchased by His blood (Acts 20: 28), stated the unequivocal conclusion that Christ is the savior of the church which is His body. Hear him! "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head

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of the church: and He is the savior of the body" (Eph. 5: 23). Christ is the **"savior of the body,"** which is His church!

Ladies and gentlemen, this is, indeed, a most serious question. If Christ is the **"savior of the body,"** which is His church, and you are not a member of His church, does **that** make any difference?

I say to you in all sincerity and kindness, but without apology, the question really is: does it make any difference about the salvation of your soul?

### A Child of God?

Does it make any difference whether or not one is a child of God? To Nicodemus, Christ declared, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3: 3, 5).

One is either a child of God, or he is not a child of God. If he has not been born again, he is not a child of God, even though he may vow, "It doesn't make any difference." A person's belief that he is a child of God doesn't necessarily mean that he is a child of God. Many honest souls have been deceived.

The apostle Peter declared of the child of God, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth... being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Peter 1: 22, 23). These were believers who repented and were baptized for the remission of sins (Read 1 Peter 1: 1; Acts 2: 9, 10, 36, 37, 38).

The birth of a child of God is the result of seed, "which liveth and abideth forever" (I Pet. 1: 22, 23). Christ declared that the "seed is the word of God" (Luke 8: 11). Peter revealed that the "incorruptible seed" is the word of God. In His prayer to the heavenly Father, Christ declared, "Thy word is truth" (John 17: 17). Obedience to the truth, the

word of God, therefore, is absolutely essential to becoming a child of God. The truth, God's word, is not "relative, " nor flexible to include whatever a person believes to be the truth. God's word is unalterable and unadulterated, the seed that perpetuates life in His kingdom. One may as well talk about an infant being born into this world without parents, without seed, as to talk about one becoming a child of God without obedience to the word of God. It must be remembered that a "satisfied" conscience is not always a safe guide. A person can be as honestly mistaken as he can be honestly right. The young prophet was deceived by a lie, presented as the "word of the Lord" to him, by one in whom he had unquestionable confidence. His firm convictions, believing it was the truth, did not change the face that it was a falsehood, nor did it change the consequences. His disobedience to God, though done in all honesty and sincerity, cost him his life. Does that make any difference?

### **Any Difference If Unfaithful?**

Does it make any difference whether or not one is a **faithful child of God?** God's children are born into His kingdom. When Christ shall come again He shall "deliver up the kingdom to God" (I Cor. 15: 24). The unfaithful citizens of the Lord's kingdom will be lost. Jesus declared: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 13: 41-43). Does that make any difference?

The great Apostle Paul was sure that it does make a difference. By inspiration, he wrote: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means.

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when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9: 27).

Jesus, our Lord, said it does make a difference. He declared that on the day of judgment many souls will be disappointed. Hear him! Are you listening?

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have we cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7: 21-23).

If it doesn't make any difference what one believes, then Christ was in error when He said: "**Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven.** " It does make a difference!

Regardless of the honesty and sincerity of one's heart, if he does not abide in the doctrine of Christ, he is without God.

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 9).

What a difference-"hath **not God**"!

Surely, it does make a difference!

## WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

Ladies and gentlemen, what is the most important question you have ever considered? The greatest question ever to be considered is, "What must I do to be saved?" Where will your soul spend eternity?

Man is lost by reason of the fact that he is guilty of sin, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Yet, God is not willing that any should perish but that all should be saved (I Tim. 2: 4; 2 Pet. 3: 9).

### **Want To Go To Hell?**

My friends, do you plan to go to heaven, or go to hell? God will send no one to hell. If you go there it will be by reason of your own choice and volition.

If one wants to go to hell, there are plenty of ways to go there. There is only one way to go to heaven, but many ways to go to hell! (Matt. 7: 13, 14). Also, one may be sure of another thing, too: he will have plenty of company on his way. There will be millions to spend eternity in hell. Furthermore, one may have a "big time" reveling in worldly pleasures on his way to hell. But, remember this fact: eternal punishment in hell is a long, long time for sorrow and punishment compared to a few moments of enjoyment of worldly pleasure. Honestly, do you want to be saved? Do you ask, "**What** must I do to be saved?" The question is both asked and answered in the New Testament. A good example may be found in Acts 16: 25-34.

### **Bible Example**

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foun-

dations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all of the doors were opened, and everyone's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. "

### The Question

Notice the importance of this question of destiny.

1. "WHAT?"

"**What** must I do to be saved?" The word "**what**" is important. There is something one must do to be saved. Some religionists declare that there is nothing a man can do to be saved, and that there is nothing one can do to be lost, once he is saved. The Bible declares: "Save yourself from this untoward generation" (Acts 2: 40), and "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2: 12). The apostle Paul declared, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2: 8, 9). God's part is by grace, but man's part is by faith in action.

2. "MUST"!

"What **must I** do?" he inquired. The question implies



something **MUST** be done. It is imperative! One **must do something**, or be lost!

3. "I"

"What must I do to be saved?" This is a personal matter. No one else can resolve this question for you. Not your mother, not your father, not your wife, not your husband. Indeed, it is what must I do to be saved?

Beloved, let us observe this case of conversion, revealed in Acts 16: 25-34, to ascertain the answer to this Bible question of life and destiny.

### **Circumstances Not Conditions**

Many honest souls have been led to believe that peculiar circumstances experienced by one may be the answer to this question of destiny. Many testimonies of unusual experiences have been offered as evidences of salvation. But this is a serious mistake. There is a great difference in circumstances attending one's conversion to Christ and the actual conditions of salvation. Circumstances are not the answer. Circumstances may be varied, but the conditions of salvation are always the same.

Paul and Silas were preachers of the gospel. They had been placed in prison, having been beaten with rods, receiving many stripes because they did preach the gospel. While in prison they prayed and sang praises unto God at the hour of midnight. What a wonderful spirit! Truly, great men of God.

Suddenly there was a great earthquake. The foundations of the prison were shaken, the doors were opened, and all prisoners' bands were loosed. The jailor, waking out of his sleep, seeing the doors open, drew his sword and would have killed himself, supposing his prisoners had escaped, but Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, "Do thyself no harm for we are all here. " What unusual circumstances! It was then the jailor fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out

and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

If we should mistake the peculiar circumstances attending the conversion of the jailor for the conditions of salvation, then every time one is converted to the Lord the preacher must be beaten and put in jail, and there would be an earthquake with every conversion! Circumstances attending conversions do not affect the conditions of salvation.

### The Answer

"What must I do to be saved?" The answer came from the men of God immediately. They said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. "

Hear — Believe

No responsible person can be saved without believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 11: 6, we are told it is impossible to please God without faith; while in John 8: 24 we are told, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. "

The questions to be resolved are: What does it mean to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Does believing on Christ merely mean giving mental assent of the mind that Christ is the Son of God? According to the Bible, much more than that.

Hear the apostle Paul, in Romans 10: 13-17, as he quoted the prophet. Are you listening?... "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Now, hear the conclusion: "So then faith (belief) cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. "

Notice, the apostle wrote: "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed and how shall they believe in

him of whom they have not heard?" They could not believe until they heard. It is, therefore, very obvious that when Paul told the jailor to **believe on the Lord**, it was necessary that the jailor be told **WHAT to believe** before he could believe. He was not told to believe **only**. Many preachers today may be heard to say: "Just believe only and be saved. " Or, "Just lay your hand on the radio and believe on the Lord and be saved right where you are. " Or, "Just hold up your hand. " Not so in the Bible, however.

### **Believe Only?**

My friends, does faith alone save? The Bible says that faith alone is dead! The apostle concluded: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2: 17-24). There is something one **must do** to be saved. Believing only never saved anyone. The apostle concluded that salvation is "**NOT BY FAITH ONLY.** " **In** all the records of the conversions found in the book of Acts, we never read of a person being saved by faith only.

Having told the jailor to believe on the Lord, verse 31, the very next verse states, "and they spoke unto him the word of the Lord-" Why did they speak the word of the Lord after having told them to believe on the Lord? Because they could not believe unless they heard, for belief cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10: 17). It was necessary for the jailor and those of his company to hear the word of God; then, after hearing the gospel, it was necessary for them to believe and obey in order to be saved. Christ is the author of salvation unto all who obey him (Heb. 5: 9).

### **Repentance — Baptism**

Obedience to the gospel is essential to salvation. Paul **and** Silas preached the "word of the Lord" and the jailor

believed and obeyed the word of the Lord. Those who do not obey the gospel of Christ will be lost. Paul declared that when Christ comes again, He is coming in "flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1: 7, 8).

What did they preach when they "spoke unto him the **word of the Lord?**"

Jesus commanded, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13: 5).

That they repented of their sins, as commanded by the Lord, is evidenced by the fact that they "washed their stripes, " indicative of a penitent heart. They didn't wash the lacerated bodies of these men of God when they placed them in jail. The change of heart was the result of hearing the "word of the Lord" and believing what was heard.

Paul commanded the jailor to be baptized into Christ when he "spoke the word of the Lord. "

Jesus commanded, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16: 15, 16). Did Paul and Silas preach this gospel to the jailor? There can be no doubt about it; if they preached the "word of the Lord, " this is what they preached because this is the word of the Lord. Don't you know that when it was said that "they spoke unto him the word of the Lord, " as faithful gospel messengers, they told the jailor just what Christ said men must do to be saved, namely: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. "

Furthermore, we know they preached Christ's command, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, " when they "spoke the word of the Lord, " because verse 33 of the divine record reveals: "and he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes; and was baptized,

he and all his straightway. "

Question: Why were they baptized, even the same hour of the night? Because they "believed on the Lord" and obeyed the word of the Lord. They believed Christ when He commanded: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. " They were told what they must do to be saved!

"What must I do to be saved?" The jailor and those of his house were saved by faith and obedience. They repented of their sins. They were baptized into Christ where they became new creatures in Christ (Acts 16: 33; II Cor. 5: 17). Having obeyed the "form of doctrine, " the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, by baptism, they were then "made free from sin" (Rom. 6: 3, 4, 5, 17, 18).

### **What Did Paul Do?**

Now, what did Saul do to be saved? In Acts 9: 1-18 and Acts 22: 3-16, we have the record of the conversion of Saul. According to Paul himself, as recorded in Acts 22: 3 and 23: 1, he was a man who lived before God always in all good conscience, having been taught the law, and was zealous toward God. He was a very religious man, deeply devoted to God, but he was not a Christian at that time. After he did become a Christian, he referred to himself as being the "chief of sinners" before he became a Christian (I Tim. 1: 15).

My friends, just because a person is honest, sincere, and lives before God in all good conscience, does not mean that he is a Christian. Saul was a very honest man and "zealous toward God, " but was unsaved. What did Saul do to be saved?

### **Believed and Baptized**

While on his way to Damascus to persecute the church of our Lord, Jesus appeared unto Saul and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Saul replied, "Who art thou,

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Lord?" Jesus answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. " Then, trembling and astonished, Saul said, "Lord, what will thou have me do?" Christ replied, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee **what thou must do**" (Acts 9: 6).

Saul waited in the city of Damascus to hear what he **must do** to be saved. For three days and nights he was deeply penitent and he prayed. Still he was unsaved. Finally, the gospel, which he must hear to know what to do to be saved, was brought to him by Ananias. According to Acts 22: 16, Saul was commanded, "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. " Hear it my friends! Are you listening?... He was told what he "**must do**"! The command was: "**Be baptized and wash away thy sins.** " His sins were forgiven when he was baptized! Baptism was essential to his salvation. Although other conditions are just as essential, baptism is no less essential. As a penitent believer, he was baptized into Christ (Rom. 6: 3, 4; Gal. 3: 26, 27).

### Received Sight — Saved?

Someone may ask, "Was not Saul saved on the road to Damascus when he received his sight?" In this record of the Acts we have the account of Saul's call to his apostleship and the record of his conversion. Saul was made blind by the brightness of the light. Later his physical eyesight was restored, but this peculiar circumstance was in no way related to his salvation. If Saul was saved before he was baptized, the Lord didn't know it, because Christ said that he would be told what he must do. If he was saved before he was baptized, he was the most miserable saved person of whom we have read. If Saul was saved before he was baptized, he was saved with his sins still unforgiven! Don't forget, he was told, "Arise and **be baptized and wash away thy sins.** " His sins were not forgiven until he was baptized.

### **Who Was Baptized—Babies?**

Other questions might be proposed: "Who was baptized the same hour of the night? Were any babies included among those who were baptized when the jailor was baptized?"

The answer is clear and positive! They who were baptized were they who were told, "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.** " They taught them what to believe when they "spoke the word of the Lord to all that were in his house. " Infants cannot be taught the word of the Lord, therefore, when Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord "to all that were in his house" they were not talking to babies. They spoke to those capable of understanding what was taught and believing what was heard. Those who were baptized were they who were taught, who believed what they were taught and obeyed what was taught. Babies were not included among those baptized.

Ladies and gentlemen, the first baptism which occurred under the divine commission of our Lord was the baptizing of the 3, 000 on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection, recorded in Acts, chapter 2. Peter preached the gospel. Thousands heard, believed, repented and were baptized. Could one imagine infants and children being told to **repent** and be baptized? The record states that they that "gladly received his word" were baptized. Infants cannot receive or believe the word, therefore, infants were not baptized.

### **Lydia's Household**

But, someone might suggest that the case of the conversion of Lydia and her household, recorded in Acts 16: 13-15, is evidence that infants were baptized on that occasion. This is purely presumption.

First, it would have to be assumed that infants are in every family and were baptized when a household was baptized. To prove that infants were baptized with Lydia's

household, the first proposition would be to prove that Lydia was married and had children. Second: that some of the children were infants. Third: it would have to be proved that these infant children were with her, although she lived in Thyatira and was then in the city of Philippi, 300 miles from her home. Such conclusions are unfounded presumptions and are in direct contradiction to the scriptures. Those who were baptized were they who heard, believed, and obeyed the gospel!

### **How Baptized?**

Other questions are in order. Someone might say, "Since these people were all in jail, were they not sprinkled for baptism? If they were sprinkled for baptism, then is not sprinkling an acceptable substitute for baptism?" Let us observe the latter question first.

Sprinkling of water, as a substitute for baptism, was never acceptable unto God. Never was such a practice known in New Testament times. This practice was introduced into what is called "Christian religion" by the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Revenna in the year 1311. The Greek Catholic church did not then accept the practice of substituting sprinkling of water for baptism in water and they still do not accept it today, although authorized by the pope. No one has ever been sprinkled for baptism by the authority of Christ or His apostles. Sprinkling and pouring of water for baptism are done by the authority of the pope of Rome.

### **Baptism Burial**

Paul, who preached the gospel to the jailor, wrote to the Romans: "We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his



death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6: 3-5). The apostle also makes the same affirmation in Colossians 2: 12: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. " Baptism, therefore, is a burial, regardless of where one is baptized, whether in jail, in a house, or outside a building.

There are three things implied in the act of baptism, or burial. First: the thing to be buried. Second: the thing buried in. Third: the act of burying. A burial may differ in many ways as to the thing buried. It might be a man, a horse, or a treasure. It may differ as to the thing buried in. It might be buried in earth or in water, but in the act of burying there can never be a difference. There must be a placing and a covering up in every burial. An individual, therefore, cannot be buried in a few drops of water poured upon him. A person is immersed in water when he is buried in baptism, and he is baptized only when he is immersed.

### Scholars Agree

Eminent Bible scholars agree that baptism in New Testament times was by immersion alone.

From Encyclopedia Americana: "Baptism, that is, dipping, immersion, from the Greek word, baptidzo. "

Butterworth renders baptidzo, "to dip, immerse, or plunge. "

Martin Luther declared, "The term baptism is a Greek word; it may be rendered into Latin by mersio—when we immerse anything in water, that it may be entirely covered with water. And though this custom be quite abolished among the generality (for neither do they entirely dip children, but only sprinkle them with a little water), nevertheless they ought to be wholly immersed, and immediately to be drawn out again, for **the** etymology of **the**

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word seems to require it. "

John Calvin: "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and the rite of baptism was practiced by the ancient church. "

John Wesley, in his notes on Romans 6: 4 and Colossians 2: 12, said, "Buried with him, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion. "

### **Both "Went Down Into the Water**

Beloved, there can be no doubt about how the man of Ethiopia was baptized. "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8: 36-39). As a believer, having confessed his faith in Christ by declaring, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, " "both, " the man who was baptized and the man who did the baptizing, "went down both into the water... and he baptized him. " The Ethiopian was "buried" with Christ "by baptism into death. "

The anglicized word "baptize, " or "baptism, " is from the Greek word "baptidzo, " which always meant to dip, to cover up, to bury.

### **Jailor Brought Out**

Evidently God knew that someday mortal and uninspired men would seek to pervert the word of God and deceive honest souls by suggesting that the jailor and those in his house might have been sprinkled for baptism, assuming that since they were in jail possibly there was not enough water in which to be buried by baptism.

Do not be deceived, my friends. It will be observed in verse 30 of Acts 16, that it is said, "and brought them out, and said, Sirs, What must I do to be saved?" God's word records the fact that they were "**brought out**" of the jail. Not only that, but after having been baptized, it is stated in verse 34, "and when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his

house. "

They "brought them out" and went some place where there was water and they were baptized. Then, he "brought them into his house, " after having obeyed the Lord, believing in God, being saved from past sins.

Do you ask, "What must I do to be saved?" The answer: you must do the same things the jailor did, the same things which Paul did, the same things the man of Ethiopia did in order to become a Christian, to be saved from your past and alien sins!

Having been baptized into Christ, the Christian is then to continue "to observe all things" commanded of the Lord (Matt. 28: 19, 20). The early Christians "continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2: 42).

### **Child of God Not Baptized**

The question has been asked, "If baptism is for the remission of sins, essential to salvation, then should a child of God be baptized every time he sins?"

Baptism is one condition of salvation, commanded by Christ, to be obeyed only by the alien sinner, that is, one who has never become a child of God. Jesus declared that baptism is a birth, "born of water" (John 3: 5), and one is "born again, " born into the family of God, only one time.

To be baptized into Christ is to become a new creature: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3: 27); "For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5: 17). One may become a child of God one time; therefore, one is baptized into Christ one time. A person may be immersed (baptized) without being baptized into Christ. The Ephesians were baptized the second time, but baptized **into Christ** only once. (Read Acts 19: 1-5). One might be immersed in water for many reasons, without being

baptized for scriptural reasons. A person might be baptized just to please a member of his family. Or, one might be baptized because he thinks he is already saved, as taught by many religious leaders. But when the penitent believer is "BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST" (Gal. 3: 27; Rom. 6: 3), "FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS" (Acts 2: 38), "TO WASH AWAY THY SINS" (Acts 22: 16), he is a "BORN AGAIN" (John 3: 5), "NEW CREATURE. "

### **Christian Worship**

The Christian has the responsibility to worship and serve the Lord, according to God's will, and live a faithful consecrated life for Christ. The early Christians "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2: 42). Our worship, if acceptable to God, must be "in spirit and in truth" (John 4: 24). There may be vain worship as well as true worship. Christ declared, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15: 8, 9). Worship dictated by doctrines of men is vain worship. Worship directed by divine truth, in true spirit, is acceptable to God.

Divine truth authorizes public worship:

- \* On the Lord's day, the first day of the week (Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2)
- \* For the Lord's supper (Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17; 11: 23-29)
- \* For singing praises unto God and teaching and admonishing (Eph. 5: 19; Col. 3: 16; Heb. 2: 12)
- \* For giving of material blessings (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2)
- \* For prayers and teaching (Acts 2: 42)

### **Add To Your Faith**

For the Christian to be saved eternally in Heaven, he must grow in grace and knowledge, adding to his faith virtue,

knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. The apostle concludes, "For if you do these things ye shall never fall" (2 Peter 1: 5-10; 3: 18). The apostle declared: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1 Pet. 1: 9).

### **What Must Erring Child of God Do?**

It is possible for God's children to err from truth and righteousness (1 Cor. 10: 12; Gal. 5: 4; 2 Peter 2: 20, 21). James writes: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5: 19, 20).

### **Repentance, Confession, Prayer**

What must a child of god do when he sins against God? An example is found in Acts 8: 13-24. Simon heard the gospel. He believed and was baptized. He became a Christian. Later, he sinned against his Lord. Peter rebuked him, declaring, "Thou art in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity. " To obtain forgiveness for his sins, Simon was told, "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. " Simon requested of Peter, "Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. "

John admonished, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1: 9).

### **Disobedient Lost—Obedient Saved**

Only those who obey the will of God may expect to be saved. Jesus declared: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he **that** doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7: 21-23).

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Friends, hear me! Are you listening? A great day of joy and gladness awaits the redeemed: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you" (Matt. 25: 34).

Salvation is the greatest hope of life and destiny!

## IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST A DENOMINATION?-No. 1

My friends, is the church of Christ a denomination? What is a denomination? From whence came all the different denominations?

Denominationalism is the active proponent of division and a dedicated opponent of the church of our Lord. The Lord's church and the denominations are definitely incompatible and have no Christian fellowship with each other.

### **Church Blood-Bought**

A denomination, according to Webster, is "a class, or society of individuals called by the same name: a sect. " A denomination is a fraction or part of the whole. The Lord's church is not a "sect" of human origin. Webster defines a "sect" in religion as: "A party dissenting from an established or parent church—one of the organized bodies of Christians: a denomination. " The church of Christ is the whole, the complete one body of Christ, consisting of all who have been saved by the blood of Christ and only those who have been redeemed by Christ's blood. The Lord's church has no "parent" church. Christ's church is THE CHURCH, the only church He ever had. The word "church" itself means the "called out", but not called out from another church. All who have been called out of the world of sin constitute the church. They who have been called into God's service constitute His church. In no sense could this be true of denominationalism. The word "denominationalism" itself suggests a fraction or part of the whole. The church of Jesus Christ is no fraction or part of anything! It is not a denomination.

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Beloved, I ask, will the advocates of denominations today declare that their respective denominations were bought by the blood of Christ, yet affirm, as they do, that one can be saved and not be a member of their denomination? Think it over! If the different denominations are blood-bought and one can be saved without being a member of such denominations, then the conclusion must be that a man can be saved without the blood of Christ, therefore, conclusive evidence of the fact that a denomination is not the church of Christ. Why? Because the church of Jesus Christ is blood-bought. No one is a member of the church of Christ who is not saved by the blood of Christ. No responsible person is saved by the blood of Christ who is not a member of the church of the Lord. Hear these words of inspiration: "Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20: 28).

My friends, the church of God is not a denomination because the Lord's church is a divine institution. Denominationalism is no part of the Lord's church. Religious leaders today will not affirm that the denominations are divine. Being a member of their respective denominations is not essential to being saved, they freely admit. But, the church of Jesus Christ is divine, consisting of the saved and only the saved—saved by the blood of Christ (Acts 20: 28).

### Christ Adds to His Church

The church of Christ is not a denomination because the membership of the Lord's church is enrolled in heaven and God does the adding of the members to His church (Acts 2: 41-47). In verse 42 of this quotation Luke records, "Then



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they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. " In verse 47 he concluded, 'And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. " Those who obeyed the gospel by believing, repenting and being baptized for the remission of sins were added to the church by the Lord. All who believe and obey the gospel are added to the Lord's church.

If the church of Christ were a denomination among denominations, is it not strange that "other denominations" were not present on this day of the origin of the church to receive part of the 3, 000 converts into membership of their denominations? Could one possibly imagine 3, 000 "converts" in any city in our day, as the results of a "non-denominational" effort, without many different denominations offering membership in their respective. deno\_mi«ations to the 3, 000?

Don't you know that if the church of Christ were a denomination among denominations, on the day of Pentecost different denominations would have offered claim to part of the 3, 000 as their members? How many denominations claimed the 3, 000 converts as their members? None. Every one of the 3, 000 was added to the Lord's church, not a denomination!

My friends, all members of Christ's church were added to the church by the Lord after their obedience to the gospel, and their names were enrolled in heaven. The apostle declared in Hebrews 12: 22, 23: "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written (enrolled) in heaven... " In this salutation, the apostle addressed the church of the firstborn. Obviously this is the church of Christ because those who are born again are they who constitute the Lord's church, and the church belongs to Christ because He bought

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it with His own bloody God does the adding to the church and the enrollment is made in Heaven! How different from denominationalism. Men are accepted or rejected by the respective denominations, according to the human creed of said denominations, and the enrollment is made by the hands of man upon rolls of paper that fade away into less than nothingness. The Lord's church is not a denomination!

### **"Join" Denominations**

Beloved, I can tell you that I observed many times, while a young boy, both the addition and subtraction of members to and from a denomination. Let me tell you something... Are you listening? I was present one time when a man presented himself for membership in a denomination when the "doors of the church were opened", as they expressed it, and there were more "nay" votes than there were "yea" votes. The dissenting voices denied that man membership in that denomination. He was voted out before he got in! Yet, the man gave testimony, as required by that denomination, that he was a saved man. Could one imagine reading an account of preachers or elders of the Lord's church in New Testament times making an appeal, "We shall now open the doors of the church for membership"? Then, after someone had related his experiences, which were compared with the experiences of others, it was decided by vote of the church whether or not the man should be received into the fellowship of the church? I say, my friends, did you ever read anything like that in the Bible concerning the church of the living God?

It is known that some years ago in an East Texas oil-field community, a denominational church closed its doors for

membership. The reason for this unusual action was the fact that oil was discovered on the church property, which meant considerable royalty for the members of that church. Therefore, instead of putting money into the collection plate, they took money out of the treasury. They divided the oil money among themselves. As you might imagine, they began to get many new members. In view of the situation, they decided to "close the doors of the church"—no more new members with whom to divide the "oil money. " I suppose that would be one denomination that a person could not "join" unless he had an oil well. Just too bad if a man didn't have an oil well! Imagine that being a New Testament church! I tell you, beloved, the church of Christ is not a denomination, and denominations are no part of the church.

### **No Choice—Don't Join Church**

The term "join" implies choice. For example, one may choose to "join" the Lions Club, the Rotary Club or Kiwanis Club. To "join means "to associate oneself with". But man does not "join" the Lord's church. He has no choice in the matter. When one obeys the gospel and is saved by the blood of Christ, he is added to the church by Christ. One may have the choice of. joining denomination A or denomination B, but there is no such thing as "joining the church of your choice" when referring to the Lord's church. Man has no choice in the matter. Christ adds the saved to His church and only His church; and, only the saved are added to His church. To be saved by the blood of Christ is to be a member of the church of Christ. To be a member of the church of Christ is to be saved by the blood of Christ! One may as well talk about being saved without the blood of Christ as to declare

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that man may be saved and not be a member of the Lord's church. The saved are added to the church: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved (as should be saved). " The church of Christ is not a denomination!

### Church, the House of God, Family of God

Other marks of distinction between the church of Christ and denominations are worthy of consideration. The church of God's the family of God, or the house of God (Eph. 2: 19; 2: 15; Heb. 3: 6 and 1 Tim. 3: 15). All of God's children are in His family. God's family is the church; therefore, all of God's children are in His church! Furthermore, beloved, the church is the fullness of God's family. If one should introduce all the members of his family, stating, "This is the fullness of my family, " then it would be understood that was his complete family. On the other hand, should one make the same introduction, declaring, "this is the fullness of my family, " then add, "I also want you to meet my other sons, " it would be very obvious that the "other sons" would be illegitimate children. We, therefore, must conclude that since the church of the Lord is the family of God and the fullness of His family, then if God has other children who are not members of His church, they must be illegitimate children. Denominations will not claim that they constitute all of God's family. The church of Christ, therefore, is not a denomination.

### No Denominational Name

The church of our Lord has no denominational name. As individual members of the church, "the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch" (Acts 11: 26). Denominational names are wrong. Peter declared, "But if a man suffer

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as a **Christian**, let him not be ashamed: but let him glorify God in this name" (1 Peter 4: 16). In the divine name there is inherent authority whereby man may be saved: "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4: 12).

### Sectarianism Sinful

Paul declared that denominational names represent Christ as being divided, deny the crucifixion of Christ and dishonor the name of our Lord, in whose name men are to be baptized. Party, sectarian, or denominational names are divisive and sinful. To the Corinthians the apostle wrote: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name" (1 Cor. 1: 10-15).

In verse 13 of this divine quotation, the conclusions are inescapable. Christ is not divided; therefore, human or party names, which are divisive, should not be honored. Only Christ was crucified for us; therefore, we should wear only His name. All who are members of Christ's church were baptized into His name; therefore, all members of the Lord's

church should be identified only by Christ's name! Members of the church of Christ are Christians only. Christians only are members of the Lord's church, not a denomination!

#### Unity in Name

The church belongs to Christ. It is His church. Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16: 18). The different denominations, identified by different names, originated with men of earth; therefore, denominationalism belongs to man and not God! The congregations of the Lord's church were called the "churches of Christ" (Romans 16: 16). As God's family, the church is identified as the "church of God" (1 Cor. 1: 2; 1 Tim. 3: 15). God has one family, one house, one church. Every house divided against itself shall not stand! (Matt. 12: 25). The Lord's church is not a denomination. His church will stand!

Ladies and gentlemen, won't you hear me! Are you listening? There is only one name in which unity can exist. There is no man-made. party or denominational name upon which we can unite. Denominationalism makes the plea, "one name is as good as another, " but evidently they do not believe it, as evidenced by the fact that one denominational group will not wear the name of another denominational body. There are hundreds of denominational names. We might agree that one name, of human origin, by which the denominations are identified, is as good as another, but there is no name equal to or above the name which is of divine origin. The apostle Peter wrote: "But if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name" (1 Peter 4: 16).

The apostle Paul declared: "Wherefore also God highly

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exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2: 9-11).

Members of the Lord's church are identified by His name, but the church must not be denominationalized by name.

### **No Denominational Creed**

The church of Christ is not a denomination because Christians are not bound by any denominational creed. Christ, the head of His church, has all authority in heaven and on earth. His gospel and His commands are authoritative.

### **Christ's Authority**

Just before our Lord left this earth He announced His universal authority to be respected by all men who would become His disciples: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28: 18-20).

There is no authority within, the church, or of the church itself. Christ is the only authority. The inspired apostle wrote: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1: 22). "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of (by authority of) the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3: 17).

The creeds and doctrines of men, by which denominations are governed, are condemned. Hear the apostle! Are

you listening? "If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances, handle not, nor taste, nor touch (all which things are to perish with the using), after the precepts and doctrines of men?" (Col. 2: 20-22).

#### Law of Faith

All members of the Lord's, church are under law to Christ alone. This is the law of faith. The Word declares: "Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith" (Rom. 3: 27).

Law commands the right and prohibits the wrong. The law of faith, therefore, is the order of Christ's authority, through the gospel, which circumscribes and regulates faith.

The law is the gospel, the commands of God which man believes, his faith being predicated upon the teaching of the gospel! Denominations have instituted their own creeds and disciplines. Denominations would not exist in the absence of human creeds. The fact that denominations are of human origin is evidence of the fact the doctrine and practice of such organizations are of human origin, their creeds and disciplines being compiled and written by men. It is not unusual for the denominations to change or alter their creeds. In the past, some have completely repudiated doctrines taught in their original creeds, having changed their creeds so as to now teach some doctrines once stated in the creeds to be false, but now declared to be true; or, once declared to be true, but now taught to be false. Such are the creeds of denominations! The Christian's creed can never change. Christ and His gospel never change! Churches of Christ have no creed but Christ and His gospel. The New Testament is the infallible guide.



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### No Denominational Organization

The church of Christ is not a denomination because the church has no denominational organization. There are no headquarters for the church on earth! Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1: 22), and He has all authority in the church (Matt. 28: 19). There is no denominational organization of churches and no centralized power or authority over the congregations of the Lord's church. There is no organization larger than that of the local congregation of the church of Christ with its elders, deacons and evangelists functioning in their proper sphere. Such was the organization of the church known during New Testament times (Phil. 1: 1; Tit. 1: 5 and Acts 14: 23).

### Unity in Worship

My friends, the New Testament church is not a denomination because of its scriptural, spiritual worship. Worship ordained and prescribed by the doctrines and commandments of men is vain, worship. Christ, the Son of God, declared, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4: 24). Worship, therefore, to be acceptable unto God, must be in spirit and according to the direction of the truth. The seriousness of this matter is revealed in the words of the Master when He announced, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men" (Matt. 15: 9). Worship in denominational churches is directed by the "doctrines and precepts of men", creeds of human origin.

Many denominations take pride in announcing to the world that their respective creeds and disciplines identify themselves in their worship, doctrine and practice. I mention

only a few of such human creeds. The Catechism—the Roman Catholic Church. The Confession of Faith—the Presbyterian Church. The Book of Common Prayer—the Church of England, or the Episcopal Church. The Philadelphia Confession of Faith, or Baptist Manual of Hitchcock and others—the Baptist Church. The Methodist Discipline—the Methodist Church. The Book of Mormon—the Mormon Church. The Key to the Scripture by Mrs. Eddy—the Christian Science Church. All the others could be added. Jesus declared that worship according to the doctrine and precepts of men is "vain" worship. Denominations, therefore, could not be the Lord's church rendering acceptable worship unto God!

#### Platform for Unity

The church of our Lord is not a denomination because Christians are united upon the divine platform of unity. The inspired apostle wrote: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4: 4-6).

Christians affirm: There is ONE GOD—unity in worship. There is ONE LORD—unity in authority. There is ONE FAITH—unity in message and doctrine. There is ONE BAPTISM—unity of practice. There is ONE BODY—unity of organization. There is ONE HOPE—unity in plan and desire. There is ONE SPIRIT—unity in life and unity in revelation.

#### As a Christian Only

As a Christian only, a member of the Lord's church and not a member of any denomination, one can believe and teach, as declared by Paul, there is "**one God**", "**one Lord**", "**one Spirit**", "**one body**" (which is the church, Eph. 1: 22),

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"one faith", "one baptism" and "one hope". A loyal and consistent member of any denomination cannot teach these divine principles of Christian unity! The very spirit of denominationalism is contrary to the Lord's church and this New Testament teaching.

Truly, beloved, these cardinal principles of unity constitute the only basis for the unity for which our Lord prayed so earnestly (John 17: 20, 21). Denominationalism refutes these divine principles of unity. There is hardly one of these seven principles of unity upon which denominations can unite. It would be impossible for the denominations to unite upon all these God-given principles of unity. I tell you, my friends, if all the denominations would unite upon these great principles of unity, as ordained by God, there would no longer be any denominations. Then only the church of the living God would exist.

### **Non-Denominational**

The church of Jesus Christ is non-denominational. It is neither Catholic, Jewish nor Protestant. It was not founded in "protest" of any institution and is not the product of the "Restoration" or "Reformation." It is the product of the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8: 11ff) grown in the hearts of men. The seed of the kingdom, the word of God, can produce only one product. As surely as the gospel only is preached, Christ's church only will be produced. As surely as there is one head, there is one body. The one body is the one church and not a denomination (Eph. 1: 22; Col. 1: 18; Eph. 4: 4). The church of Christ, therefore, is non-denominational in origin, organization and worship, functioning according to the authority of the New Testament. By divine pattern it embraces all in its

fellowship who comply with the will of God and refuses fellowship to the disobedient who will not subjugate their will to the authority of Christ, the head of the church.

The church which Jesus built is not a denomination, but the redeemed of God's people, serving the Lord in the one body for which He died on the cross!

### **Divine Builder**

The church of Christ is a divine institution because it belongs to Christ. He established and bought it with His precious blood. In Matt. 16: 18, Jesus declared to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. " The church that Jesus established was His church. It belongs to Christ. The church of Christ belongs to Christ by right of ownership. Jesus said, "I will build MY church. " The divine Son of God was the divine builder of His church. "My church" is Christ's church. I have no church. You should have no church. Why be a part of some religious organization of human origin when Christ built His church and it is of divine origin? Why not just be a member of the Lord's church, a way that is so right that it cannot be wrong!

Many denominations have been built by men, but Christ built only His church. Inspiration declared a long while gone: "Except Jehovah build the house they labour in vain that built it" (Psalms 127: 1).

### **Divine Origin**

The church of Jesus Christ is not a denomination because of its divine origin. Every institution of human origin is a mortal institution. Christ, the divine Son of God, built His church upon the mighty solid rock of the fact of His divinity. The identity of this rock is revealed when Jesus told the

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apostle Peter that He would build His church. The apostle had just confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16: 16). Jesus replied, "And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church. "

### Christ the Rock

Jesus declared that He would build His church upon a rock. What was the rock? Without question the rock must refer to either Peter's confession of Christ or Christ's confession of Peter. Many religionists declare that Peter was the rock, because the word Peter means rock or stone. The original Greek language positively will not permit this interpretation because two different words are used. Jesus said, "Thou art Peter (Petros) and upon this rock (petra) I will build my "Church" (Matt. 16: 18). Our Lord definitely did not say that He would build His church upon Peter (Petros). but declared that He would build upon the rock (petra). The rock (petra) upon which the church was built was the mighty solid foundation and glorious fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, which was confessed by Peter. The church of Christ, therefore, was not built upon weakness of mortal man, but upon the divine Sonship of Christ. It must be observed further that the apostle Paul declared, after the church had been established, that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3: 11). Also, "Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2: 20). God, through the prophet, announced: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation" (Isa. 28: 16). While our Lord was on earth He applied the prophecy to himself, recorded in

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Matt. 21: 42. Also, the apostle Peter applied the prophecy to Christ, declaring: "He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner" (Acts 4: 11).

These facts force us to the inevitable conclusion that Christ's church was not built upon Peter, as the rock, but upon the glorious and divine truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Attesting to this great truth was God, through the prophet Isaiah, before the advent of Christ. Christ himself declared it to be the truth and the apostle Peter, to whom Christ made the promise, also declared it to be so.

### **Hades Not Prevail Against Church**

The church of Christ was as certain to be established as Christ was the Son of God, and just as certain, Christ was to be the founder of His church. Christ's promise to establish His church could not fail. As the Son of God, He had pledged His life and His blood to establish His church. Death and Hades would not prevail against it. Hades could not prevail against the foundation of the church. The church of Christ could not exist without its divine foundation. There is no other foundation. Other foundations support other churches, not the Lord's church.

Not only would Hades be unsuccessful in prevailing against the Lord's church, but all the powers of Hades, for all time to come, would never prevail against, or destroy, Christ's church. The prophet, Daniel, declared, with reference to Christ's kingdom, that God would "set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2: 44). The gates of Hades shall not prevail against the church of Christ, just as certain as Christ is the Son of God (Matt. 16: 13-19)!

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The church has suffered severe persecutions in the past and there may be unknown persecutions in the future, but the enemies of the Lord's church will never successfully prevail against Christ's church. The firm foundation of God standeth! The church will be here when Christ returns. He will then present His church, His kingdom, to God the Father for an eternal abode in Heaven where sorrows and persecutions will never invade the habitation of the saints of God. Paul declared: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15: 24).

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## The Beginning

To establish the true identity of the church and distinguish it from a denomination, it is important that we know the place and time of the beginning of the church. Someone might presume that this matter is unimportant. What difference does it make about the beginning of the church, one might say. My friends, it makes all the difference! Could one imagine a captain at sea, on a journey without knowing the point of his beginning and not knowing the sea in which he was sailing? What would his compass be worth without a beginning point? True, he could sail toward any point the compass called for, but he could not tell you where he was going, nor when he would arrive, unless he had a definite place of beginning. Likewise, an engineer could not survey a line to determine deeds, titles and property rights without a beginning. There must be a beginning! The church had a beginning. All denominations had their beginnings. Determine the time and place of the beginning of Christ's church and immediately you are able to distinguish between the church of Christ and a denomination. The beginning of the church is a mark of identification of the church. The time, place and circumstances of the beginning of the denominations identify them as such.

## Time and Place

About six hundred years before Christ came to this world, Daniel prophesied that a kingdom would be set up which would never be destroyed, a kingdom that would be established during the days of those kings, (the fourth earthly kingdom) the Roman kings, and it would break in pieces



and consume all the other kingdoms (Dan. 2: 44).

God, through the prophets, spoke of the time and place for the beginning of Christ's church. In Isaiah 2: 2, 3, God declared, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. "

From this prophetic declaration of God, through the prophet Isaiah, at least three facts are established. First: the time of the beginning of the church is revealed. Second: God's house was to be exalted above all else and all nations would flow unto it. Third: the place. God's house, the church, was to be established in Jerusalem. It should be observed that after the church was established, Paul explained that the house of God, to which the prophet referred, is the church of the living God (1 Tim. 3: 15). Other prophetic scriptures bear testimony to these facts, including Zech. 1: 16 and Micah 4: 1, 2.

### **Kingdom at Hand**

In the New Testament we read from Matt. 3: 1, that in those days of the Caesars and the Herods, came John the Baptist preaching: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand. " (The time of these kings was foretold by Daniel, the prophet, already quoted). According to Mark 1: 15, when Jesus came, He declared, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. " In Luke, chapter 10, the seventy were sent out to teach, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you, " all of which is evidence of the fact that at that time the church, or Kingdom, had not been established but was soon to be estab-

lished. It was "at hand", "nigh unto" them. The general time for the establishment of the church is very well-known from these quotations, but a more specific time and place are revealed.

### **In Lifetime of Apostles**

Having informed the disciples that He would build His church soon, Christ further declared to the apostles: "There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom" (Matt. 16: 28). Again, in Mark 9: 1, He said that "there are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God coming with power. " Now, friends, according to these statements, some of those men, to whom Christ was speaking, would live to see the establishment of Christ's church, the kingdom to which Peter had been given the keys, the kingdom which was to "come with power. "

### **Kingdom Come With Power**

Specific instructions were given the apostles concerning their waiting for the power of the Holy Spirit which was to accompany the establishment of the church. After Jesus had arisen from the dead, just before He went back to the Father in heaven, He told His disciples: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24: 49). They were then to preach repentance and remission of sins in the name of Christ. Read verses 46, 47, 48. According to Acts 1: 8, the apostles were to receive power "when the Holy Spirit is come upon you. " Remember, these apostles were to wait at the designated place, the city of Jerusalem, for the specific incident of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, then they would be assured of the fact that the kingdom of Christ had come; the church would then and

there be established. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the time and place foretold by God's prophets, by John the Baptist, by Christ's disciples and by Jesus himself with reference to the origin of Christ's church.

### Church Established

Reading from the second chapter of Acts, beginning from the last verse of the first chapter, we learn that the apostles, who were waiting as they had been instructed by Jesus, received the "power from on high" (the Holy Spirit), on the day of the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus. The apostle Peter, exercising the responsibility given him by Christ, using the keys of the kingdom, stood up with the eleven and preached unto the people Jesus, preaching repentance and remission of sins in the name of Christ. The people heard the gospel story. They were pricked in their hearts and cried out unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, "What shall we do?" The answer came from the inspired apostle Peter when he commanded, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for (unto) the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38). The record states, in verse 41, that those who received the Word were baptized and there were added unto them in that day about 3, 000 souls and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2: 47). Previous to this time the church, or kingdom, was referred to as being in the future, but now the church is in existence. This was the beginning!

### Terms of Membership

The terms of membership in the church of Christ, the day of its origin, were divinely dictated because the church was divine. The 3, 000 who were added to the Lord's church

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were added to the church when they obtained "remission of sins", but they obtained remission of sins only when they obeyed the commands of the Lord, revealed by Peter (Acts 2: 38). Only those believers who repented and were baptized for the remission of sins were added to the church. Remission of sins is by virtue of the blood of Christ (Hebrews 9: 22). Those who are saved by the blood of Christ constitute the church of Christ (Acts 20: 28).

It is a peculiar fact that almost all denominations distinguish themselves from the Lord's church by denying these New Testament conditions for remission of sins and church membership, especially claiming that baptism is NOT for remission of sins, therefore, not essential to salvation.

The church of Christ could not have originated before the death and resurrection of Jesus, neither could its beginning yet be in the future. It was in the year 33 A. D., in the city of Jerusalem, when Christ's church was originated in its fullness and began its great mission in the world. It was then that Christ sat down at the right hand of God, occupying the throne of David, and was made "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Acts 2: 30-36; 1 Tim. 6: 15). Some few months later, Paul wrote that he was in the kingdom (Col. 1: 13). Since that eventful day until this good time, Christ has been reigning as the head of His church and King over His kingdom, which is an everlasting dominion, a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.

### Christ the Founder

The church of Christ was not established by Abraham or David. Christ's church was not established by Luther, Calvin, Wesley, John Smith, Joseph Smith, Campbell, Mary Baker Eddy or any other person on this earth. John the Baptist was not the founder of the Lord's church. He himself declared,

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"the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3: 2). John never was in the Lord's kingdom because he died before it was established by Christ (Matt. 11: 11). John was a great man, but never had the experience of being a member of the Lord's church, a citizen of the Lord's kingdom. Jesus himself declared of John, that "among them that are born of woman there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11: 11).

### Origin of Denominations

The different religious denominations may be identified by origin. One has no difficulty ascertaining the origin of the denominations by consulting the secular pages of church history. Otherwise, one may search the pages of divine truth in the Bible for a lifetime and he will never discover the identity of our modern denominations. Just a brief review of the dates, places and names will bear evidence of the fact that denominations are of human origin and not of divine origin.

The Roman Catholic church had her beginning as a result of certain departures from the New Testament doctrine and practice, as taught and practiced by the New Testament church. The apostle Paul warned the early church of this development: "Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God" (2 Thess. 2: 3, 4). The apostle profoundly and forcefully emphasized that the time would come when there would be a falling away of the church, a departure from the faith so evidently manifested that one would set himself forth to be worshipped as God, all of which would occur be-

fore the second coming of Christ. Other references to the apostasy and development of this hierarchy and ecclesiasticism may be found in Acts 20: 28-30; 1 Tim. 4: 1-3; 2 Cor. 11: 13, 14.

The exact date of the origin of the Roman Catholic church can hardly be established since it occurred as a result of gradual development of departures from the word of God until she stood forth exercising dominion and power, claiming power over all nations, both religious and civil in all the world, until de-throned from such dominion and power in 1870. It might be said, however, that Catholicism dates back to the third century. They do not claim to have had an archbishop until the end of the fourth century, and then it was several centuries later before they had popes and cardinals (Catholic Ency. 1 V. 44).

The first pope we have record of was Boniface III, who was designated by Emperor Phocus in 606 A. D. He claimed the pope to be infallible in his decisions, being the supreme head and having all authority and power. Such divine titles as "Our Lord God the Pope", "Another God on Earth", etc. are applied to him. Concerning the claim of authority and infallibility of the pope, Pope Boniface himself declared: "We declare, say, define and pronounce to every human creature that it is altogether necessary salvation to be subject to the Roman pontiff. "

Another pope declares: "There is but one name in all the world; and that is the pope's. All princes ought to kiss his feet. He alone can nominate or displace bishops, or dissolve councils. Nobody can judge him. He has never erred, and never shall err in time to come. He can depose princes, and release subjects from their oaths of fidelity. " (Abbott's History of Christianity, page 407). What claims of infallibility and divinity by mere mortal men!

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The doctrines of Romanism, the creed of the Catholic church, originated over a period of some 1200 years, including Doctrine of Holy Water, Doctrine of Penance, Doctrine of Purgatory, Mechanical Instruments of Music in Worship, Transubstantiation, Celibacy, Indulgences, Confessions and Sprinkling for Baptism.

All of these new doctrines are foreign and unknown to the doctrine of Christ, revealed in the New Testament, taught and practiced by the New Testament church. The doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church had influence on practically every protestant denomination that came into existence following the origin of the Catholic Church.

### Protestant Denominations

We shall not attempt to present the history of all denominations. The origin and identity of all denominations, however, may be established by consulting many reliable secular church histories.

The first protestant denomination, the Lutheran Church, originated in 1524—as a result of Martin Luther's protest of Roman Catholicism. John Calvin was the founder of the Presbyterian Church in 1535. The Church of England was next in the origin of protestant denominations, with the Book of Common Prayer adopted as the creed in 1552. The Baptist Church was next to originate in the year 1607. Dr. George A. Lofton, a well-known Baptist historian, states: "Thomas Crosby, the first Baptist historian (Vol. 1, pages 265-278), gives an account of the origin of the first Baptist Church in English history, organized in 1609 A. D. It originated with John Smith and his followers at Amsterdam, Holland, whither they fled in 1606 from from persecution. " Dr. Lofton continues: "I have quoted freely from Smyth, his friends and opponents to show clearly the origin of the First

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General Baptist Church, and the principle and practice upon which it was founded. By a gradual process of development through perhaps eight or ten years, separating first from the English church and then from the Brownists, Smyth evolved the idea of a Baptist church in the light of Scriptures contrasted with the error of both the pedo-Baptists and Mennonites. "

Dr. Lofton states: "Regarding baptism as the ceremonial constitution of the church, and that being lost he, Smyth, struck upon the idea of baptizing himself and then baptizing the rest of his company in communion after each had made confession of faith in Christ" (English Baptist Reformation, pp. 29, 35).

The Methodist Church originated in 1729 with John Wesley, another great protestant reformer, as the founder. Regarding its origin, Mr. Wesley said: "On Monday, May 1st, our little society began in London, but it may be observed that the first rise of Methodism, so called, was in November, 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford. The second rise of Methodism was at Savannah, Ga., in 1736, when 20 or 30 persons met at my house. The third rise of Methodism was at London, May 1, 1737, when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every evening in order to free conversation, which began and ended with singing and prayer. "

Continuing, Mr. Wesley declares: "I am, under God, the father of the whole family. "

There are more than two hundred distinct denominations and the origin and conflicting doctrines of each one could be presented. This brief review of the origin of denominations has been presented so that you might have a better understanding of the question under consideration, "Is the Church of Christ a Denomination?"



### Seed Produces Christ's Church Only

My friends, hear me! Are you listening? If nineteen hundred years ago, when the seed of the kingdom, the word of God only, was sown and that made Christians only, then if the same seed, the same gospel, is taught today, will it not also make Christians only today? What church did those people become members of when they obeyed the gospel only? With no amount of imagination could one produce even one single inference that they became members of some denomination. Those who were baptized in New Testament times were baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2: 38). Why? Because they received the word (Acts 2: 41). The word is the seed (Luke 8: 11). Seed always reproduces after its own kind. Those who obeyed the gospel of Christ only, nineteen hundred years ago, were members of the Lord's church only. They were added to His church (Acts 2: 47). If the same seed is planted today, the gospel of Christ, and that word is obeyed, as was done nineteen hundred years ago, one could only be a member of the Lord's church today—not a denomination.

### Did Church Lose Identity?

No doubt, a question to many is, "Did the church lose its identity during the dark ages of Catholicism, or during the ages of protestantism?" My friends, why worry about that? Don't you know that seed always reproduces after its own kind? A "pumpkin" seed will always reproduce pumpkins; it makes no difference whether the seed is planted today, tomorrow, next year or a hundred years from now. Seed will always reproduce regardless of where it is planted. To illustrate: I knew of some people who planted some corn seed which had an unusual origin. The seed was found in a cave in Arizona. Evidently the seed was placed there by Indians

many, many years ago, perhaps even a hundred years ago. The corn seed, which has been completely preserved, was removed from the cave. The seed was planted. Can you imagine what happened? Would you believe that they gathered oats, rice, cotton, beans, potatoes, corn and two hundred other products from the corn seed planted? Why, you would say, "How foolish can you be!" Yes, it reproduced corn—the same corn that seed would have produced had it been planted one hundred years ago.

Beloved, don't you know that if pure corn seed is planted today, it will reproduce only corn? If cotton seed is planted, it will reproduce only cotton. Furthermore, the seed will reproduce the same product whether it is planted now or planted a thousand years from now.

Ladies and gentlemen, the seed of God's kingdom is His word (Luke 8: 11). The word of God reproduces only one product—a Christian only—a member of the Lord's church.

Christ declared that He would build His church "and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16: 18). The church of Christ will never be destroyed. The church will be somewhere on this earth, serving the Lord and preaching the gospel to save the lost, when Christ comes again!

For the sake of argument, suppose the Lord's church did not exist for several hundred years. I doubt that. No doubt the church of our Lord has been on earth since its beginning and will be here when Christ shall come. But suppose it isn't so; that does not involve the true identity of the Lord's church today. Let me give you an illustration. One of the great American sports events is baseball. We have rule books governing the game of baseball. Suppose the rule book is lost. We have no rule book to go by. We still try to play baseball—How long do you suppose you would recognize the game as a

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42nd cousin to the original game of baseball, if played without a rule book for fifty years? Suppose the rule book is gone. We have no baseball for a period of one thousand years. But, somebody discovers a rule book, which had been hidden away in a locker for a thousand years, telling you how to play the game of baseball. The rule book is followed in minute detail. The game, with the pitcher, the catcher, the first-baseman, second-baseman, third-baseman, short-stop, right field, center field and left field, and all play the game just as the rule book says. I ask you, "Would that be baseball, or would it not be baseball?" Obviously, baseball!

Just suppose the word of God, in its completeness, was taken away from the people. Suppose it was hidden in the rubbish of the dark ages for a thousand years. But, somebody opened the Bible. Someone begins to teach and preach only the word of God and the word of God only! Suppose we follow its directives and only its authority. Suppose everyone does exactly what was done in New Testament times—preaches the same gospel, believes the same gospel and obeys the same gospel,—I ask, "What church would that make one a member of?" Surely nothing more, nor less, than a Christian only—just a member of the Lord's church.

Why, ladies and gentlemen, because Campbell, after having learned the truth and obeyed the gospel, taught somebody else the truth and baptized him, did that make a person a "Campbellite"? Personally, I have had the pleasure of baptizing more than 6, 000 people into Christ. Did that make them "Howardites"? According to such fallacious reasoning, if a jaybird should pick up an acorn, fly across the Mississippi River, and drop the acorn in the swamps on the other side, the seed, the acorn, when it grows to be a tree, will produce a crop of jaybirds. Now, isn't that absurd!

## Church of Christ Not a Denomination

Friends, I say to you kindly, yet frankly and earnestly, all denominations are of human origin, having originated at the wrong places, by the wrong persons, at the wrong times. Any religious body having begun since Christ's church was established, soon after He declared, "I will build my church, " is too young to be His church. Any denomination claiming to have originated before that time is too old to be His church.

The church of Christ began in the city of Jerusalem, the record of which is found in the second chapter of Acts. It began in Jerusalem and not in England, Germany, France, Holland, Italy or America. It began in the year 33 A. D., and not in the third century or 1521, 1535, 1607, 1729, or any other later date. Christ was the founder, and not a Pope, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy or any other person or group of persons.

It is still true that seed will produce after its own kind. When the seed of the kingdom, the word of God, is sown, there will be one product—that is the Lord's church, not a denomination. The seed of the kingdom will reproduce just as it did nineteen hundred years ago. The Bible only will make Christians only!

It must be concluded that the church of Christ is not a denomination of human origin. It is a divine institution of divine origin, divinely identified by name, doctrine and practice, with a God-given mission in the world to preach a divine doctrine (Rom. 1: 16; Gal. 1: 11, 12).

Remember, "Except Jehovah build the house, They labor in vain that build it" (Psa. 127: 1). The church of our Lord, its origin, New Testament doctrine and practice, revealed in the Book divine, will always stand the millenniums of time. May all men of earth honor and exalt the church of our Lord Jesus Christ! Are you a member?

## THE BRIDE'S ATTIRE—No. 1

My friends, in the long ago God, through the prophet, declared: "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number" (Jer. 2: 32).

It is hardly likely that a maid shall forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire, but there is an adornment, significant of a spiritual wedding, that has often been tragically forgotten. You may be sure that God, a principal in this wedding, has not forgotten, but the bride too often has forgotten her attire!

The happy bride, no doubt, will always remember the time, the place, and that special ornament — perhaps a ring that was placed on the finger with a pledge of love and devotion never to cease. Still more significant, the bride's attire, the wedding garments, are cherished as precious memories to those whose marriage has been a blessed event.

God, through the prophet, declared that it is hardly likely that a maid will forget her ornaments, or a bride forget her attire; yet, His people had forgotten Him days without number.

### Israel Married to God

According to the Bible, Israel was spiritually married to God and the law of Moses was the marriage contract between them (Jer. 3: 14; Rom 7: 1-4). Hear the apostle Paul concerning the matter:

"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the

husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. "

### Israel in Spiritual Adultery

The apostle affirmed that the Jews were one time spiritually married to God. While married to God, Israel had forgotten her vows and her obligations, having committed spiritual adultery. The maid could hardly forget her ornaments, nor the bride forget her attire; yet, God's people, even then, forgot Him days without number.

Israel was guilty of playing the part of a harlot with many lovers. The prophet declared, "But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord" (Jer. 3: 1).

Jehovah was greatly concerned because Israel had forsaken God, having backslidden into wickedness. The Lord announced, "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer. 2: 13).

God charged the leaders of the day, the priests, pastors and prophets, with having committed adultery, having perverted the word of God and propagated false teaching: thereby, leading God's people astray. In this adulterous state the prophets and priests "strengthened the hands of the evildoers" (Jer. 23: 14).

### Jews Free to Marry Again

To the Romans, Paul wrote:

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to **the** law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who was raised from the dead" (Rom. 7: 4).

Surely, there can be no doubt about the inference proclaimed by the apostle in this text. Israel, who was at one time spiritually married to God, was now free to marry again without being in spiritual adultery, because the law had been removed by reason of the death of Christ. When Christ died on the cross the law became dead. Hear the apostle! "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2: 14).

In Ephesians 2: 14-16, the same apostle affirmed:

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. "

By reason of the death of Christ, those Jews, who were previously spiritually married to God, are "now become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, " the inspired apostle concluded. For them it was a second marriage, but not a state of adultery. Now, both Jew and Gentile, members of one body, the Lord's church, are spiritually married to Christ.

### **The Betrothal**

Before the consummation of the marriage between

Christ and His church, there was the betrothal. In his letter to the Corinthian church, Paul wrote:

"For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor. 11: 2). Through the gospel of Christ the apostle had proclaimed the love of God and the love of Christ for His church, His bride.

Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride forget her attire? How important it is for the bride's attire to be remembered, never to be forgotten, never to be defiled!

### **Adornment of Doctrine for Marriage**

In becoming a Christian, being spiritually married to Christ, there must be the adornment of the garments of truth and righteousness. Of the attire, Paul wrote: "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2: 10). Without the adornment of the doctrine of Christ man does not have God with him. In 2 John 9 it is revealed: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. "

Is the bride's attire being forgotten today? There is no attire to replace **sound doctrine**, the **doctrine of Christ!** Paul charged Timothy to "preach the word, " declaring that the time would come when there would be those who would "not endure sound doctrine" and because of "itching ears" they would "turn away their ears from the truth" (II Tim. 4: 2-4).

It is only the truth that makes men free (John 8: 32). It is only the gospel of Christ that is the "power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1: 16). The recitation of nursery rhymes and bedtime stories, the quotations of poems and philosophy of mortal men, a dissertation on psychology and mental



health, and generalized, apologetic sermons are not going to convert men to Christ. Today, as always, there is a need for the preaching of sound doctrine; yes, the plain, positive, old Jerusalem gospel that brings conviction to those who hear.

Have we forgotten the bride's attire, the adornment of the doctrine of Christ? Have we forgotten Acts 2: 37, 38? Is it too old fashioned to preach the great, simple, positive, spirit filled, regenerating sermon that brought conviction to some 3, 000 people who were told to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins? Have we forgotten that these 3, 000 souls gladly received the word of God? Have we forgotten that it was the preaching of sound doctrine that caused this great number of people to adorn themselves with the bride's attire?

Beloved, think what might have been the results on Pentecost if Peter had just preached a nicely polished, generalized sermonette, without having told the people of their guilt of sin and what they should do to obtain the remission of their sins! No doubt, there are many people today who profess to be Christians, but, at the slightest provocation, deny the faith and quit the church, as though legal divorce between them and the Lord had been granted. No doubt, too, many are being "converted," or "married" to the preacher, or, converted to a local congregation rather than being truly converted to Christ. The tragedy of it is that many honest and sincere souls, conscious of their guilt of sin, are not told what to do to be saved. Deceived, misinformed, or for the lack of instruction, they are left at the "altar" without being spiritually married to the Lord. They are lost for eternity!

God was greatly concerned when Israel forgot the bride's attire. He charged that the priests and prophets were guilty of adultery by walking in lies, compromising and

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pervverting His word, all of which strengthened the hands of evildoers. How true this must be today. When teachers and preachers compromise the doctrine of Christ, they have indeed, strengthened the hands of the evildoers! What a tragedy to forget the bride's attire!

### Marriage

In proper attire, with adornment of the doctrine of Christ, the sincere, penitent believer, in total commitment, surrenders his life to Christ, to love, honor, and obey the Lord throughout life.

The day of the origin of the Lord's church some 3, 000 souls were spiritually united with Christ, when, in obedience to the gospel of Christ, they were baptized "for remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38). They were "added to the church" (Acts 2: 47).

One is not spiritually married to the Lord until the relationship is changed. Paul affirms the relationship is changed when one is "baptized **into** Christ" (Gal. 3: 27). By the authority of the Lord the betrothed believer, who pledges his enduring faith in Christ, the Son of God (Acts 8: 36-39), is baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28: 19).

Being "joined to the Lord" by the divine ceremony and act of faith, being baptized "into" Christ, the marriage is consummated and the new relationship with Christ is now experienced as a member of the Lord's body, His church.

### **The Church, the Bride**

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? The church of our Lord is spiritually married to Christ and every child of God should be deeply concerned about the bride's attire.

Paul concluded, in his epistle to the church in Rome, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law

by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7: 4).

The apostle alludes to the marital relationship between husband and wife, affirming that the woman is "bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. " The apostle, furthermore, explained that "if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Rom. 7: 2, 3).

The Christians in Rome, who constituted the Lord's church, were free from the law of Moses by reason of the death of Christ, and now were "married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, " obviously, Christ, the Son of God.

The church is the bride of Christ. In his letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 5, verses 22 through 33, Paul alluded to the marital relationship between husband and wife, then applied the examples to Christ and His church. He concluded:

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church" (Eph. 5: 31, 32).

#### Subject to Authority of Head

The bride of Christ, the church, is obligated to love, honor, and obey Christ, the head of the church. Concerning this relationship, Paul declared that the "church is subject unto Christ" as wives are to be subject to their husbands in everything (Eph. 5: 24). There is no authority, no head, no pope, no priest, no preacher, nor any organization on this earth, who has authority over the church. Paul made this very clear and emphatic in Colossians 2: 20-22.

Listen to the apostle: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; ) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"

My friends, hear me! Are you listening? As the bride of Christ, the church is subject only to the authority of Christ, the head of the church. This is part of the bride's attire, the adornment of the doctrine of Christ, that must not be forgotten by the bride.

Christ is the head of the church and has all authority and power in heaven and on earth.

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1: 22, 23).

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1: 18).

When giving the "great commission" Christ declared His authority in unmistakable terms, saying: "All authority is given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28: 19, 20).

Paul reminded the church in Colosse, Christ's bride, that all things should be done by the authority of Christ: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3: 17).

## THE BRIDE'S ATTIRE—No. 2

### Bride's Name

Friends, is there anything in a name? Should we ask a bride, "Is there anything in a name?" The answer is self-evident. If the church is spiritually married to Christ, whose name should be honored?

When God's people were married to Him under the Old Law, they honored God's name, "Israel, " which He gave to them. By wearing this name they exalted the name of God. The name "Israel" included God's name. The last syllable of the word, "Israel, " the suffix, "el, " is one of the Hebrew names for God, meaning "Prince of God. " This God-given name appears some 2, 000 times in the Old Testament and no man was permitted to alter or change it. Only the fullness of time would change the name that God's people should honor. A new name was to be given after Christ should come and establish His church — establish a new marriage relationship.

To Israel, God declared, in Isaiah 65: 15, "And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God-shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name. " Hear it, beloved! Are you listening? The Lord God "shall call his servants by another name. "

Again, the prophet declared, Isaiah 56: 5, "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. "

Hear the prophet in Isaiah 62: 1, 2: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles

shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. "

From these statements there are four inevitable conclusions: **First, a new name was to be given within God's house**, a name better than the name of sons and daughters of men.

**Second**, this name was **to be an everlasting name** that shall not be cut off, or changed. **Third**: The **name** was to be **given to both the Gentiles and Jews**, as God's people, and not to Jews only. **Fourth**: **God**, Himself, from His own mouth, was to **give the "new name."**

#### New Name, Christian

The new name that God gave His people to wear and honor, as members of the church, is "Christian. " This name embraces the official name of God's Son. The word Christ means "anointed. " The word, "**Christian**, " is used to describe an anointed people and means "belonging to Christ. " The name **Christian**, in the New Testament, applied only to individual members of the church, and not to the church itself, hence the church was never referred to as the "**Christian Church.** " The church was called the **church of God**, the **Lord's church**, the **churches of Christ**, therefore honoring Christ (1 Cor. 1: 2; Acts 20: 28; Rom. 16: 16). Indeed, it is Christ's church! **Not my church, or your church or Christian's church. The church belongs to Christ, therefore, the church of Christ. Christ declared, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16: 18). Christians are members of Christ's church.**

The Jews first became members of the church of the Lord on the day of Pentecost (Acts, chapter 2). The Gentiles first became members of the Lord's church when Cornelius obeyed the gospel (Acts, chapters 10 and 11;

Then, after both Jew and Gentile had become one in Christ, "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26). This is the "**new name**"-**Christian!** God's people are called by a "**new name,** " **Christian,** named by "**the mouth of the Lord.** "

### **Bible Scholars Accept Divine Name**

Just here, ladies and gentlemen, may I assure you that churches of Christ are not alone in contending that God's people today should wear only the name "Christian. " Many of the great religious leaders of the reformation movement were in agreement on this subject. John Wesley, one of the great protestant reformers and founder of the Methodist Church, said, "Would to God that all party names, and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world, were forgot" ("Universal Knowledge, " Vol. 9, page 540). Furthermore, he states, "that the very name (methodist) might never be mentioned more, but be buried in eternal oblivion. "

Another great religious leader, Martin Luther, insisted on wearing only the name **Christian,** although he was the founder of the Lutheran Church. From the volume, "Life of Luther, " by Stork, page 289, I quote: "I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for anyone. St. Paul (I Cor. 1: 13) would not that any should call themselves for Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How then, does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust **and** ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease, my dear friends, to cling to these party names and distinctions; away with them all; and let us call ourselves only Christians, after Him from whom our doctrine comes. "

Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest Baptist preachers

ever known, declared: "I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living! I hope that the Baptist name will soon perish, but let Christ's name last forever" ("Spurgeon Memorial Library, " Vol. 1, page 168).

Other quotations from great religious leaders, pleading for one name, Christian, could be added.

Friends, hear me! Are you listening? I plead with you, let us wear no name but the name God has given. Let us be only Christians, and Christians only! Churches of Christ everywhere are pleading for a return to the New Testament church and to the doctrine and practice authorized in the, New Testament. Let us dispose of all human and party names and honor the name of Christ. Let us not forget the bride's attire!

The name **"Christian"** is the **God-given name**. May I ask, in all honesty and sincerity, did God name you? Are you a Christian? Or, do you wear and honor the name of some man of earth, or some church ordinance, or some church method? Don't you know it is right to be a **"Christian" only!** Don't you know that it is displeasing to God to wear some human, sectarian, or party name instead of wearing the divine name given by Jehovah! Could you possibly say that God made a mistake by giving the **"new name,"** the name **"Christian"**?

#### **Name Christian Universally Accepted**

The name "Christian" is one upon which all believers in Christ should unite. On the other hand, we cannot possibly be united under any human or denominational name. Members of different denominations will never agree to accept any one denominational name, but all should be willing to be called **"Christians."** Every human religious title is questioned by someone, but the **name "Christian" is above question!** It is a name that. is right and cannot be wrong. It is



of divine origin, given from the mouth of God!

Hyphenated names would be synonymous to hyphenated Christians. Could you, beloved, conceive of Christ wanting hyphenated Christians? In America, all American citizens are simply Americans — not German-Americans, or Japanese-Americans, but Americans! God's people should be Christians — not Methodist-Christians, Baptist-Christians, Lutheran-Christians, or Campbellite-Christians, but "Christians" only.

#### Name by Marriage

Since the church is spiritually married to Christ, does not the adornment include the honorable name given by God? Shall the bride forget the "attire"? Does not the bride honor and wear the name of the one to whom she is married? Would a husband be willing for his bride to wear and honor the name of another man? What about that? What do you suppose Christ thinks about those who propose to be a part of His church, spiritually married to Him, yet wear and honor the name of another?

Let us further consider the spiritual marriage relationship between Christ and His church. Is there not a parallel relationship regarding the name? Let us observe some comparisons between the natural, or physical marriage and the spiritual marriage.

Suppose we have a wedding. Mr. Johnson is to be married to Miss Brown. Attending the wedding there will be Mr. Smith, the "best man, " we usually call him, or the "friend of the bridegroom. " Now, ladies and gentlemen, suppose that after the ceremony has been said and Mr. Johnson and Miss Brown are pronounced husband and wife, the bride turns to her husband and remarks, "Mr. Johnson, I love you with all my heart and you are now my husband, but I beg to inform you that I like and prefer the name of Mr.

Smith, the best man; and, although I am your wife, I shall wear and honor the name of Smith instead of your name, Johnson. " Just what do you imagine the husband would say? The answer is obvious! I think I know what I would say: "J am just not going to have it that way. Just scratch my name off the license and put Mr. Smith's there. He can have my place!"

My friends, imagine this man's wife, of the supposed marriage, who is to "love, honor, and cherish" her husband, yet wearing and honoring the name of another man! Can you imagine what Christ thinks of those who are supposed to be married to Him, yet wearing and honoring the name of another, with human and sectarian names? Now, may I quote a scriptural reference to the marriage. I wish to emphasize a statement of John the Baptist.

### **John the Baptist — the Best Man**

According to John 3: 29, John the Baptist declared that Christ is the bridegroom and that he, John the Baptist, was the "friend of the bridegroom, " whom we call the "best man. " These are his words. Hear him! "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. "

Christ, the bridegroom, was soon to be married to the church, His bride. By this statement, John states emphatically that **Christ is the bridegroom**, while he, **John**, was only the **friend of the bridegroom**, the best man, so to speak; that **Christ would increase** while he, only the **friend of the bridegroom, would "decrease. "** Could it be right for one who is accepting Christ, becoming married to Him, to declare to the Lord, "Now, I love you and I am glad to have the honor of being your bride, but I prefer the name of John the

Baptist, your friend, the best man, therefore, I choose to wear and honor his name, John the Baptist, rather than yours—Christian. "

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Don't you know that it is displeasing to Christ for anyone to dishonor His name by wearing and honoring any human or sectarian name. The bride assumes and honors the name of **the** bridegroom—"Christ-ian". When we wear the name "Christian, " we honor the name of Christ. John the Baptist made it plain and evident that no one should entertain the **thought** of honoring his name, or any other name except the name of Christ.

### **Baptized Into Christ's Name**

The apostle Paul warned the members of the church in Corinth about sectarian and party names — denominationalized names:

"Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (I Cor. 1: 12, 13).

The conclusion from the inspired statements of the apostle is obvious. Christ was crucified for you, and not Apollos; therefore, **wear Christ's name**. You were baptized into the name of Christ, and not Paul; therefore, **honor Christ's name**. Christ is not divided; therefore, you should wear and honor the name of Christ only. Paul was an apostle, a great man of God, but no one should wear his name. Peter was an apostle, one to whom the Lord had given the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16: 18, 19), which were used on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) when the first sermon was preached by the apostle, which resulted in 3, 000 souls becoming spiritually married to Christ, but it was wrong for them to wear and honor the name of Peter, or Cephas.

Christ was crucified for you; you were **baptized into the name of Christ; therefore, wear the name of Christ**, and not Peter, Paul, Apollos, Luther, nor Campbell. No man, method, doctrine or institution of human origin is worthy of the name of Christ! Human, party and sectarian names are divisive. Christ is not divided, therefore, wear the non-divisive name of Christ, "Christian. " These are scriptural, inevitable conclusions! The name "**Christian**" is **non-denominational, non-divisive, God-given, and God-honored.**

### **Christian—Honorable Name**

The name Christian is an honorable name worthy of suffering and persecution for the name's sake, if need be. In I Peter 4: 16, the apostle declared, "If a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed: but let him glorify God on this behalf. " Notice, the apostle declared, "If any man suffer as a **Christian**, let him not be ashamed; but let him **glorify God in this name.** " Many of the early Christians suffered bitterly for the name of Christ; yet, they would not deny the name; rather, they suffered death to glorify the name.

According to history, Polycarp, a Christian during the days of the apostles, was burned at the stake with the name of Christ on his lips. When he was arrested for being a Christian he asked for an hour in which to pray, during which time his guards were so impressed with his faith and loyalty that they repented that they had been instrumental in holding him. Before taking him to the stake the Proconsul urged him, saying, "Swear, and I will release thee; reproach Christ. " The reply from Polycarp was, "Eighty and six years I have served Him, and He never once wronged me; how then shall I blaspheme my King, who hath saved me?" On his way to the stake he was heard to cry, "Hear my cry with boldness, **I AM A CHRISTIAN.** " As the scorching flames devoured his body, his unwavering faith superseded the

human agony of his flesh in flames. With his last breath this aged member of the Lord's church cried, "I am a Christian. " Oh, for that kind of faith and loyalty today!

#### Bond of Love

The bond of love should cause the bride to be loyal and devoted to Christ, never to forget the bride's attire. Only such love and true fidelity could have characterized such men as Polycarp, as he died at the stake with the name of Christ on his lips. True love is the foundation rock upon which this spiritual marriage relationship between Christ and His church exists. Surely, there can be no doubt about Christ's love for His church.

Christ loved the church sufficiently to die for it. He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15: 13).

Of this marriage and Christ's love for the church, Paul wrote: "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it... For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Eph. 5: 25, 29).

If we, members of the Lord's church, love and trust Christ to whom we are spiritually married, then we will obey Him, motivated by love. Jesus declared:

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love" (John 15: 9, 10). The apostle John wrote: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5: 3).

To cease to love Christ and obey His commandments is to forget the bride's attire.

## Bride's Garments Defiled—Adultery

Our Lord wishes to "present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5: 27). But how often the bride has forgotten her attire! Many times the wedding vows have been broken, the wedding garments have been stained and spotted by sin, and a state of spiritual adultery exists. Worldliness and ungodliness in the church is nothing short of spiritual adultery. Like Israel, Christ's bride has often forgotten her attire and "played the harlot with many lovers. "

The inspired apostle wrote:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2: 15).

James declared that those who forget the "bride's attire" may be living in spiritual adultery. Hear him! Are you listening?

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4: 4).

Worldliness, ungodliness and unrighteousness characterize the lives of many who profess to be Christians. Drunkenness, fornication, adultery and revelling (dancing) have almost become a standard in our modern society, but members of the Lord's church, guilty of the "works of the flesh, " have defiled their wedding garments and are living in spiritual adultery.

The inspired apostle warned:

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath

strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5: 19-21).

#### Alienation of Affections

The apostle Paul warned the elders of the church of the Lord in Ephesus that there would be an alienation of love, devotion and loyalty to Christ. He said:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20: 28-30).

The Lord sent a message to the church in Ephesus, stating: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2: 4, 5).

The bride forgot her attire and left her "first love. " She fell; she was alienated from Christ. It was necessary that she "remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, " otherwise Christ will "remove thy candlestick" (Rev. 2: 5).

Fellowship between Christ and His church, His bride, must be compatible. The love of Christ for His bride can never be questioned, but the lack of love and fidelity of members of the church to Christ may cause alienation. The church at Laodicea had become "rich" and complacent,

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"lukewarm" and nauseating. As a result, Christ said, "I will spew thee out of my mouth"; they were rejected by the Lord. Christ is revealed as being on the outside of His church. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, " He said. Forgiveness may be obtained by the penitent members of the church who will open "thine eyes that thou mayest see, " and "clothe thyself in white garments. " His admonition was: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent. He that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne... " (Rev. 3: 19, 21). Many husbands and wives have wrecked their homes and wrecked their lives because of unfaithfulness and disloyalty, but the greatest wreck of all is a "shipwreck faith" of a member of the Lord's church, who has alienated himself from Christ so much that he has become a servant of Satan (1 Tim. 1: 19-20).

Worldliness, ungodliness, unrighteousness, and false doctrines have caused alienation of affections and infidelity on the part of many members of the Lord's church, the bride of Christ.

Concerning those who have become alienated from Christ, the apostle Peter wrote:

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them"(2 Peter 2: 20, 21).

It is most encouraging to know that even if a part of the church does become alienated from Christ, having forgotten the bride's attire, the individual Christian may remain loyal



and devoted to the Lord, with the promise of eternal life in heaven.

The Lord sent a message to the church at Sardis saying: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev. 3: 4-5).

### Worship

The bride's attire must not be forgotten in worship. Christians must completely adorn themselves in doctrine and practice, lest we forget:

**LORD'S SUPPER:** Christ admonished His bride not to forget Him. The observance of the Lord's supper is a memorial of the supreme sacrifice of all the ages. Of this communion of the body and the blood of Christ, Jesus commanded: "This do in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 10: 16; 11: 24, 25).

The first day of the week, the Lord's day, is a day when Christ and Christians meet in worship and fellowship. Read Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2; Heb. 10: 25; Matt. 18: 20.

**SINGING:** The matter of "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, " (Eph. 5: 19) is a most profitable spiritual exercise.

"I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Cor. 14: 15).

"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee, " inspiration revealed (Heb. 2: 12).

It will be observed that the doctrine of Christ, with

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which the bride is adorned, includes singing and not the playing of mechanical instruments of music in worship. To abide not in the doctrine of Christ is to worship without God; "**Hath not God**" was the solemn pronouncement of the apostle John (II John 9).

PRAYER, TEACHING, AND GIVING: The early Christians did not forget the bride's attire: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2: 42). Christians today cannot afford to forget the bride's attire!

### **Christ's Return for His Bride**

Ladies and gentlemen, some day the Lord Jesus Christ shall return for His bride, the church. What about the wedding garments? Are they clean, sanctified, and without spot? May I refer to the presumed marriage again?

Suppose the husband says to the bride, "It is needful that I go to another country to prepare a home for you. While I'm gone, be loyal and faithful to me for I shall return to take you to our new home. " Suppose when the husband returns for his bride, he finds that she has been unfaithful; she has left her first love; the wedding garments are defiled; his bride is living in adultery with another man. Do you think the husband would say to his bride, "Although you have been unfaithful to me and you are now living in adultery, I shall take you to the new home I prepared, anyway?" No, surely not!

Let me tell you, beloved, Christ promised that He was going to prepare mansions for His bride (John 14: 1-3). Time and time again He has admonished loyalty and faithfulness until He comes again. But, the sad and regretful fact must be that when our Lord returns He will find that many have denied the faith, left their first love, and defiled their

wedding garments.

No doubt, when the Lord returns He will find many members of His church living in spiritual adultery, having joined themselves with bodies — religious denominational bodies — which are not the Lord's church; wearing and honoring names not the Lord's name, and living in sin and unrighteousness. Do you think, for one moment, that Christ will just overlook all such infidelity and give the unfaithful members of the church mansions in heaven, the same as may be expected by those loyal and faithful Christians? There is but one answer. For the unfaithful, the doom will be an eternity of punishment in hell where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 13: 41, 42).

To those faithful members of His church will be the welcome, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25: 34). The foundation hope of the Christian's life is the second coming of Christ. Without His second coming, the first advent would be meaningless. He will return for His bride! Is the bride adorned and prepared for his coming?

Don't forget! "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number" (Jer. 2: 32). Men and nations that forget God shall be "turned into hell" (Psa. 9: 17).

Let not the bride forget her attire!

## THE LORD'S DAY OR SABBATH—No. 1

Ladies and gentlemen, does the Lord's day mean anything to you? What is the difference in the Lord's day and the Sabbath? The Lord's day is the first day of the week, not the seventh, or Sabbath. Referring to the Lord's day as the "Sabbath" is a mistake. Sunday, the first day of the week, is the Lord's day. Saturday, the seventh day of the week, was the sabbath day. The question: are Christians to observe the Lord's day, or the Sabbath day?

### Sabbath, Day of Rest

It is affirmed that God finished His work and rested on the seventh day, the Sabbath, therefore, we should observe the Sabbath and not the Lord's day. Genesis 2: 3, we are told, should be our example.

Although God did finish His work of creation and "rested" on the sabbath, having "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, " it was not until 2500 years later that the Sabbath day was dedicated and set apart, sanctified, as a holy day -of worship and service. It was then God appointed the Sabbath as a day of rest for the children of Israel, **after** their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. Previous to this time, there is no Biblical record of any man on earth observing the Sabbath for any purpose. What God did is one thing. What man is to do, as commanded by God, is another thing!

The Sabbath was not given for the Jews to observe because God finished His work and rested on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was given to be observed by the **Jews only**, in memory of **their deliverance** from the bondage of Egypt (Deut. 5: 15).

### The Sabbath and the Law

The word "sabbath" occurs for the first time in the Bible in Exodus 16: 22, 23:

"And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord.. "

Moses did not command the Jews then to continue an observance of the Sabbath. This was a new observance. His detailed instructions in verses 23 through 26 of Exodus 16 are evidence that this was a new experience for the Israelites. This order was given, evidently, in anticipation of the law, which was to be given at Mount Sinai, including the ten commandments, the fourth of which was: "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy... " (Exodus 20: 8-11).

The sabbath law was not given unto the Israelites until after their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The law containing the observance of the Sabbath was given at Sinai: "Thou earnest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments and madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandest them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant" (Nehemiah 9: 13, 14). It should be observed that it was made "known unto them thy holy sabbath" in the giving of the Law.

The ten commandments, including, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy, " were given to the Jews, who had been delivered from Egyptian bondage. God said: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exodus 20: 2).

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### For Jews Only

This law was not intended for anyone else. The Jews were to "Remember the sabbath" in memory of **their deliverance** from Egyptian servitude: "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (Deut. 5: 15).

**WHO** was commanded to keep the Sabbath? The **Jew** who was a "**servant in the land of Egypt.** " **WHY** were they commanded to keep the Sabbath? "**That thou shalt remember... thy God brought thee thence** through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded **thee to keep the sabbath.** "

Question: Are those who contend that the Sabbath should be observed today, rather than the Lord's day, all Jews? Do men today keep the Sabbath **in memory of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage?** Moses declared to those Jews that the **law** commanding their observance of the Sabbath **was not given even to their fathers, but to them.** Hear him in Deut. 5: 2, 3: "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. " Suppose we ask those who contend that we are to observe the Sabbath and other statutes of the Old Law, were **you** among the "**us**" with **Moses, when he declared, "Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day"?**

### Do Not Keep Sabbath

Those who advocate that the Sabbath should be observed today, do not observe the Sabbath.

When God commanded the Jews, who had been delivered from Egyptian bondage, to keep the Sabbath, He

said: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. " The emphasis is on "keep it holy", not just to "remember" the seventh day. Just to "remember" the sabbath without obedient action to "keep it" would be of no value. Furthermore, not to "keep" it would be a violation of specific order from God. The purpose of remembering the sabbath was to be sure of keeping the sabbath.

Keeping the sabbath necessitated burnt offerings and sacrifices:

"And on the sabbath day two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof: This is the burnt offering of every sabbath, beside the continual burnt offering and his drink offering" (Numbers 28: 9, 10). Where are the "burnt offerings" and sacrifices of those who presume to "keep" the sabbath today?

Concerning **keeping** the **Sabbath**, God said: "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates" (Ex. 20: 10). No work of any kind by anyone, not even an animal, was permitted on the Sabbath. Those who were commanded to observe the Sabbath could not even build a fire on that day: "Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitation upon the Sabbath day" (Ex. 35: 3). The penalty of disobeying the command to **"keep the sabbath"** and refrain from work was death: "Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death" (Ex. 25: 2; 31: 15). In Numbers 15: 32-36, it is recorded that **"a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day"** was stoned to death by order of God.

Where is the person who does **"keep the Sabbath"** today? Have you heard of anyone being put to death because he didn't **"keep the Sabbath,** " having worked or "gathered

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sticks upon the Sabbath day"? Is it not rather strange that those who seek to bind the Sabbath upon men today must admit they do not "keep the Sabbath" themselves? Observance of the Sabbath day, as originally commanded of the Jews by God, could hardly be found today among those who presume to keep the Sabbath instead of the Lord's day!

### Sabbath Observance To Cease

According to Heb. 8: 8-13, the law of Moses, including the observance of the Sabbath, was to pass away and a new law be given instead — the law of Christ, the New Testament,

The apostle quoted the prophet: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them forth out of Egypt. "

God said, "I will make a new covenant. " The apostle concluded, verse 13, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away. " God said nothing about only a part of the law being put away. Christ declared, on the contrary, "One jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled. " The Old Law was supplanted by the New Law. The old Sabbath, the seventh day, was supplanted by the Lord's day, the first day of the week.

My friends, there can be no doubt that the sabbath law was abrogated by reason of the death of Jesus on the cross. The law, including the Sabbath, was abolished. The inspired apostle Paul wrote:

"And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the



reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ" (2 Cor. 3: 13, 14).

Again, the apostle wrote: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace" (Eph. 2: 14, 15).

Furthermore, the apostle declared: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2: 14).

There can be no doubt about it. Paul concludes that the Old Law, containing ordinances and commandments, **including the Sabbath**, which was a "partition" between Jew and Gentile, was abolished in the death of Christ.

### **Change of Priesthood, Change of Law**

With the change of the priesthood, Christ having become the "priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, " which was "a disannulling of the commandment going before" (Heb. 7: 17, 18), there was the necessity of the change of the law. The **old law** was removed and a **new law** was instituted. The inspired apostle unmistakably affirmed: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7: 12).

Is it not strange that those who contend for observance of the Old Law do not attempt to maintain the Jewish priesthood order, as was practiced under the Old Law? Remember, the Bible says:

**"For the priesthood being changed there is made of necessity a change also of the law. "**

The inspired author of Heb. 10: 9, 10 made the strong affirmation that the first covenant, the Old Law, was

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removed in favor of the second covenant, the New Testament:

"He **taketh away the first, that** he may **establish the second.** By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all. "

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? The annulment of the decalogue, "the tables of the covenant, " was the abolishment of the sabbath law. The annulment was effected through Christ:

"Then verily the **first covenant** had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary... And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the Covenant" (Heb. 9: 1, 3, 4).

The abolishment of the law, the "**first covenant,** " was removal of everything in that Covenant, the "**tables of the Covenant,** " on which were written the ten commandments, including the **sabbath law.** The **Sabbath,** therefore, **is no part of the "second"** covenant, the New Testament law, by which all men are governed since the death of Christ and the "change of the priesthood. "

### Objections

Sabbatarians offer several objections to the New Testament teaching that the Lord's day is to be observed rather than the Sabbath day of Old Testament times.

Objection 1: The Sabbath was to be perpetual because the prophet declared, "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me saith Jehovah" (Isa. 66: 23).

That which proves too much proves too little! This is a

misunderstanding of the prophet. If the Sabbath is to be perpetual, according to this verse, then the feast of the new moon is to be perpetual. The Sabbatarians reject the feast of the new moon. What inconsistency!

The New Testament forbids "new moon" and "sabbath days" worship:

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days" (Col. 2: 16).

The inspired apostle concluded that the feast days and sabbath day worship was "a shadow of things to come." Christians are not to walk in the shadows but to walk in the marvelous light of the New Testament truth! Furthermore, if the law, including the observance of the Sabbath, was for a **perpetual** covenant, as expressed in Exodus 31: 16, so was **the priesthood for a perpetual covenant**, as stated in Exodus 40: 15. Why not observe the priesthood order as a perpetual law?

Let us consider Exodus 31: 16: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant." God **did not** say that this law was to be a perpetual law **throughout all generations**, for all time, but **He did declare** that it was to be through "**their generations**," meaning as long as the Jewish economy was in force.

Not a statement in all the New Testament can be found where Christ or His apostles ever commanded, or intimated, **that** Christians should meet on the Sabbath day. Christ gave a new day, the Lord's day, the first day of the week, to be observed by Christians! Those who contend for Sabbath observance have not been thoroughly converted to Christ. They live in the smoke of the city of Babylon, who observe the seventh day in memory of creation instead of the first

day in memory of the resurrection.

Objection 2: Christ kept the Sabbath (Luke 4: 14-16). It is true that Christ observed the Sabbath, but not as an example for us to follow today. He was "born under the law" (Gal. 4: 4) and kept the law, which was in force until His death. He observed more than the Sabbath. Jesus was also circumcised, Luke 2: 21, and kept the passover. If Sabbath observance is required of Christians, by reason of Christ's observance of the Sabbath, then Christians must be circumcised and they must keep the passover feast. This is a false conclusion!

Objection 3: The New Testament commands Sabbath observance in the words: "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb. 4: 9). This is another misunderstanding of God's word. The context clearly reveals that the "sabbath" referred to in the text is the heavenly rest contemplated by Christians. This text, Heb. 4: 1-11, mentions the heavenly rest eight times and in no way refers to Sabbath observance. The apostle declared:

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his **rest**, any of you should seem to come short of it... There remaineth therefore a **rest** to the people of God. For he that is entered into his **rest**, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. "

Let us be sure that we do not fail to enter into that heavenly **rest** because of unbelief.

## THE LORD'S DAY OR SABBATH - No. 2

Ladies and gentlemen, we continue the subject, "The Lord's Day or Sabbath. " We continue our consideration of some objections.

Objection 4: It is affirmed that Paul preached on the Sabbath (Acts 13: 14-44, 16: 13, 14), therefore, a New Testament example for observance of the Sabbath.

It should be understood that Paul did preach on the Sabbath in the synagogues, because the Jews, whom he wished to convert from the Old Law to the New Testament, from Moses to Christ, were gathered in the synagogues on the Sabbath. He took advantage of the opportunity to preach the **gospel of Christ** to them, and **not the commandments of the Old Law**. In fact, the doctrine of Christ which he preached to them was in conflict with the Old Law, which the Jews accepted: "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming" (Acts 13: 45). The doctrine and practice of Paul obviously was in conflict with observance of the Old Law, including the Sabbath day as a day of worship, because many of the Jews violently opposed Paul, even "Crying, these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also... " (Acts 17: 6).

Paul's preaching the gospel to the Jews on Saturday did not mean that he was observing the Sabbath as a day of worship, any more than preaching the gospel on Friday would mean that he was observing Friday as a holy day. Paul preached the gospel of the New Testament every day in some places. For two years he taught daily "in the school of one Tyranus" (Acts 19: 9).

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Objection 5: There is a distinction between the "moral law," the decalogue, and the "ceremonial law." The ceremonial law was the law "against us" and "contrary to us." The ten commandments, the "moral law," were never "against us" nor "contrary to us," therefore, were not removed.

This contention is a perversion of Bible teaching. The Bible knows nothing about two laws, such as "moral law" and "ceremonial law." It was one law. In II Chron. 31: 3, it is revealed that the so-called "**ceremonial law**" was a part of the law of the Lord: "for the burnt offerings, to wit, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the **law of the Lord.**"

Malachi declared: "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, **with the statutes and judgments**" (Mai. 4: 4).

The "**Book of the Law**," deposited in the receptacle by the side of the ark, quotes the ten commandments twice. Read Exodus 20: 1-17 and Deut. 5: 6-22.

The "law of the Lord" contained both the, so-called, "moral law" and "ceremonial law" (II Chron. 31: 3; Lev. 19: 1-37; Matt. 26: 36-40). Moral conditions and principles are holy within themselves. Ceremonial things are made holy by reason of commandment (Mark 2: 27). "Remember the sabbath day, (the seventh day of the week—V. E. H. ) to keep it holy" was a part of "ceremonial law" made so by commandment (Exodus 20: 8).

The **law**, **all** the law, including all the Pentateuch, not just a "ceremonial" law, was nailed to the cross (Eph. 2: 11-16; Col. 2: 14-17; Heb. 10: 9; Rom. 6: 14; Rom. 7: 1-7; Gal. 3: 23-25; Heb. 7: 11, 12).

Objection 6: Christians are taught to obey the ten

commandments by James: "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law" (James 2: 8-11).

My friends, this text does not even suggest obedience to the Old Law. The "royal law" was not the decalogue or binding upon Christians. The conscience of all men, since the death of Christ, is to be regulated by the "perfect law of liberty" (James 1: 25). James' reference to the "royal law, " with quotation from Leviticus 19: 18, and his reference to the command from the Old Law were cited to emphasize the importance of obeying all the teaching of the gospel of Christ, the New Testament law, by which we are going to be judged. His conclusion was: "So speak ye, and do so, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2: 12). The commandments, referred to by the apostle, obviously are a part of the "perfect law of liberty. " The command, "Remember the sabbath, " is no part of the "law of liberty. "

Objection 7: The fallible authority of man, by the edict of Emperor Constantine, in 321 A. D., is responsible for changing the Sabbath, Saturday, to Sunday, as a day of worship.

This objection is stated in total disregard to the teaching of the New Testament, 300 years before Constantine was born, which reveals the "first day, " the "Lord's day, " as a day of worship (Acts 20: 7; I Cor. 16: 1, 2; Rev. 1: 10).

Objection 8: If the ten commandments, including: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy, " is no longer

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binding on the conscience of men, then, neither are the other commandments binding on men.

This objection is evidence of lack of understanding of the New Testament law. All the principles of the commandments of the Old Law, the ten commandments, except the command: "Remember the sabbath day, " are included as a corporate part of the New Testament. For example:

1. First Covenant: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20: 3).

New Testament: "That ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things therein" (Acts 14: 15).

"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many, ) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by him" (I Cor. 8: 5, 6).

2. First Covenant: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image... Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them... " (Exodus 20: 4, 5).

New Testament: "Little children keep yourselves from idols" (I John 5: 21). "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one" (I Cor. 8: 4).

3. First Covenant: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" (Exodus 20: 7).

New Testament: "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation" (James 5: 12). "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt.



12: 36, 37).

4. **First Covenant:** "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20: 8).

**New Testament:** There is **no command, precept, nor example in the New Testament law for man to keep the Sabbath.** This **command** was **entirely omitted** in the **new covenant of Christ.** The **Lord's day, the first day of the week,** was **given to be observed,** (Acts 20: 7).

5. **First Covenant:** "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20: 12).

**New Testament:** "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Eph. 6: 1).

6. **First Covenant:** "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20: 13).

**New Testament:** "Let none of you suffer as a murderer" (I Peter 4: 15).

7. **First Covenant:** "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20: 14).

**New Testament:** "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers... shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6: 9, 10).

8. **First Covenant:** "Thou shalt not steal".

**New Testament:** "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good" (Eph. 4: 28).

9. **First Covenant:** "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" (Exodus 20: 16).

**New Testament:** "Lie not one to another" (Col. 3: 9). "And all liars shall have their **part** in the lake which **burneth** with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21: 8).

10. **First Covenant:** "Thou shalt not covet. "

**New Testament:** "Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit

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the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6: 10). "Covetousness, let it not be named among you" (Eph. 5: 3).

These commandments of the New Testament law are to be observed **because they are commandments of the new covenant** instituted by Christ. The **nine commandments** of the **first covenant** were **included** in the **New Testament** because they are divine principles of righteousness, justice, and Godliness. The other command, "Remember the sabbath day, " in no way relates to man and his relationship to God, or his fellowman today. That command was given only to the Jews to be kept in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Deut. 5: 15).

It should always be remembered: "**Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law...** " (Rom. 3: 19). The law was given to the Jews only, before Christ and the New Testament law.

### **The Lord's Day**

Ladies and gentlemen, man is by nature a worshipping creature. The God of all creation, the God of heaven and earth and all things therein, created man with the sensibility of a supreme being, with a nature to worship. The spirit of worship is a divinely created attribute, inborn in every normal human being. The sense of God's presence in the world dwells in the soul of man.

The Lord's day is a day of worship. In the 20th chapter of Acts we have an approved example of the church engaging in worship to Almighty God on the Lord's day, the first day of the week.

It has been said that the character of our lives is made or marred by the manner in which we spend our leisure time. This principle certainly applies to the manner of observing the Lord's day, although the Lord's day is not a day of

leisure to the Christian. It is a day of worship and service.

This does not mean that one can live a life of neglect during the other six days of the week, then presume to honor God on the Lord's day. A one-day religion is the devil's religion. If one serves the devil six days a week, he will also serve him seven days a week. God does not accept a divided service. There are no part-time Christians! Either one serves God, or Satan! God will not accept only one day out of seven. We should be devoted in our religion every day of the week. However, the Lord's day is a special day set aside by Christ the Lord, Himself, for worship and communion.

The first day of the week, divinely appointed, is **appropriately called the Lord's day**. It was on the first day of the week that our Lord arose from the grave (Luke 24: 1-8). Surely no other day would have been worthy of such distinction as being called the Lord's day! It was the day of triumphant victory over death—resurrection day; the greatest day in world history! It was the day on which he appeared to his disciples by infallible proofs (John 20: 1, 19, 26). It was the day of the sending of the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth.

The Lord's day was the day of the beginning of the church of Christ (Acts 2: 1-47). The "day of Pentecost" always came on the first day of the week, as revealed in Lev. 23: 15, 16.

### **Lord's Day and Lord's Supper**

Christ instituted the Lord's Supper to be observed by His disciples (Matt. 26: 26-28; ! Cor. 11: 23-29). No other day would be more appropriate for observance of the Lord's death than the Lord's day, the first day of the week. So important was the matter that Paul "tarried seven days" in Troas that he might worship with the Christians and commune with the Lord's body and blood through the Lord's

Supper on the "first day of the week" (Acts 20: 6, 7).

Paul "tarried seven days" in Troas. The **Sabbath** day passed by and there is no evidence that Paul, nor the other Christians there, in any way, thought of remembering the "sabbath day to keep it holy. " It is obvious, however, that they did remain seven days to worship on the "first day of the week. "

The commemoration of the Lord's death on the first day of the week is, in all probability, the reason for Paul's solemn injunction to the Hebrews in Heb. 10: 25-27, when he wrote, "Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much more, as ye see the day drawing nigh. "

The apostle John, while in prison, honored and respected the Lord's day. He declared: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1: 10).

The Lord's day was the beginning of the mediatorship between God and man; the day the new covenant had its operative beginning. It was the day that forgiveness of sins was first announced in the name of Christ (Luke 24: 46-49; Acts, 2nd Chapter). It is a day that should be kept and observed in reverence and hallowed memory.

### **Purpose of Lord's Day**

The purpose of the Lord's day is for our edification and spiritual growth. On one occasion Jesus declared that the "sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mark 2: 27, 28). By this, it was understood that the Sabbath, with its divinely appointed exercises, was an agency for human good while in effect. Man was to make the day minister to his higher and more exalted needs. Therefore, as the **Hebrews** observed the **sabbath in memory of their freedom from physical servitude**, **Christians**, throughout the world, in every nation, of every color and tongue, **regard the**

first day of the week as the Lord's day, and observe it as a memorial of their spiritual emancipation and in memory of a crucified Saviour, who died and made atonement with His blood that this freedom might be gained!

#### Day of Inspiration and Service

Hear it, my friends! Are you listening? The Lord's day, the first day of the week, is a spiritual feast day for Christians. It is a time when Christ and Christians meet around the Lord's table; a time when Christians commemorate the death and sufferings of our Lord by partaking of the Lord's Supper in communion with His body and His blood (Acts 20: 7, 1 Cor. 11: 23, 29).

In his statement to the church at Corinth, regarding the Lord's Supper, the apostle quoted Christ as saying, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come. " Surely, Christians should desire to meet and engage in communion of the body and the blood of the Lord "as often" as the Lord appointed, and that is every first day of the week to be continued in proclaiming His death "till he come. "

The Lord's day is the day of public assembly to worship God when Christians give of their material means for the cause of the Lord (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2). The early Christians "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers" (Acts 2: 42).

#### Sunday Sickness

It is incredible how little the world regards the Lord's day. But, still more incredible that so many professed Christians forsake the Lord on the Lord's day.

Friends, have you heard of this dreadful disease that is so contagious among members of the church? It is called "Morbus Sabbaticus, " described as follows:

"Morbus Sabbaticus, or Sunday sickness, is a disease peculiar to church members. The attack comes suddenly on Sunday; no symptoms are felt on Saturday night; the patient sleeps well and wakes feeling well, eats a hearty breakfast, but about church time the attack comes on and continues till services are over for the morning. Then the patient feels easy and much better, and is able to take a walk, talk about politics and read the Sunday papers. He eats a hearty supper, but about church time he has another attack, and stays home. He retires early, sleeps well and wakes up Monday morning refreshed and able to go to work, and does not have any symptoms of the disease until the following Sunday. The peculiar features are as follows: (1) It always attacks members of the church. (2) It never makes its appearance except on Sunday. (3) The symptoms vary, but they never interfere with the sleep or appetite of the patient. (4) It never lasts more than twenty-four hours, or just over the Lord's day. (5) It generally attacks the head of the family. (6) No physician is ever called in to see the patient. (7) It always proves fatal in the end — to the soul. (8) No remedy is known for it except prayer and fidelity, but the patient refuses that. (9) Pure religion is the antidote. (10) It is becoming fearfully prevalent among men, sweeping thousands every year prematurely to destruction and to hell. "

What are your attitudes toward the Lord's day? Are you spiritually sick?

Let us regularly observe the first day of the week, as an apostolic practice, authorized by the God of heaven. It is not to be observed as a day of rest, but as a day of worship, a day of inspiration and great religious activity. The first day of the week is the Lord's day! Is it the Lord's day for you?

### Lord's Day Perverted

The Lord's day is often exchanged for Father's Day, Mother's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Kids' Day, Dog Show Day, Hog Calling Day, Fishing Day, Reunion Day, Day-off Day, Wedding Anniversary Day, Entertain Kinfolk Day and My Day of Rest Day. Some excuses for perverting the Lord's day may include "Bible" excuses:

"I Have Bought a Field" Day—excuse please!

"I Have Bought a Yoke of Oxen" Day—"pray thee have me excused. "

"I Have Married a Wife" Day—"I cannot come" (Luke 14: 16-24). What do you think about that? Never happened before since the world began—"I married a wife"! Bless my lonely heart! Christ declared that those who made such inexcusable excuses "were not worthy. " Such speech-making (excuses) will be over some day. When the excuse-maker stands before the King, he will be "speechless" (Matt. 22: 2-12).

It is not difficult to see that many people today have "no time" for the Lord's Day.

Are you faithfully observing the Lord's day, or is it just another day in the week? Are you a member of the church, yet absent yourself from the house of the Lord on the Lord's day? How could one be so careless and indifferent as to deny himself of one of the greatest privileges we have, the freedom of assembly, as Christians, to meet the Lord in worship and communion?

Christ has never forsaken a meeting of Christians — "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them" (Matt. 18: 20). No doubt, thousands often forsake the Lord on the Lord's day. Have you ever forsaken the Lord?

## **THE LORD'S SUPPER—No. 1**

Greetings, my friends. Does the Lord's supper mean anything to you? What is the Lord's supper? The Lord's supper is a monument, a commemoration, a communion. To many people it is seemingly a small thing, but may I remind you, "despise not the day of small things. " When Balboa, the Spanish commander, discovered the Pacific Ocean he took from his pocket a soiled, worn banner and waved it over the water claiming all the land it touched, a seemingly insignificant thing, but meaningful.

In making a covenant with man, God usually left some token, sign, or monument of his promise and seal of contract. For example, in the Old Testament we have record of the brazen serpent, the rainbow, the passover, the feast of the tabernacles, and others.

### **The Lord's Supper — A Monument**

In the New Testament we have the Lord's supper, instituted by Jesus himself, and given to us as a monument. In Washington one may look upon Washington's monument with pride, in memory of the man who won American liberty. Should I ask, does he deserve it? The answer is obvious! But, does not Jesus Christ, the great deliverer of man's soul, deserve a monument? It was He who bought our freedom with His own blood, by His sacrifice upon the cruel tree of the cross. He suffered and died that we might be delivered from the greatest oppression ever known, the yoke of sin. He did for man what man could not possibly do for himself! Surely, Christ is worthy of an everlasting monument, a memory to be cherished and faithfully observed!

### **Worship**

The Lord's supper is a part of worship, a communion of



the body and blood of our Lord, to be observed on the Lord's day. True worship is designed to recognize and set forth the worthiness and honor of the object, or person, to which it is addressed. Man is so made that he recognized God in his inmost soul. It is only the fool, the abnormal, the perverted man, who "Hath said in his heart there is no God, " as declared by David! Christian worship is designed to show the worth of the Christian's God, and to show the esteem and honor of Christ to the Christian's soul. Respect of Christ's will and sincere worship, therefore, will declare one's estimation of his worth to the soul. What is He worth to your soul?

Memorial institutions have a double purpose. Both sacred and secular memorials are commemorative and declarative. They bring their message from the past and declare them to the present! In partaking of the Lord's supper we commemorate His death and suffering, the past, and proclaim holy services and divine fellowship until He comes again, the present.

### **Divine Origin**

Ladies and gentlemen, the Lord's supper is of divine origin, instituted by Christ, our Lord. In the very shadow of the cross, the night on which He was betrayed, recorded in Matthew 26: 26-28, "Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. " The cup and the loaf are perpetual witnesses to the sacrifice on Calvary, as the foundation of human hope. The purchase price of our redemption was the great sacrifice of the body of the Son of God and the pouring out of His blood for our redemption.

### A Communion

The Lord's supper is a communion of the body and the blood of our Lord. In 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17 Paul wrote: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. " It should be observed, however, that by no power of logic, or imagination, could one deduct from the scriptures that any man, priest, preacher, or otherwise, can, by special blessing, cause the fruit of the vine to be turned into the literal blood of Christ and the bread be turned into the literal body of Christ, as claimed by the ecclesiasticism of Rome.

### Transubstantiation

The Roman Catholic church introduced the doctrine of transubstantiation some one thousand years after the church of Christ was established. This false doctrine affirms, as pronounced in the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Sess. XIII:

"In the Eucharist are contained truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently, the whole Christ" (Canon 1). "The whole substance of the bread is converted into the body and the whole substance of the wine into the blood" (Canon 2).

The Catholic Church claims that through the officiating "act of the priest, " who "places the body and blood of Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine upon the altar, " the priest prevails upon God to turn the bread into the literal body of Jesus Christ and the wine into the literal blood of the Lord. The priest "makes an oblation of this victim to the Eternal Father on behalf of the people, and the victim undergoes a destructive change... " (Roman Missal, P. 9).

"Not only is it the true body of Christ, to wit: All that is proper to the human body - the bones, the nerves, contained in the sacrament — but farther, Jesus Christ, whole and entire. "

It is, indeed, incredible that men would dare pervert the Lord's supper into such a mockery of God! Intelligent men and women are taught to believe and accept, without question, that Jesus Christ our Lord, body and blood, **flesh, bones, and nerves**, the whole human body, is eaten by the priest; that the identical human body of Christ, whole and complete, is produced in a wafer of bread and a glass of wine by a weak and unworthy man, called a priest; while at the same time of the eating of the body of Christ by the priest, the identical body and person of Christ is in heaven!

By this ritual the priest creates his own God, through a "Propitiatory offering, " kills him for sacrificial offering, eats him, and offers him for the sins of the people! That is **"transubstantiation, " not the Lord's supper!**

Surely, when Jesus said, "This is my body" and "this is my blood" he employed symbolic language. It should also be remembered that Christ said, "I am the door" (John 10: 9), but obviously not a literal door. He also referred to himself as "the good shepherd" and his disciples as "sheep" (John 10: 14). It is absurd to attempt to place literal interpretations upon symbolic language. The bread and the fruit of the vine are emblematic of the body and blood of our Lord. The Lord's supper is a communion of the body and the blood of Christ. "Transubstantiation" is a preposterous figment of man's imagination!

### **Self Examination**

My friends, what must be the attitude of those who would observe the Lord's supper? This observance calls for self-examination, not only of outward conduct, but of

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inward conscience as well. God requires that we worship Him in spirit and truth, in true character. The self of the worshipper is part of the worship. Our life is back of our worship. Our praise, our prayers, and our communion with the Lord do not rise above the level of our daily living. Worship is holy. The character of the worshipper must, therefore, be holy. The principle is clearly set forth by the prophet of God in his declaration to the people of Israel.

Apparently everything in Israel was as it should be; their creed was orthodox, their profession was enthusiastic, and their worship regular; but, upon investigation, the prophet found that their daily life was wretched! They measured with short yard-sticks, weighed with false balances, and sold with small bushel measure. Upon this discovery, the prophet stood before them when they assembled to worship and startled them with the charge that because of their false life their worship was an abomination to the holy God.

To commune with the Lord, by partaking of the Lord's supper, one must be of such character that God will accept his worship. Perhaps if more preachers today would declare to the members of the church, as did the prophet of God to Israel, "because of your false life your worship is an abomination to the holy God, " more people would become awakened to the consciousness of their own sins and repent in order that they might worship God acceptably.

#### Fellowship

Beloved, to commune with Christ is to fellowship with Christ. The apostle John declared: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1: 6, 7).

The word, "fellowship, " in this text is from the same

Greek word which is translated "communion" in I Cor. 10: 16. To enjoy this fellowship and communion with the Lord one must be cleansed by the blood of Christ. To be cleansed by the blood of the Lord the child of God must continue to abide in the "truth" and "walk in the light, as he is in the light. " Walking in "truth" includes observance of the Lord's supper. Walking in the "light" includes a consecrated life of one whose character is a light shining in darkness, all of which combines into true communion and fellowship with the Lord. For one to forsake the assembly of Christians to observe the Lord's supper, in memory of His death, is to walk in darkness and be denied fellowship and communion with the Lord. A member of the Lord's church who willfully forsakes the Lord's supper is not in fellowship and communion with the Lord; and, he is not in fellowship with those Christians who do continue in fellowship and communion with the Lord.

### **Worthy Manner**

In Paul's writing to the church at Corinth, I Cor. 11: 27-29, he declared, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. " There is no worship in the mere "sounding of brass and tinkling of cymbals. " The fact that men and women merely go through the act of partaking of the Lord's supper is no assurance of their communion with Christ. This observance calls for self-examination and meditation. A person's heart must be right with God.

### **Meditation**

Except the soul is in reverence and meditation, it is vain

to eat the bread and drink the wine, presuming to commune with the Lord. It is sad to think that many people go through the formality of partaking of the Lord's supper, yet their spirit is far from a communion with the Lord. My friends, hear me! Are you listening? It seems that many people have little conception of the meaning of the Lord's supper. While actually eating of the bread and drinking of the cup, the spirit of man may be far removed from the scene on the cross, the supreme sacrifice for his soul.

When I was but a small boy, I received an impression that perhaps will never be erased. I was attending a denominational church that proposed to have the Lord's supper two or three times each year. It was obvious that many in the audience did not truly realize the significance of the communion. It was something that they seldom witnessed, as that church very seldom proposed to have the Lord's supper, and, no doubt, very little teaching had ever been given on the subject. It was shocking to me to see some members of that church break bread, as it was passed, roll it into a ball, and throw it at someone in the audience. A tragic thing!

Communion is not without meditation. It would hardly seem probable that one is engaged in communion with the body and blood of our Lord, although engaged in the act, while at the same time, playing with the baby, engaged in conversation, powdering the nose, flipping the pages of a hymnbook, or, thinking about: didn't like the preacher's sermon, the favorite TV football or baseball game, what for lunch? Or, thinking about a hundred and one other things, which would evidence a lack of meditation. It is hardly possible to engage in communion without sincere meditation! A person who presumes to partake of the Lord's supper without meditation and communion, "eateth and drinketh

damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (I Cor. 11: 29).

### Unity In Communion

In eating the Lord's supper there is the element of unity of body, unity of spirit, and unity of purpose. Of the communion Paul wrote:

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (I Cor. 10: 16, 17).

Christ had one physical body, which He sacrificed on the cross, the center of our communion, and He has **"one body,"** which is His church, one church. Read Eph. 1: 22, 23; 4: 4; Matt. 16: 18. Before His death, Jesus prayed fervently that all His disciples might be one. In the shadow of the cross and predawn of the time of man's greatest gift He prayed: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us..." (John 17: 21). When observing the Lord's supper, members of the "one body," in a true spirit of communion and fellowship, eat of the "one bread", a unity that should prevail in all spiritual matters authorized by the Lord. If this principle should prevail in all religious activities, ordained by Christ, religious divisions, denominationalism, would be eliminated.

The Spirit of God condemns division. (Read I Cor. 1: 10). The Lord's supper symbolizes unity. May unity prevail; not only on the Lord's day, around the Lord's table but every day in every way the Lord has commanded.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER - No. 2

### Lord's Supper On Lord's Day

Ladies and gentlemen, we continue our discussion of the Lord's Supper. When is the Lord's supper to be observed? There are those who contend that they are pleasing the Lord when they attempt to observe the Lord's supper only a very few times during the year. Jesus, our Lord, said, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11: 26). Surely, Christians should want to do this as often as is consistent with the Lord's will. How often are Christians to observe the Lord's supper?

According to the New Testament, the early Christians met each first day of the week, the Lord's day, and observed the Lord's supper. In Acts 20: 7, we read, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them... " Notice, they met on the **first day of the week** to break bread. Our worship today must be governed by precept and example of the New Testament.

According to Acts 2: 42 the early Christians were regular in meeting on the first day of the week to break bread—the Lord's supper. "And they continued steadfastly, in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers. "

But someone may suggest, "Did the early Christians meet on every first day of the week for the Lord's supper?" The answer is positively, "Yes!" "**The** first day of the week" is **every** first day of the week. The Jews, under the law of Moses, were taught to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" (Ex. 20: 8). Everyone understood that "**The** Sabbath" meant **every** Sabbath. Those who did not "remember" and



forgot to keep every Sabbath suffered severe punishment, even death, because of their disobedience to God. When Christians, under the new law, the New Testament, came together "upon the first day of the week to break bread, " they gathered together **every first day of the week. The** first day of the week is **every** first day of the week. It would be superfluous to say, "**The every** first day of the week. "

The early Christians met on the first day of the week for the Lord's supper. There is one first day in every week; that is how often Christians assembled for the Lord's supper.

### **Bible Scholars Agree**

Bible scholars of different denominations are in agreement that the early Christians met every Lord's day for the Lord's supper.

John Calvin, the great protestant reformer and founder of the Presbyterian church, declared, ("Calvin's Institutes, " Vol. 2, Chapter 4, Chapter 17, section 46, pages 580, 581): "And that custom which enjoins believers to communicate only once a year, is unquestionably an invention of the devil, whoever were the persons by whom it was introduced. " In the same reference Mr. Calvin declared, "A very different practice ought to have been pursued. At least once in every week the table of the Lord ought to have been spread before each congregation of Christians, and the promises to have been declared for their spiritual nourishment. "

Mr. Calvin, furthermore, concluded in the same reference, "I have sufficient reason for complaining that it was the artifice of the devil that introduced this custom, by which, by prescribing one day a year, renders men slothful **and** careless all the rest of the time. "

Hear it, my friends! Are you listening? There can be no doubt about it. Annual, quarterly, or monthly observance of the Lord's supper is the invention of man and not approved

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by the God of heaven!

Dr. Thomas Scott, of the Church of England, in his commentary, page 33, on Acts 20: 7, wrote, "breaking bread, or commemorating the death of Christ in the Eucharist, was one of the chief ends of their assembling, this ordinance seems to have been constantly administered every Lord's Day. " Many other quotations might be added.

### **Who Shall Commune?**

Citizens of the kingdom of Christ enjoy the duty and privilege of communion, since the Lord's table, the Lord's supper, is in the Lord's kingdom. Christ announced, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom... " (Luke 22: 29, 30).

The apostle Paul declared that "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ" (Col. 1: 2, 13) were in the kingdom. He furthermore affirmed that those in Christ were they who had obtained forgiveness of sins by virtue of the blood of Christ. Hear the apostle! Again I say, are you listening?

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1: 7).

Remission of sins is by virtue of the blood of Christ (Heb. 9: 22). The 3, 000 on Pentecost who obtained remission of sins were told: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins... " (Acts 2: 38). They were added to the Lord's church (Acts 2: 47; Acts 20: 28) and were made citizens of the kingdom of Christ where the Lord's supper is served (Col. 1: 2, 13; Eph. 1: 7; Luke 22: 29, 30).

### **Lord's Supper in Kingdom**

The Bible knows nothing about "close-communion, " or "open-communion. " The communion of the body and blood

of the Lord, by means of the Lord's supper, can only be experienced by those who are members of the Lord's church, citizens of the Lord's kingdom. Regardless of the sincerity of participants, members of institutions and organizations, which are not the Lord's church, cannot commune with Christ through the Lord's supper, even though they may, in all honesty and sincerity, eat "bread" and "drink of the fruit of the vine." The Lord's supper is only in the Lord's kingdom!

Christ told His disciples that He would drink of the fruit of the vine with them in His Father's kingdom (Matt. 26: 26-29). The kingdom of Christ is the church of Christ. To Peter, Christ declared: "upon this rock I will build my church..." and "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom..." (Matt. 16: 18, 19). The church is composed of those who are saved by the blood of Christ (Acts 20: 28). The kingdom is composed of those who are saved by the blood of Christ (Rev. 1: 5-6). One must be born again, "born of water and the Spirit" (John 3: 5), to be in the kingdom. Men and women who have not been born again are not in the Lord's kingdom! Only God's children, citizens of Christ's kingdom, can commune with the body and the blood of the Lord through the Lord's supper.

#### Lord's Supper Not A Common Meal

My friends, an attempt to make the Lord's supper a common meal is a perversion and corruption of spiritual worship. Such doctrine and practice constitutes heresy. To the Corinthian church Paul declared: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses

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to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God... " (I Cor. 11: 19-22).

To equate the Lord's supper with a common meal is a desecration of a holy service. The Lord's supper is a divinely appointed, momentous occasion, to be experienced by Christians. It is a communion of the body and the blood of the Lord (I Cor. 11: 23-25). A common feast, for any purpose, conducted by anyone, anywhere cannot compare to the Lord's supper. The purpose of the Lord's supper and the solemnity of the event, the fellowship with Christ assembled at the Lord's "table" in the Lord's kingdom (Matt. 26: 26-29; Luke 22: 29, 30), is incomparable to any supper, or feast of the richest king on earth. **If** it is the **Lord's** supper, it is **not** a common feast. If it is a common meal, it is **not** the Lord's supper.

#### **Remember Me**

The Lord's supper is to be observed in memory of Christ. We remember that He is the Son of God (Matt. 17: 5). We remember that He went about doing good. He performed great miracles to establish His identity as the Son of God (John 20: 30). We remember that He was betrayed into the hands of His enemies (Matt. 26: 47-56). We remember that He endured the humiliation of a mock trial. We remember that He was crucified on the cruel cross for our sins. We cannot forget His love for us, even as He expressed it, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15: 13). We remember His spirit of forgiveness as He prayed for His enemies, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23: 34). We remember the scenes of the cross. What agony! What suffering! What love! His body is pierced. His blood flows as atonement for our sins. We remember those moments when time, seemingly? stood still and our Lord cried to His Father, "My God, my

God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27: 46). We remember those moments when the earth did groan and tremble and the sun refused to shine upon the tragedy of all the ages. We remember those dying words of triumph and victory, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23: 46).

We remember His burial, His resurrection and His ascension to the Father in heaven (Luke 23: 50; Luke 24th chapter). Truly, the Lord's supper is to be observed, as He requested, "This do in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11: 23-29).

### **Proclaim His Death Till He Come**

The Lord's supper is a public proclamation. In retrospect, it is a proclamation of His death on the cruel cross of Calvary. Every week faithful Christians publicly proclaim their faith in the death, the burial, the resurrection, and the blood atonement for their redemption.

Prospective, the Lord's supper is a public proclamation of the Christian's faith in the Lord's promise of His second coming. The Lord's institution of the Supper, and His participation with Christians through communion, is a divine attestation of His second coming and the presentation of His kingdom to God, the Father, for eternal glory. Read very carefully Matthew 26: 26-29, the 14th and 16th chapters of the gospel of John, and I Cor. 15: 23, 24.

The second coming of Christ is equally important as His first advent. His birth and His death would be of little value were it not for His resurrection, ascension, and second coming. Question; How much do you believe in the Lord's death, His ascension, and His second coming? Your faithful observance, or lack of observance, of the Lord's supper is an inescapable mirror of your conscience and your faith in the Lord!

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Christians will be observing the Lord's supper when Christ returns. If He should return on the Lord's day, many faithful Christians will meet Him at their regular meeting place, where the Lord's supper is observed to "proclaim His death till He come. "

The day our Lord returns will be a sad day for many. It should never be forgotten that when the Lord returns, He is coming "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 1: 8).

If you refuse, or neglect, to meet with the Lord and His saints on the Lord's day for the Lord's supper, to proclaim His death "till He come, " would you want the Lord to come on that day?

For the faithful Christian, who is prepared for the Lord's coming, it will be a day of great joy and supreme happiness. In Heaven, there will be no sorrows, no sickness, no disappointments, no pain, no death (Rev. 21: 4).

### Summary

The Lord's supper is a spiritual attraction to the spiritually minded Christian on the Lord's day. Read I Cor. 11: 22-34 in sincere meditation! This sacred memorial directs one's spirit upward, backward, outward, forward, and inward.

In meditation we look **upward** with thanksgiving in our hearts to our God and to our Lord; thankful for the bread and fruit of the vine which are emblems of His wounded body and His precious blood.

We look **backward**, by faith, in memory of the crucifixion of the Son of God. It is not just a historical event, but a supreme sacrifice to remain a precious memory in the hearts of those redeemed by His blood. Our Saviour requested, "This do in remembrance of me!"

We look **outward**, silently and reverently proclaiming the Lord's death to the world. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death, " our Saviour admonished.

We look **forward**. The Lord's supper inspires the Christian to look forward in anticipation, "till he come. "

We look **inward** as we partake of the Lord's supper. Self-examination is essential before communion of the body and blood of our Lord. "Let each man prove (examine) himself and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. "

God's children who do not regularly partake of the Lord's supper in communion of His body and His blood "were weak and sickly,, and many sleep" (I Cor. 11: 30).

Beloved, it is a sacred hour when Christians meet at the Lord's table face to face with the supreme sacrifice on the cross. The death of Christ, an unerasable event, of which the Lord's supper is a memorial, stands in the midst of the ages as the supreme pledge of God's love and sacrifice. It stands for God's sacrifice for sin! He is the Lamb of God. No one should dare approach the Lord's table without deep reverence and profound love. Let our lives and hearts be prepared for communion with the Lord.

One cannot afford to rush thoughtlessly and unprepared into the presence of the supreme gift of the ages. Let us remember, in this memorial, the passionate cry of a sensitive soul, the earnest plea of our Lord when he said, "**Do this in remembrance of me.** "

## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP—No. 1

My friends, does the Bible authorize instrumental music in Christian worship? Acceptable worship must be by the divine authority of Christ. In John 4: 23, 24, Jesus said: "But the hour Cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. "

### False And True Worship

There are two inevitable conclusions from this passage of scripture. First, the statement clearly implies that there is a true worship and a false worship. Christ said, "When the **true** worshippers shall worship the Father, " indicating that there is **both a true and a false worship**.

According to Matt. 15: 8, 9, Jesus emphasized that worship which is according to the doctrines and precepts of men is "**vain worship**. " Vain worship is certainly the opposite of true worship.

Secondly, according to the text, worship, in order to be true and acceptable worship, must be **in spirit and according to the truth**. Furthermore, Paul declared in Col. 3: 17, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. "From this statement of inspiration it is evident that our worship must be in the name of, or by the authority of, the Lord Jesus Christ.

### New Testament Authority For Singing

The question is, did Christ, the apostles, or the Holy Spirit authorize mechanical instruments of music in worship? If so, then Christians should comply with His will. If not, then we must not disobey the will of the Father by engaging



in worship authorized by man and not by Christ.

What does the New Testament teach? Eph. 5: 17, 19: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. " What is the "will of the Lord" regarding music in the church? The answer is revealed in verse 19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. " Here the apostle declared that music is to be vocal—singing, making melody with your heart to the Lord. The command is to sing! Never one time is the use of mechanical instruments in worship ever intimated. One may read every verse in the New Testament on the subject of music in the church within a few seconds, as follows:

Matt. 26: 30, "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. " Acts 16: 25, "At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God. " Romans 15: 9, "I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. " I Cor. 14: 15, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. " I Cor. 14: 26, "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm. " Eph. 5: 19, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. " Col. 3: 16, "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. " Heb. 2: 12, "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. " James 5: 13, "Is any merry? let him sing psalms. "

Surely everyone must observe the absence of mechanical instruments in all the New Testament scriptures, which must govern the actions of Christians in worship.

### **Origin Of Instruments In Worship**

Let us consider briefly the origin of mechanical music in what is called Christian worship. From whence did the use of

mechanical instruments of music in worship originate? If it came not from the New Testament, where did it come from?

The first organ introduced into worship of any body of people claiming to be Christians was 670 years after Christ. It was introduced by Pope Vitilian I. It threatened division in the Roman Catholic Church and was removed to preserve unity. Eight hundred years after Christ the organ was reintroduced into Roman Catholic worship over some opposition. The Greek Catholic Church refused it then and still refuses it today. In the American Encyclopedia, Vol. XII, page 688, it is stated: "Pope Vitilian is related to have introduced organs into some of the churches of Southern Europe about A. D. 670, but the only trustworthy account is that of one sent as a present by the Greek emperor, Constantine Copronymus, to Pepin, king of the Franks in 775. "

The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religions, Vol. II, page 1702 declares: "In the Greek church the organ never came into use, but after the eighth century it became common in the Latin church, not however, without opposition from the side of the Monks—the reformed church discarded; and though the church of Basil very early introduced it, it was in other places admitted only sparingly and after long hesitation. "

The churches of Christ are not alone in refusing the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. Many of the world's great religious leaders and Bible scholars have opposed its use in worship. Among the "Orthodox Catholic Apostolic Eastern Church, " with its thousands of communicants, the Greek Orthodox Church, older than the Roman Catholic Church, has never used instruments in its worship.

### **Opposed By Religious Leaders**

John Calvin, a great protestant reformer and one of the founders of the Presbyterian Church, said, (Calvin Commentary, Thirty-Third Psalm) "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. " Calvin's conclusion would mean that there would be as much authority for use of burned offerings and sacrifices of blood and animals, or other practices under the Old Law, as for the use of mechanical music in Christian worship.

### **Opposed By Methodist**

John Wesley, a protestant reformer and the founder of the Methodist Church, when asked about the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship, replied: "I have no opposition to the organ in our chapel provided it is neither seen nor heard. " (Clarke's Commentary, Vol. IV, page 686).

Adam Clarke, a Methodist, and one of the best Bible commentators, said, (Clarke's Commentary, Vol. IV, page 686), "I am an old man and a minister; and I declare that I never knew them (Mechanical instruments) productive of any good in the worship of God; and I have reason to believe that they were productive of much evil. Music, as a science, I esteem and admire; but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music and I here register my protest against all such corruption in the worship of the Infinite Spirit who requires his followers to worship him in spirit and in truth. "

Clarke, furthermore, declared: "The Church of Rome, in every country where it prevails or exists, has so blended a pretended Christian devotion with heathenish and Jewish rites and ceremonies, two parts of which are borrowed from

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Pagan Rome, the third from Jewish ritual ill understood, and grossly misrepresented, and the fourth part from other corruptions of the Christian system. Nor is the Protestant Church yet fully freed from a variety of matters in public worship which savours little of that simplicity and spirituality which should ever designate the worship of that infinitely pure Spirit which cannot be pleased with anything incorporated with His worship that has not a direct tendency to lead the heart from the earth and sensual things to heaven, and to that holiness without which none shall see the Lord. The singing, as practiced in several places, and heathenish accompaniments of organs and music instruments of various sorts, are contrary to the simplicity of the gospel, and the spirituality of that worship which God requires, as darkness is contrary to light. And if the abuses are not corrected, I believe the time is not far distant when singing will cease to be a part of divine worship. It is now, in many places, such as cannot be said to be any part of that worship which is in spirit and according to truth. May God mend it!" (Christian Theology, by Adam Clarke, page 248).

What a strong indictment against instrumental music in worship! Truly a warning against innovations which corrupt true worship!

#### **Opposed By Baptist**

Another influential religious leader was Charles Spurgeon, a Baptist minister. For twenty years he preached in the Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle in London, England, to ten thousand people every Sunday. Never were mechanical instruments used in his services. When asked why he did not use the organ in his services he first quoted I Cor. 14: 15, which says, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also, " then he declared, "I would

as soon to pray to God with machinery as to sing to God with machinery. "

Andrew Fuller, one of the most respected Bible commentators in the Baptist Church, wrote the following declaration concerning the use of instrumental music in worship:

"The New Testament speaks of praising God by singing, but further it says not... Paul speaks more than once in his Epistles to the Corinthians of instruments of music, but not as being used in religion. He described them as necessary to war, but not to worship; and speaks of them in a language of degradation, as 'things without life, giving sound'... The history of the church during the first three centuries affords many instances of the primitive Christians engaging in singing; but no mention, that I recollect, is made of instruments. Even in times of Constantine, when everything grand and magnificent was introduced into Christian worship, I find no mention made of instrumental music. If my memory does not deceive me, it originated in the dark ages of popery, where almost every other superstitions are more prevalent, and where the last regard is paid to primitive simplicity? (Works of Andrew Fuller, Vol. III, page 520).

Stronger opposition could hardly be found among Bible scholars and commentators!

My friends, these quotations from eminent Bible scholars and religious leaders, representing different denominations, serve as assurance of the fact that churches of Christ are not alone in contending that, originally, the New Testament worship was without use of mechanical instruments of worship. These quotations, however, are not given as reasons why churches of Christ do not use mechanical instruments of music in worship. With Christians, it is a matter of faith. Worship, in order to be scriptural and

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acceptable worship, must be according to the New Testament pattern, by the divine authority of Christ. Any subtractions or additions to worship, not authorized by Jesus Christ, are forbidden. It is the desire and purpose of Christians to worship in spirit and according to the truth, as enjoined by Christ in John 4: 22-24. The truth of the New Testament does not include the use of instrumental music in worship, therefore, churches of Christ do not use it.

### **Not Used In Tabernacle**

Efforts are made to justify the use of mechanical instrumental music in worship by appealing to the Old Testament law. It is obviously known to any Bible student that the instruments were used in Old Testament times in some cases, although not used in the tabernacle and synagogues.

The Jews did not use mechanical instruments of music in the Tabernacle and the Synagogue worship, although it was used in the temple. Church Music History and Practice, page 15, by Winford C. Douglas, states: "The synagogue music was an adoption without musical instruments of the Temple music. "

In McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia Vol. 6, page 762, it is stated: "The instruments were never used in ancient worship. "

The instrument was first used in the Jewish synagogue in Berlin in 1815 under violent opposition by many of its members. An appeal was made to civil authorities and its use was prohibited until the year of 1818. Then, when it was used the Jews were not allowed to play the instrument. A non-Jewish organist was employed.

The Jews in the United States first introduced the organ in their worship in 1840 in Charleston, South Carolina. The opposition was bitter. By majority vote, forty-six to forty,

the use of the instrument was adopted. The matter was carried into court, but the court decision was given in favor of the majority. The case was appealed, but lost again in 1846.

During Old Testament times it must be observed that other practices were approved such as circumcision, burnt offering, sacrifice of blood of bulls and goats, burning incense, observing the Sabbath day and other rituals, but such are no part of Christianity.

The church of our Lord is a New Testament institution. We have a New Covenant, a new law, with the blood of Christ as an atonement for sins, with Christ as its mediator and the apostles as its ministers. There is positively no New Testament authority for mechanical instruments in Christian worship!

#### No Justification By **Old Law** Today

The Old Law was abrogated by reason of the death of Jesus on the cross and the New Law was given instead. Hear these words of inspiration! Are you listening?

Heb. 7: 12, "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. " And again, Heb. 8: 13, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. "

Heb. 10: 9, 10, "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified... "

Col. 2: 14, 15, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. "

Heb. 9: 15, "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament... "

Many other references, affirming the fact that we are not under the Old Law, but are under the New Testament

law, could be cited. Surely these are sufficient.

### **No Authority**

The Lord Jesus, the author of the new religion, "the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12: 2), did not see fit to include instrumental music, either as a part of, or an aid to Christian worship.

The faith, of which Christ is the author, was "once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Note the following scriptural conclusions.

1. Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10: 17); mechanical music is not authorized in New Testament, therefore, **a practice without faith.**

2. Justification is "by the law of faith" (Rom. 3: 26-28); instrumental music is not included in the "law of faith, " therefore, **without justification.**

3. Man cannot please God without faith (Heb. 11: 6); instrumental music in worship cannot be used by faith, therefore, **mechanical music in worship cannot please God.**

### **Commanded To Sing**

Ladies and gentlemen, the command of God for Christian worship, without exception, is sing. Never did He say play, merely make music. The command is, "sing, " The music is subordinate to singing. We obey the command, sing, and the music is thereby produced. If God had said, "make music, " then we could choose to make any kind of music we desire. But He didn't say that. He told us the kind of music—vocal music, "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5: 19).

Question: Does the doctrine of Christ include instrumental music in worship? Every preacher and every Bible student of every denomination should know that neither Christ, nor His apostles, ever authorized such practice, therefore, it must be concluded that the use of instrumental



music in worship is without God's authority and without God! We must respect the authority of Christ, without addition or subtraction.

The apostle declared: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God... " (II John 9). To **abide not** in the teaching of Christ is to **do so without God. "Hath not God"** is an irreparable consequence of going beyond the word of God! Instrumental music is not used in worship because there is no divine command in the New Testament to do so.

### **Purpose of Singing**

Another factor of vital importance is the **purpose** of singing in worship, which eliminates the use of instrumental music. In Col. 3: 16, Paul declared, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. "

In this statement the apostle affirms that the **purpose of singing**, or music in the church, is **to teach and admonish one another and make melody with the heart unto the Lord**. The will of the Lord may be taught in singing. The sinner may be taught of God's saving grace and the terms of salvation. The children of God may be admonished to praise Almighty God. The message of Christ in song includes the greatest themes of life and destiny. Millions of souls have been admonished and inspired by such great hymns as, "The Lord Is My Shepherd, " "What A Friend We Have In Jesus, " "Rock of Ages, " "My Faith Looks Up To Thee, " "How Firm A Foundation, " "Amazing Grace, " "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God, " and hundreds of others.

My friends, I beg you hear me! Are you listening? The mechanical instrument is a dumb instrument, wholly incapable of teaching and admonishing anyone. Mechanical

instruments are primarily instruments of entertainment. Although entertainment is to be desired and appreciated in its place, it has no place in worship.

Not only do we teach and admonish one another in worship, but in worship there is the overflowing and outgoing of the soul to God in homage and love, in admiration and praise. There is no worship in the mere sounding of brass and tinkling of cymbals. Insofar as the spiritual part of man does not worship, and without divine dictation, man's worship is in vain. It was Jesus who said:

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth" (John 4: 24).

"But in vain they do worship, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15: 9).

Instrumental music is not authorized in the doctrine of Christ, therefore, unauthorized in Christian worship. Let us worship God in spirit and in truth!

## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP—No. 2

### **Objection—Music In Home**

My friends, we continue the discussion of the subject, Mechanical Instruments of Music in Worship. We are not unmindful of the fact that some objections are sometimes offered in support of mechanical instruments in worship. Scriptural reasons are never offered for its use, but occasionally objections are used to sustain its use.

Some objections include: if you have instrumental music in your home, why not in church? The answer is obvious. Surely everyone knows the difference in the activities of the home and public worship of the church. We are not left without divine instruction concerning this, however.

To the Corinthians Paul wrote, I Cor. 11: 22, "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God... " It is one thing to eat and drink in our homes and another thing for the church of our Lord to engage in public worship.

### **Didn't Say "Not"**

Another objection is raised by suggesting that God did not say **not** to have mechanical instruments, therefore, it is permissible to use them. If this reasoning were followed, then we could add whatever is desired to the worship of God; even if we should include the eating of cake and drinking of milk for the Lord's Supper, because God didn't say **not** do it!

A positive command, or example, from God need not be followed by a series of negatives relating to the thing commanded. When our Lord instituted the Lord's Supper he named "bread" and "fruit of the vine" as elements through

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which Christians would commune with his body and blood (Matt. 26: 26-30). It was not necessary for Him to add negatively, but **do not** use cake and milk.

Christ did tell us not to use instrumental music in worship, because we are told specifically in the New Testament the kind of music we are to use; that is vocal. The command to sing, automatically, within itself, excluded any other kind of music. Can you imagine every time God gave a command for something to be done, then add the negatives, "but **don't** do this and **don't** do that"? When God speaks, he speaks with authority and man must subjugate his will to the will of God! Nadab and Abihu "offered **strange fire** before the Lord, **which He commanded them not**" and they suffered death for having disobeyed God (Lev. 10: 1, 2). The penalty was severe! Evidently God did mean **not** do something which He "**commanded them not.** " Actually the law did forbid, "strange" offerings (Ex. 30: 9), but a positive command implied the negative, even though not specifically stated.

### David Did

Still another person may object by suggesting that David used instrumental music under the Old Law (Psa. 150: 1-6), therefore, Christians may use it today. This objection is made without understanding the difference between the worship of the Jews under the Old Law, and the worship of Christians under the New Law, the New Testament. Paul refers to this distinction in Rom. 3: 19 when he declared, "We know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law. " Are we all Jews living under the Old Law? Obviously not! We do not worship God under terms of the Old Law. Christians worship God under the terms of the new covenant. Remember these words of inspiration:

"In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old" (Heb. 8: 13).

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament... " (Heb. 9: 15).

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Heb. 8: 8).

Now, since the law was given to the Jews, and Paul declares that the law speaks to them that are under the law, it must be concluded that everyone must be a Jew, living hundreds of years in the past, who would seek to justify mechanical instruments of music in worship on the basis that it was used in Jewish worship under the Old Law. Furthermore, if instruments of music can be used in Christian worship because such may have been used in Jewish worship, under the law of Moses, then it must be concluded that all other acts and ceremonies of worship under the Old Law, including burnt offerings and sacrifices of blood and observance of the Sabbath day, may be included in Christian worship. As a matter of fact, there would be no alternative but to keep all parts of law, if one attempted to keep any part of it. James declares: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2: 10).

Beloved, what David did under the law of Moses was one thing. What Christians do under New Testament law is another thing. If Christians follow the example of the religious practices of David, then where is **David's lamb for the burnt offering** and **David's bowl of incense**? They will be found in the same verse of the New Testament where mechanical instruments in worship may be found.

Don't forget, "**What** things soever **the law saith, it saith to them that are** under the law!"

### **Instruments In Heaven**

In order to defend the use of instruments of music in

Christian worship, some religionists have referred to the vision of John, in Rev. 14: 1-3, declaring that there will be instruments of music in heaven, therefore, we should use them now. I know a preacher who was asked by a member of his church for scriptural authority for the use of instruments in their worship. He replied that "Christians should use the instruments today so they will be in practice when they get to heaven, because John saw instruments of music in heaven. " What a perversion of the truth! Let us observe Rev. 14: 2, 3:

"And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. "

Question: John, what did you hear?

John said, "I heard a voice. "

John, what did the voice, which you heard singing, sound like?

"As the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder... the voice of harpers harping with their harps, " John replies!

Ladies and gentlemen, hear it! Are you listening? Can you understand how honest men could misunderstand John in this matter? Could it be possible that some men have deliberately perverted the word of God? If John heard **literal harping** on harps, did he not likewise hear **literal thunder and literal water**? Why include the "**harps**" in worship and leave out the "**thunder**" and the "**water**"? If harps are literal in the passage, then the thunder and the waters are literal and John really didn't hear the voice at all! He heard "thunder, "

"waters," and "harps." This is a gross mistake!

No, my friends! John heard a **voice** "AS **the voice of many waters,**" a "great thunder," and "harpers." The voice was **SINGING; not playing.** The beautiful melody, the volume, and harmony of the song, which was being sung, was comparable to the melody, the volume, and harmony of "the voice of many waters... the voice of a great thunder... the voice of harpers..." This was heavenly music, with a voice, God's gift of music to man!

### **Only An Aid, Not Worship**

Many honest and sincere worshippers have been led to believe that instruments of music are not part of worship, but only an aid, just as a tuning fork, a pitch pipe, or hymn book might be an aid. This is a gross misunderstanding. What does the Bible say?

Instruments used as an "aid" in worship produce music, which becomes a part of the worship. Hear God in the matter: "And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David, king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished" (II Chron. 29: 26-28). God declared this was worship.

From this quotation there can be no doubt that the vocal music and instrumental music were blended into "**one sound**" and constituted the praise unto God. The instrumental music was as much a part of the "sound" in worship and praise as the singing. It cannot be classified as an "**aid,**" as no part of the worship.

Do not be misled by the advocates of the theory that

instrumental music is only an aid and not a part of the worship. That which is a part of worship cannot be made only an "aid" to worship. Incidentally, it would be well to remember that part of this worship consisted of "the burnt offering upon the altar, " therefore, if instrumental music in worship is justified today because such was a part of worship in Old Testament times, then "burnt offering upon the altar" should be part of the worship along with the instruments of music.

#### Hymn Books, Tuning Forks, P. A. System

In their feeble effort to justify mechanical instruments of music in worship as an "aid, " some proponents have actually declared that the instruments are no different from hymn books, with notes on the pages, or tuning forks, or public address systems. This would seem almost unbelievable!

It would be interesting to see how one could make music by playing a hymn book; or, playing a tuning fork; or, playing a microphone, or public address system.

#### Psallo Argument

Ladies and gentlemen, the only serious attempt to justify instruments of music in worship by New Testament authority is the argument based on the word, "psallo. " It is not a "scholarship" argument, but more of a claim fostered by the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian churches. Realizing that if mechanical instruments of music were to be justified in Christian worship it would have to be by the authority of the New Testament, they proffered the "psallo" argument as follows.

The affirmation: The New Testament authorizes singing. The word "psallo" is translated sing with the accompaniment of instruments, therefore, singing with the accompaniment of instruments of music is by New Testament authority. The



premise upon which this conclusion is based is false, therefore, the conclusion is false. Let us briefly consider the argument.

1. If psallo means sing with instrumental accompaniment in Eph. 5: 19, then instrumental music is commanded; there is no choice in the matter; worship would not be acceptable without it. One could not praise God without it. The instruments would become a part of the faith of the gospel and it would be wrong to fail to use them in worship! Obviously, this is a false conclusion.

2. **Psallo does not mean sing.** A native Greek, Sophocles, who was professor of Greek in Harvard University, published a lexicon in which he gives the definition of words used during the period from 146 B. C. to 1100 A. D., but did not find that the word, "psallo, " was used to mean "sing, " or sing with instrumental accompaniment.

3. **Psallo does mean to "pluck, pull, twang, "** like plucking the hair, the beard, or the strings of a musical instrument; or, like twanging a bow string of carpenter's line marker. To know the meaning of psallo in the New Testament, therefore, one must understand the use of the word as it relates to the thing that is "plucked, " etc. Whether it is the "plucking" of beard, the strings of a musical instrument, or the "heart, " must be determined by its use in the context. For example: the word "baptize" means to "immerse. " It doesn't mean "water. " A person may be baptized in water, or he might be baptized in gasoline. The use of the word, with its relationship to other words, or actions, determines its proper understanding. Psallo may, or may not, mean "pluck" on a harp. The qualifying words relating to its usage will determine its meaning.

### **The Instrument, The Heart**

Under the Old Law mechanical instruments were

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"plucked, " or played, in worship to God. But since the death of Christ, as already pointed out, we are under the New Testament law, and at no time, anywhere, did Christians "psallo, " or play, on mechanical instruments in worship to God. No scholarship can be produced that will make an affirmation to the contrary. The "**instrument,** " which the Christian "plucks, " as he **sings praises** to Almighty God, **is his heart.** When singing, the Christian is "making melody (psallontes) in your heart to the Lord, " the apostle declared. Notice, the inspired apostle declared that the instrument is the "HEART" and **not a mechanical instrument.**

Christians are to worship God in Spirit, with the instrument being the heart (John 4: 24). God is not material. He is not the created but the Creator. He breathed into man the "breath of life and man became a living soul, " created in the "image of God" (Gen. 1: 26, 27; 2: 7). God, therefore, accepts worship of **the man** and not material instruments made by the hands of man. In his address to the Athenians Paul declared that God is not associated with, nor a part of, the material things of this world. He concluded, that God "dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything" (Acts 17: 24, 25). To attempt to worship God or serve God, with instruments made by hands of men is to attempt to substitute "hands" for the "**heart.** " Yet, Paul said, "**neither is he served by men's hands.** "

The inspired apostle warned, by necessary inference, that God does not hear the "sounding brass, or clanging cymbal" (I Cor. 13: 1). God wants and deserves the worship of **man himself,** His own creation, and not some mechanical or material instrument made by the hands of man. The "heart" is the instrument with which he worships God **when singing psalms and hymns** as stated by the apostle when he

declared: "speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5: 19; Col. 3: 16).

### Hath Not God

It is a most serious thing to go beyond the word of God and abide not in the teaching of Christ.

Paul declared: "These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written... " (I Cor. 4: 6 ASV).

Many examples of the imperative need of obedience are revealed in the Old Testament. Paul declared that they were written for "our example " and "admonition" (I Cor. 10: 6, 11).

Hear these! Are you listening?

1. Numbers 22: 18: "I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more. "

2. Numbers 23: 26: "All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do. "

3. Numbers 22: 35: "Only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. "

4. Numbers 23: 20: "I have received commandment... and I cannot reverse it. "

The apostle Peter, in the New Testament, concluded: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (I Peter 4: 11).

The closing admonition of the Bible concerns the destiny of the souls of men: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any

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man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in tins book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22: 18, 19).

The inspired language of II John 9 should never be forgotten: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: He that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (ASV).

The doctrine of Christ includes **"singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. "** To worship accordingly, is to have **"both the Father and the Son"** with us in worship. To go beyond and abide not in the teaching of Christ; to add to, or take from the word of God; to engage in worship **not according to the doctrine of Christ, is to do so without God-"Hath not God, "** declared the apostle! What an irrevocable decision! What a changeless destiny!

## THE NEW BIRTH

My friends, "The New Birth" is a profound subject. Christ declared to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus said, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. "

Jesus, our Lord, declared that one must be born again to enter into the kingdom of God. This new birth is as essential to entering the kingdom of God as is the natural birth to entering into the family of man.

### Amazing Command

Hardly had Nicodemus finished his words of hope and assurance when Jesus spoke a truth that destroyed the very foundation of his religion. Jesus declared, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. " This declaration was beyond the understanding of Nicodemus. As a Jew, he had entered the family and nation of God by natural birth. The Jews expected the kingdom to be a worldly kingdom, consequently, they would claim membership in it by reason of their natural birth. Jesus obviously knew this, therefore, the reason for this immediate and mighty declaration of truth, "Ye must be born again!"

Wonder and amazement seized upon this ruler of the Jews, and confused in mind, he asked, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter into his mother's womb a second time and be born?" The only birth relating to the

kingdom of God that Nicodemus could comprehend was that of the natural birth, and, this new doctrine taught by Christ, whom he had acknowledged to be a teacher from God, struck from under him the very foundation of his religion. By this teaching he was denied membership in the kingdom of God, although he was a Jew, unless he be born again.

Seeing the confusion and amazement of Nicodemus,, Jesus replied in more definite language, easier to be understood:

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. " To be born again, therefore, is to be born of water and the Spirit.

Beloved, many people today are just as much confused, regarding this matter, as was Nicodemus. They do not understand the new birth. The word of God plainly instructs us as to what constitutes the new birth. One cannot be in the kingdom of God unless he has been born again. Jesus said, "Ye **must** be born again"! As certain as Christ is the Son of God, one must be born again to enter the kingdom of God.

### **What Is The New Birth?**

The new birth is **one** birth, not two — one birth of water and one birth of the Spirit. It is a birth of water and the Spirit. These are two essentials in the birth, but it is only one birth. There are two essentials in natural birth; one: the begetting; two: the birth. The same is true in the spiritual birth, of which Jesus spoke. **In** the new birth **one** of **these essentials** is the **Spirit** and **the other is** the **water**. In the natural birth one is ascribed to the father, while the other is ascribed to the mother. When a child is born into a family, he was begotten by the father and born of the mother. In the

spiritual birth, that is, the new birth, one is begotten by the Spirit and born of the water.

#### Born Of The Spirit - The Word

In 1 John 5: 6-8, it is revealed: "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one. "

"The Spirit is the truth, " the apostle declared! In what sense is the Spirit the truth? To answer this question, we must know what the truth is. The answer is found in John 17: 17. In the prayer of our Lord to God, He said, "Sanctify them in truth: thy word is truth. " The word of God, therefore, is the truth.

Furthermore, the Spirit is the truth, the word of God, in that it gives life to the word. The Holy Spirit uses the "truth", the "word" of God, for the begetting of a soul into the family of God. Now, since one is begotten of the Spirit, he is begotten of the word of God, which is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8: 11). To Christ, Peter declared: "Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6: 68).

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? The Spirit, to the word of God, the seed of the kingdom, is the same thing that life is to a grain of corn. Life is contained in the seed. We do not see the life in the grain of corn, but we know that life is there and God put it there. We are told that today some chemical laboratories have been able to perfect a grain of corn so nearly like a real grain of corn that even chemists cannot distinguish between them in the laboratory. But, there is a very definite way to tell the difference; plant them and see the difference. Chemists may make something that looks like a grain of corn, but they cannot put "life" into the seed. Should one plant a man-made grain of corn it

would stay in the ground and rot without reproduction, because there is no life in man-made substance. In the God-made grain of corn there is life. Life to the grain is the same thing that the Spirit is to the word of God. Jesus said, "It is the spirit that gives life... the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life. " Also read James 1: 18.

It must be concluded that since one is begotten, or born, of the Spirit he is begotten of the word of God: he is begotten by the Spirit through the word of God! This fact is affirmed by the apostle Paul in his writing to the church at Corinth: "For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus **I begat you through the gospel**" (1 Cor. 4: 15).

The Christians at Corinth, those who had been born again, were begotten through the gospel, the truth. But the Spirit is the truth; therefore, they were begotten by the Spirit through the word which is the seed of the kingdom. Not only were they begotten by the Spirit, but they were born of water, as revealed in Acts 18: 8. They were baptized.

As further evidence of the fact that men are begotten by the Spirit, through the word of God, when they are born again, I refer you to another text of inspiration, 1 Peter 1: 22, 23. The apostle declares, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your **obedience to the truth — having been begotten again**, not of corruptible **seed**, but of incorruptible, **through the word of God** which liveth and abideth. " Certain inevitable facts are deduced from this statement of inspiration. I: The apostle was writing to those whose souls had been purified. II: Their souls were purified through their obedience to the truth. III: They were begotten again. IV: That by which they were begotten was the truth, the word of God, the incorruptible seed. Certainly, beyond any doubt or question



these facts must force us to the very definite conclusion that these people, to whom Peter wrote this epistle, had been born again. They were begotten by the Spirit, through the word of God, which was the first essential to the new birth.

### **Born of Water — Baptism**

Having learned that the begetting by the Spirit, through the truth, is the first essential to the new birth, let us determine from the Scriptures what constitutes the birth, the second essential to the new birth.

Remember, Jesus said, "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. " What does it mean to be born of water?

Friends, there is no doubt about it, to be born of water is to be baptized into Christ; buried with him in water and born of water.

It is amazing how that men sometime pervert the word of the Lord. In order to defend the human theory of salvation by faith only, which denies that baptism is essential to salvation, some religious teachers have stated that "WATER" does NOT mean "WATER" in this divine statement of Christ. Some would say, "**Water means Spirit.** " Just one question, if **water** means **Spirit**, then why didn't Christ say "**SPIRIT**"? Would it not be rather absurd to accuse our Lord of saying, "Except one be born of **SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT** he cannot enter the kingdom of God" Who would suggest that water is the same thing as Spirit? Anyone who can read and count should know better. John names them and counts them, when he said: "For there are **three** who bear witness, the **Spirit**, and the **water** and the **blood**; and the three agree in one. " Water is as essentially related to salvation as are the Spirit and the blood. They are inseparable! One plus one, plus one, equals three. Though they

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agree, there are one, two, three witnesses — the Spirit, the water, and the blood. Obviously, the water and the Spirit are not the same. Bible scholars are in general agreement that "WATER" in this scripture refers to **baptism**, while "SPIRIT" refers to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead. When one says that Christ was so mixed up that he didn't mean "WATER" when he said "WATER, " such is an **attempt to deny that "being born of water, " in John 3: 5, refers to water baptism.**

#### What Scholars Say

Most eminent Bible scholars are in agreement that "born of water, " in John 3: 5, refers to water baptism.

Albert Barnes: "By water, here is evidently signified baptism. Thus the word is used in Eph. 5: 26; Tit. 3: 5" (Barnes' notes on the New Testament, Luke & John P. 202).

J. W. Wilmarth: "Baptism and renewal by the Spirit are the conditions of true citizenship in the kingdom of God on earth" (Baptist Quarterly, July, 1877, P. 309).

Timothy Dwight, a Yale College President said: "To be 'born of water, ' as here intended, is, in my view, to be baptized... " (System of Theology, Vol. V, P. 223).

Baptism in water is to be born of water. The Spirit, by which one is begotten, instructs one through the word to be baptized into Christ where remission of sins is obtained by virtue of the blood of Christ (Acts. 2: 38, 22: 16; Gal. 3: 27).

Water has no relationship to the kingdom of Christ other than water baptism, therefore, "WATER, " in John 3: 5, can refer only to water baptism.

#### New Birth, New Creature

Christ declared **that** one must be baptized in water to be born again (John 3: 5). The penitent believer is baptized into Christ:

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ

have put on Christ" (Gal. 3: 27).

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death" (Rom. 6: 3). It must be remembered that the blood of Christ was shed in His death; therefore, to obtain remission of sins by the blood of Christ one must be "baptized into his death. " Without the blood of Christ there is no remission of sins. (Eph. 1: 7; Heb. 9: 22).

When one is "born of water, " baptized into Christ, he is a new creature:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5: 17). The new birth, therefore, enables one to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 3-6). My friends, I say, are you listening? The new life does not begin apart from the new birth when one is "born of water" — "baptized into Christ. "

#### Born Again Examples

Let us observe some Bible examples of those who were born again.

In 1 Cor. 4: 15, we have already learned that the Christians at Corinth, those who were in the kingdom of Christ, were begotten through the gospel preached by Paul. In Acts 18: 8 it is recorded: "And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized. "

The Corinthians **heard the gospel; they believed it** and they obeyed it—**they were baptized**. They were **begotten by the Spirit**, through the gospel, **and were born of water**, the very thing that Jesus told Nicodemus one must do to enter the kingdom of God. When Paul preached the gospel to them, begetting them by the Spirit, he preached the commands of Christ, which included baptism in water, as essential to salvation. We know that is true because he preached the

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gospel, and when Christ gave the command to preach the gospel, he said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that **believeth and is baptized shall be saved**" (Mark 16: 15, 16). The Corinthians heard, believed, and were baptized. They were "born of water and the Spirit. "

According to 1 Peter 1: 22-24, the Pentecostians were born again. Of them Peter wrote: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth... having been begotten again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, through the word of God. " There is no mistake about it, Peter declared that these people, to whom he had written this letter, had been born again, having been begotten by the Spirit, through the word of God!

We have a record, giving the details of the conversion of these people to whom Peter wrote this letter. The record is found in Acts 2: 5-42. Verses 9 through 11 identify the same people as those of 1 Peter 1: 1, who, the apostle said, had been born again. They were **begotten by the Spirit** through the word preached by Peter, and they were **born of water** when they obeyed the command of God, given by the apostle. In verse 38, the apostle commanded, "**Repent ye, and be baptized every one** of you in the name of Jesus Christ **unto the remission of your sins**; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "

### **Birth — Burial, Resurrection**

The new birth necessitates a burial in water. When the man of Ethiopia was baptized, born of water, the Bible says: "They both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. " (Acts 8: 37-39). This man was "born again" — "born of water and the Spirit. "

Baptism is a burial! In Rom. 6: 3-4 the apostle declared, "Or are you ignorant that all we who were baptized into

Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we might walk in newness of life. " In this text the apostle states that baptism is a burial. We are buried with Christ in baptism and raised to walk the new life. Notice, the new life begins when one is baptized and raised from the burial of water, that is, born of water. It would be impossible to be born of water and not be buried in water.

It is impossible to be born of something and that which is born be larger than that from which it was born! Sometime ago it was reported that a very young child, some twelve years of age, gave birth to twin babies. As incredible as this may seem, it happened. But one thing is definitely known: without question, the mother, though but a child, could not have been smaller than the babies and the babies have been born of the mother. It is impossible for one to be born of water with a few drops poured upon his head, or sprinkled upon his body! To be born of water, therefore, one must be buried in water, concealed in water, and brought forth from the water.

#### Spirit Born Again, Not Body

This is a NEW birth. It is the birth of the spirit of man, not the body. The natural birth is a birth of the body. Man's carnal body is not born into the kingdom. Christ declared, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3: 6). The Spirit of a man dwells in his body until death. A person's body is buried in water in baptism, but it is the soul that is born again. It would be useless to baptize a dead body, a human body in which there was no spirit. This would not be the new birth!

#### Babies Born Again?

Who is to be born again? Obviously, those who need to

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be born again. Those who need to be born again are they who are separated from God by reason of their sins and transgressions. The apostle Peter declared that man is begotten (born) again of incorruptible seed, the word of God, 1 Peter 1: 22, 23, which is evidence that the soul that is born again is taught to obey the Lord (Acts 2: 36-38).

Question: are infants to be born again, baptized of water into the kingdom of Christ? Positively, NO! Infants are not guilty of sins. The infant is free from sin. He cannot believe and repent of sins, therefore, cannot be scripturally baptized, or be born of the water and the Spirit. Although it is possible for an infant to be immersed in water, that would not constitute a new birth. The soul of the infant is not a subject of the new birth, therefore, not a subject of baptism. An infant would have as much faith as a dead body; therefore, one would have as much scriptural right to baptize a dead body as an infant. It must not be forgotten that Christ declared that one must be born of water and the Spirit to become a **new creature** in Christ. One is begotten by the Spirit, through the word, and is baptized, as a penitent believer, **into Christ**.

### **Partakers Of Divine Nature**

**In** the natural birth we receive the image of our natural parents. In the spiritual birth one bears the image of the second Adam, Christ. Paul declared that one is "buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him... If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col. 2: 12; 3: 1). The apostle concludes that "your life is hid with Christ in God, " having "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3: 3, 10).

In the natural birth we become partakers of the human

nature. In the spiritual birth one becomes a partaker of the divine nature. The apostle Peter wrote: "According to his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature... " (2 Peter 1: 3, 4).

Ladies and gentlemen, are you listening? A Christian should bear the image of Christ. As a partaker of the divine nature of the Lord, he should live more like Christ each day. The Christian is admonished: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience; In which ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3: 5-10).

As long as the Christian remains in close fellowship with Christ he does conform to the life characterized by Paul in this inspired exhortation because he is "renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. "

The born again child of God should always live a life consistent with the divine nature of Christ, adding to his faith "virtue, and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love. " The apostle concludes: "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful, in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is

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blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Peter 1: 5-10). Obviously, the child of God who does not continue to bear the image of Christ and live a faithful life, consistent with the divine nature of our Lord, shall fall. The inspired apostle concludes: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, then, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2 Peter 2: 20, 21).

Beloved, if one is a child of God, he has been born again. If he has not been born again, he is not a child of God.

I am not unmindful of the fact that some religious leaders declare that the kingdom of Christ has not yet been established—that it is yet in the future, to be established when Christ returns. If this theory were true, then there is not a "born again" child of God on earth today. It is a false theory! To be "born again" is to be in the kingdom; to be in the kingdom is to have been born again. Paul declared that those who were "delivered out of the power of darkness" were translated "**into the kingdom** of the Son of his love" (Col. 1: 13).

When Christ comes again it will not be to establish His kingdom, that souls may be born again — born into the kingdom. When He comes He shall deliver the kingdom, His faithful "born again" subjects, to God the Father. That will be the "**end**" — not the beginning of the kingdom on earth! (1 Cor. 15: 24).



## THE DOCTOR'S ORDERS

My friends, have you ever been sick? Have you not consulted a physician? Have you not at some time said, **"those are the doctor's orders"**?

Few people have not at some time been attended by a physician because of illness. Thousands of people are daily attempting to follow the doctor's orders, because they know their lives depend upon it. Perhaps the order is: immediate surgery, or death. Or, perhaps the doctor has ordered a special prescription of medicine which means life or death. Is it conceivable that one who receives such life or death orders from the doctor would conclude, "I had rather die than follow the doctor's orders"? Hardly would that be true of anyone exercising the proper faculties of his mind and judgment.

If my doctor, in whom I have faith and confidence, should declare, "Follow my orders because it is a matter of life or death, " you may be sure I would not argue the matter with him, but would resolve to follow, to the very best of my ability and knowledge, the doctor's orders in minute detail. Regardless of the medicine prescribed, its distastefulness, or extra cost, I would follow the doctor's orders, if it were a matter of life or death. Would you not do the same?

Today, the world is sick. The souls of men are sick because of the deadly disease of sin.

### The Plague Of Sin

In Old Testament times the term "plague" applied to the odious disease of leprosy. In modern times the term generally applies to a deadly and infectious disease. The most infectious and deadly of all diseases is sin, a plague of the heart. Reference is made to sin as a plague in 1 Kings 8: 38:

"Shall know every man the plague of his own heart. "

Sin is loathsome and devastating. In the beginning God created man with moral beauty and dignity. Man reflected the image of his creator, and God, in an expression of delight, pronounced him very good. Later the plague of sin separated man from God because God is all good and sin is all evil. They can have no fellowship. Sin robbed the soul of man of its spiritual energies and moral strength.

Like a plague, sin is exceedingly infectious. One sinner may contaminate and destroy a wealth of goodness. In the beginning Eve caught the plague of sin and Adam immediately was contaminated with it. Thereafter, their first-born son became the murderer of his brother. The dreadful disease spread as man populated the earth. Then God surveyed the state of mankind and pronounced: "That the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6: 5, 6).

Paul emphasized the seriousness of the plague of sin when he wrote that men were "under sin... There is none righteous, no, not one... Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues that have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood; Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3: 9-18). What an indictment against man! What a description of the tragic results of the plague of sin!

Every soul of man, every family, every city and every nation on earth has been infected with the deadly disease of sin. Every member of a person's body, and every faculty of the soul may be afflicted by this odious plague!

**The Effects Of Sin**

Ladies and gentlemen, the effects of sin may be fatal. Even if healed by following the doctor's orders, its scathing marks may be seen in every phase of society. Sin will wreck the mind, wreck the body, and destroy the soul of man. Sin will wreck the home, wreck the community and destroy a nation. Sin may debase man and cause him to become a blight and a curse upon society. Sin may eat away, like a cancer, the spiritual fiber of man's soul. Sin infatuates and produces delirium; it annihilates peace and may fill one with internal misery and torture. Without following the doctor's orders, this most dreadful disease will destroy soul and body in an eternal hell! The wages of sin is death (Romans 6: 23). The inspired word of the apostle to the Galatians should ever be remembered. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6: 7, 8).

**Incurable Through Human Agency**

No man is capable of curing himself of the fatal disease of sin. Human reason, in opposition to faith, has tried and failed. All the infidels, atheists, agnostics, modernists, liberals, and skeptics in the world combined have failed to make a single contribution to the relief of a sin-sick soul. Human systems of religion have tried and failed. Man himself has never been able to restore even one plague-stricken soul!

**Remedy Of The Great Physician**

My friends, hear me! Are you listening? There is a remedy! There is a cure, if we will follow the doctor's orders.

The remedy is not prescribed in terms of street demonstrations, rebellion against constituted authority, the "new morality," nor the practice of religion dictated by the dogmas of men. The remedy must be prescribed by the one physician who is capable of issuing orders which will

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completely effect a cure of the sin-sick soul. That physician is the one Great Physician, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who once declared, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matt. 9: 12).

### Physician's Qualifications

If any member of our families should become seriously ill, plagued with a deadly disease, surely we would seek the services of a qualified and experienced physician and we would be completely resigned to follow the doctor's orders. The love of self and the determination to sustain life in the human body are deeply implanted in the heart of every human being. It is not unusual for men to travel thousands of miles and spend fortunes in money just to secure relief for a diseased body, or sustain life in the body just for a short while longer. Under such circumstances the sick patient resolves to follow the doctor's orders in every minute detail. However, in committing one's life into the hands of his physician man is definitely concerned about the doctor's qualifications. What about his experience in treatment of disease? The patient is always anxious to know about the physician's success in effecting a cure for the disease.

Jesus, God's Son, the Great Physician, possesses complete and unbounded supernatural knowledge. He knows all the faculties of the soul, all the ailments which might afflict the soul, and he knows the exact remedy and application necessary to effect an absolute and infallible cure. No earthly physician can claim infallibility in his treatment and cure of the diseases of the body. Because they are human, they often err and many of their patients die. This is not true of the Great Physician, Jesus Christ. All the diseases of sin are alike to him and none are beyond cure. The sin-sick soul may be completely healed, if man will be completely resigned to following the orders of the Great Physician.

It is most unfortunate that many who are sick unto death, fancy themselves as being quite well and have no need of a physician. They will not admit the plague of their own hearts. Others may admit that they are sin-sick, having acted as a physician who diagnosed his own case, but conclude that their maladies are not serious, nor dangerous, therefore, are indifferent toward following the orders of the Great Physician. Thousands of sinners die unprepared to meet God because of indifference.

### **Doctor's Orders Perverted**

Today thousands of sin-sick souls are conscious of their need of the Great Physician and are even willing to consult Him about their condition and the cure, but, obviously, do not have unqualified faith in Christ, the Great Physician. They are not always willing to follow the doctor's orders!

Beloved, if you should become seriously ill and go to your physician, would you have faith enough in your doctor to follow his orders, especially with reference to his prescription as a remedy for cure of the disease.

It is said that one time a preacher, who was seriously ill, consulted a physician, who was a specialist in his field of medicine, and upon completion of the examination the doctor gave him a prescription to be filled. The doctor warned the minister that his life was in grave danger, unless he followed the prescription in minute detail. When the preacher presented the prescription to a pharmacist he was informed that all the items specified in the prescription were not necessary.

"There is one item I do not think is essential in the doctor's prescription, " declared the druggist. "But my life may depend on this order of the doctor and I must insist that the prescription be filled exactly as given, " replied the preacher. "Well, I have another drug, and in my opinion, that

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is just as good as the one prescribed. Shall I not substitute it?" said the druggist. "No indeed, " said the preacher, "I want nothing left out and nothing substituted. It must be filled exactly as the doctor ordered, because my life depends on it. "

"But other people have accepted the substitute, " the pharmacist declared. "Not me, " said the preacher, "this is my life involved. Regardless of what somebody else may have done, I will accept no change, nor substitute. "

Later, the pharmacist attended a church service and heard the minister deliver his sermon. He was both relieved and amazed. The preacher, who was supposed to be filling the prescription of the Great Physician, as a balm for sin-sick souls, declared that although Jesus, the Great Physician, did command, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16), he thought one could be saved without baptism. "Baptism is non-essential, " the preacher said. The Great Physician prescribed baptism as a condition, but the preacher, who was supposed to be administering the doctor's orders, was arguing that one part of the prescription was not necessary.

Furthermore, the druggist was impressed when he heard the preacher say that the Great Physician at no time prescribed the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship, but it was his opinion that it would be acceptable to add it to the prescription because almost everybody used it and he could see no harm in it.

At the conclusion of the services the druggist firmly shook hands with the preacher and said, "Surely, the legs of the lame are unequal!"

### **No Substitute**

Surely there is a lesson in this story. No one can afford to risk the loss of his soul because of a change of the doctor's

orders. In the Lord's plan of salvation, as well as in medicine, man cannot tamper with the doctor's orders! Additions or subtractions to the doctor's orders are never made by reliable pharmacists. The laws of the land protect our bodies from unscrupulous men who might tamper with the doctor's orders, intended for the healing of the body, but it is up to every individual to see that every condition specified by the Great Physician, Jesus, the Christ, is followed without addition or subtraction. That is a matter which concerns the destiny of the souls of men. So serious are the consequences that the Bible warns, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

It is a recognized fact that certain medicines may be used to sustain life in the body. Yet, the same drugs misused in the hands of unlearned and unskilled men may cause death. The gospel of Christ, consisting of the divine orders of the Great Physician, is the power of God to save the believer (Rom. 1: 16). But a perverted gospel, which is a prescription tampered with by men, can only mean spiritual death (Gal. 1: 7, 8).

#### Steps Of Safety

1. Every preacher must be certain that he administers the divine prescription just as the Great Physician gave it.
2. Be certain that the doctor's orders have not been tampered with. Souls will be lost if the divine prescription of the Great Physician is not followed.
3. Examine very closely any spiritual remedy offered by religious teachers. Search the scriptures. The Bible says, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4: 1).

4 Examine to see if the religious instructor declares as non-essential, any condition prescribed by the Great Physician.

5. Beware of any person who might say, "I know the Bible says that but I don't think it is necessary. "

6. Watch for scriptures misquoted or misapplied. If one has no scruples about changing the doctor's orders, it could well be that souls are in jeopardy! Remember, it is your soul that is to be saved or to be lost.

### **Ignorance No Excuse**

It is a known conclusion that ignorance on the part of the druggist will not immune the sick person from the ill effects, even death itself, when the doctor's orders are not followed. Ignorance on the part of the sick person is no immunity from the deadly effect of deadly poison. Some religious teachers may be careless, or not properly informed of the scriptures; even some may be dishonest. The results are the same—a mistake that cannot be changed in eternity! A person who might drink DEADLY poison through error—whether error on the part of the druggist, or the individual for whom the prescription was filled—would be just as dead as if he planned suicide! Surely, no one would conclude that it doesn't make any difference. It does make a difference what a person believes!

If the doctor's orders, which may be a matter of life or death, are so important that a preacher would demand that under no circumstances is the prescription to be altered, how much more important it is to follow the divine prescription without addition or subtraction.

### **Caution**

The price of being deceived may be the loss of a soul in eternity. The caution warnings are plainly displayed along with the divine orders of the Great Physician in the Bible.

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because



of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph. 5: 6).

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15: 9).

"Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15: 13, 14).

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2: 8).

"(Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using; ) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (Col. 2: 21, 22).

### **The Doctor's Orders**

Ladies and gentlemen, may I present to you the doctor's orders for every sin-sick soul. You cannot be wrong by following the orders of the Great Physician. You will be lost in eternity if you do not follow his orders.

#### **I. MUST BELIEVE**

##### **Caution: Confidence in doctor's orders, or die!**

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11: 6).

"For if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8: 24).

#### **II. MUST REPENT**

**Warning: Ignorance no excuse. Die if orders not followed.**

"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13: 3, 5).

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at;

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but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent"  
(Acts 17: 30).

### III. MUST CONFESS CHRIST

**Notice: Allegiance to Physician, or cure denied.**

"And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8: 37).

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10: 32).

### IV. MUST BE BAPTIZED - BURIED IN WATER

**Warning: To change or modify doctor's orders is to risk loss of soul.**

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 16).

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22: 16).

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 3, 4).

"They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8: 38).

My friends, hear me! Are you listening? Baptism is most positively included in the divine prescription dictated by the Great Physician.

**BAPTISM**

**1. WHO IS TO BE BAPTIZED?**

Note: Orders by the Great Physician

	Believers	Infants
(1) "Teach all nations" (Matt. 28: 19, 20).....	Yes	No
(2) "He that believeth" (Mark 16: 1b).....	Yes	No
(3) "Understandest thou... ?" (Acts 8: 30, 31) .....	Yes	No
(4) "If thou believest" (Acts 8: 36-39).....	Yes	No
(5) "Hearing, believed and were baptized" (Acts 18: 8).....	Yes	No
(6) "Baptized... rejoiced, believing in God" (Acts 16: 33, 34).....	Yes	No
(7) "Repent and be baptized" (Acts 2: 38) .....	Yes	No
(8) "Continued... apostles doctrine" (Acts 2: 42) .....	Yes	No
(9) "All that believeth" (Acts 2: 44) .....	Yes	No

**2. WHY BE BAPTIZED?**

Note: Prescription not to be tampered with.

	To Be Saved	Already Saved
(1) "For remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38) .....	Yes	No
(2) "Wash away thy sins" (Acts 22: 16) .....	Yes	No
(3) "Shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16).....	Yes	No
(4) "Baptized into Christ"		

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	To Be Saved	Already Saved
(Rom. 6: 3; Gal. 3: 27) .....	Yes	No
(5) "Baptism doth also now save us" (1 Peter 3: 21) .....	Yes	No

**3. HOW BAPTIZED; WHAT IS THE ELEMENT?**

Note: "Let him be accursed" who perverts this order (Gal. 1: 8).

	Immer- sion	Sprink- ling	Pour- ing
(1) "Came unto a certain water" (Acts 8: 36) .....	Yes	No	No
(2) "Was much water" (John 3: 23).....	Yes	No	No
(3) "They went down both into the water" (Acts 8: 38).....	Yes	No	No
(4) "Buried with him by baptism" (Rom. 6: 4).....	Yes	No	No
(5) "Planted together in the like- ness of his death" (Rom. 6: 5).....	Yes	No	No
(6) "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him" (Col. 2: 12) .....	Yes	No	No
(7) "In the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6: 5).....	Yes	No	No
(8) "Were come up out of the water" (Acts 8: 39) .....	Yes	No	No

Ladies and gentlemen, no man, nor group of men, has the right or liberty to change, alter, or substitute in the divine prescription for man's salvation. Yet, it is not uncommon for men today, who claim to have been called by God to preach His word (that is, to fill the divine prescription), to

deliberately eliminate, modify, and substitute for God's divine remedy for sin. Follow very closely the divine orders given in the scriptures quoted and one should have no difficulty in identifying any departures or perversion offered by men.

V. CONTINUE TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS

**Caution:** Observe all Physician's orders. **To be continued for life.**

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, " Matt. 28: 20, Jesus said.

VI. WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

**Warning:** To alter or substitute is counterfeit.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4: 24).

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

The Great Physician prescribed that "whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of (by the authority of) the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3: 17). This divine order includes singing in worship. Consider this item of the Physician's prescription.

**Singing**

**Caution:** To add to or take from is to be denied benefits of prescription (Rev. 22: 18, 19).

	Vocal Music	Instrumental Music
(1) "Hymns and spiritual songs, singing" (Eph. 5: 19).....	Yes	No
(2) "Singing... with your heart" (Eph. 5: 19) .....	Yes	No

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	Vocal Music	Instrumental Music
(3) "When they had sung a hymn" (Matt. 26: 30).....	Yes	No
(4) "Prayed and sang praises to God" (Acts 16: 26).....	Yes	No
(5) "Sing unto thy name" (Rom. 15: 9).....	Yes	No
(6) "Sing with the spirit... sing with understanding" (1 Cor. 14: 15)'.....	Yes	No
(7) "Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3: 16) .....	Yes	No
(8) "In the midst of the church will I sing" (Heb. 2: 12).....	Yes	No
(9) "Let him sing psalms" (James 5: 13).....	Yes	No

Lord's Supper

My friends, are you listening? Every item of worship is prescribed by authority of the Great Physician. The early Christians came together "upon the first day of the week" for the Lord's Supper (Acts 20: 7). This part of the divinely prescribed worship is "the communion of the blood of Christ... and the communion of the body of Christ" (I Cor. 10: 16, 17). It is ordered, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11: 23-26).

The Lord's supper is a communion of the body and the blood of our Lord. In I Cor. 10: 16, 17 Paul wrote: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. " It should be observed, however, that by no power of logic, or imagination, could one deduct from the scriptures

that any man, priest, preacher, or otherwise can, by special blessings, cause the fruit of the vine to be turned into the literal blood of Christ and the bread be turned into the literal body of Christ, as claimed by the ecclesiasticism of Rome.

Citizens of the kingdom of Christ enjoy the duty and privilege of communion, since the Lord's table, the Lord's supper, is in the Lord's kingdom. Christ announced, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom..." (Luke 22: 29, 30).

### **Praying, Giving, Teaching**

The divinely dictated items of worship also includes prayer, which is to be offered in the name of Christ (John 14: 13; 15: 16; 16: 24, 26) and "according to his will" (I John 5: 14).

In New Testament times the Lord's church was diligent in following the instructions of the Great Physician. "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2: 42).

The divine orders for worship included the matter of Christian stewardship (I Cor. 4: 2; I Pet. 4: 10). Stewardship includes the giving of our material wealth to the Lord's work. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order... Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him..." (I Cor. 16: 1, 2).

The teaching of the gospel and edifying of the church were included in the divine orders to be fulfilled.

"I charge thee therefore before God... Preach the word..." (2 Tim. 4: 1, 2).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matt. 28: 19).

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2: 42).

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### Not Bought With Money

The divine prescription, ordered by the Great Physician, cannot be bought with money. Yet, it is within the reach of every responsible soul on earth. Simon was rebuked because he thought that the "gift of God may be purchased with money. " He was told, "Thy money perish with thee... Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter... Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8: 19-24).

### You Can Be Sure

The divine prescription is simple and easily understood; not couched in phrases of theologians and philosophers, difficult to understand. Paul said that he was sent to preach the gospel, "not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1: 17, 18). Furthermore, he declared: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. " **Be sure about your prescription.** Paul concludes: "**(Touch not; taste not; handle not;** Which all are to perish with the using; ) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (Col. 2: 8, 21, 22).

The apostle Peter concluded: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4: 11). Balaam, the prophet, declared: "I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more" (Numbers 22: 18).

The divine prescription of the Great Physician is the only prescription under heaven that is perfect and is



guaranteed to cure the sin-sick soul of man. But the assurance of cure can only be expected when following the doctor's orders. If the prescription is not complied with, then the soul must die!

The doctor's prescription may mean the saving of a life from death, if faithfully followed. If the doctor's orders are not followed the prescription is of no value in effecting a cure. Little value would it be to consult a physician and then refuse to take the medicine. The gospel of Christ is the power of God to save those who believe and obey (Rom. 1: 16; 2 Thess. 1: 8). Jesus, the Great Physician, said: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6: 46).

A perversion of the doctor's orders will mean the loss of souls in eternity. Remember, **the soul that may be lost may be your own. And, one soul that you want to be saved must be your own.**

## SAVED BY FAITH

My friends, salvation is by faith. It is perhaps one of the most misunderstood subjects in the Bible, yet it seems so plainly taught that one could hardly misunderstand. The Bible says: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3: 16). Believing in Christ, however, is more than mental assent of the mind that Christ is the Son of God.

### What Is Faith?

What is faith? The Bible gives the answer—Hebrews 11: 1: "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. " No better definition than this inspired definition, or description, could be found. We must know that faith is something not seen; yet, there is full assurance and conviction relative to the unseen. Faith, therefore, must be predicated upon certain testimony and evidence, resulting in certain convictions and expressing itself in definite actions.

### One Faith

When men today abide by the divine authority of Christ, believe and accept the testimony of God's word only, there will be only "one faith. " All will believe and practice the same things and "speak the same thing" when we are governed by the testimony of God's word. The apostle declared that there is "ONE FAITH" (Eph. 4: 5). Furthermore, he exhorted the early Christians: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing; and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same

mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1: 10). Surely, God is pleased with "ONE FAITH. "

There is a great difference between faith and opinion. Many souls today base their religion upon opinions, freely admitting that they have no divine testimony upon which to base their convictions. Those who accept the divine testimony of the word of God believe and trust God with very definite convictions and with full assurance that Christ will save those who will subjugate their will to the Lord's will. Salvation is by faith, according to God's will, and not by opinion, according to man's will.

### **Faith Essential**

Faith is absolutely essential to salvation, but faith alone does not obtain salvation. Baptism is essential to salvation, but baptism alone does not remit sins.

Without faith man cannot please God. In Hebrews 11: 6, it is declared that "without faith it is impossible to please God. "

According to Romans 1: 17, "the righteous shall live by faith. " Luke records, in Acts 15: 9, that Peter announced: "and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. " Faith is essential to salvation.

### **How Does Faith Come?**

A question of vital importance. is, "How does faith come?"

Many people have the opinion that faith comes in answer to prayer, or in some mysterious or unknown manner. This is a mistake. Paul declared, "So faith (or belief) Cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10: 17). There can be no mistake about it. If one's convictions are not based upon the word of the Lord, then it is not faith with the assurance of salvation—nothing to hope

for!

### Not By Faith Only

Salvation is **not** by "**faith only**." After having revealed the truth that faith alone is of no "profit" (James 2: 14-16), and faith alone is "dead" (James 2: 17), the apostle declared that faith alone may be the devil's profession of religion—"the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2: 19). The inspired apostle concluded: "Ye see that by works a man is justified, **and not** by faith only" (James 2: 24).

### Believer Has A Right To Become

The believer has the right to **become** a child of God. John records:

"He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1: 11, 12). The believer, therefore, has the right to become a child of God.

The word "right" in this text is translated "power" in the King James version. It is also used in Revelation 9: 10 and Luke 12: 5. The word means, "the right or ability to act." In the original Greek this word, "**power**," in this text means "physical and mental power; the ability or strength with which one is endued, which he either possesses or exercises" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon). The believer is active. He has the right to become a child of God! Not that he is already a child of God, but he has the **right to become a child of God**, by virtue of his faith.

Ladies and gentlemen, man cannot become a child of God unless he is a believer, but not every believer becomes a child of God! The believer only—only has the right to become a child of God. We are not unmindful of the theory which declares that man is saved by faith only, but how

could such a theory be true, in contrast to the simple and plain truth of God which states that the believer has the right to become a child of God? If a person is a child of God by faith only, a child of God the very moment he believes, then what would be the meaning of the word of God which states that the believer has the right to **become** a child of God? How could one become a child of God, if he is already a child of God?

What would you think if someone declared that a child has the right to become the child of his mother and father? Rather absurd, don't you think? Would we accuse God of such absurdity? Why, you would say, the child cannot **become** the child of his parents because he is already the child of his mother and father. Then, if a man is already a child of God, **by faith only**, how could he **become** a child of God? If one is already a child of God, he could hardly become a child of God! The believer has the **right to become** a child of God.

### **Believers Not God's Children**

In John 8: 31-44, Christ exposed a class of Jews who believed on Him, yet declared that they were of their father, the devil! In verse 31, it is recorded, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. " It is declared that they were believers! If the theory of salvation by faith only were true, then we would be forced to the conclusion that they were saved already because they were believers. But such is not the case. They were believers; but in verse 44 of this chapter, our Lord charged that they were of their father, the devil. Hear Him:

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father is your will to do. " Yes, believers, but too stubborn-hearted to accept Christ! As believers they had the right to

become children of God, through obedience to the will of God, but they were of their father, the devil, because they would not hear and obey the word!

### **Popularity**

Another class of believers who will be lost is revealed in John 12: 42, 43, "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. "

Most positively the record states they "**believed on him;** " yet, for the sake of popularity among men, they did nothing about it. They were believers, but not acceptable to God. Believers only will be lost! Jesus declared, "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8: 38).

### **Believers Almost Christians**

Again, another class of believers without God's blessings may be found in Acts 26: 19-29: The apostle Paul made his defense before King Agrippa, related the case of his own conversion to Christ, preached unto the King a crucified and resurrected Lord, the Christ, and emphasized that Moses and the prophets had foretold the same facts of the gospel (verses 22, 23). In verses 27 and 28 Paul declared, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. "

Beloved, in this case we have a man of God, the apostle, declaring: "I know that thou believest. " Yet, the King replied: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. " A believer, but not a Christian! Although the King was a

believer, yet, as far as the divine record reveals, he went into eternity unprepared to meet God. As a believer he had the right to become a Christian by obeying the gospel. He was almost persuaded. Almost cannot avail; almost is but to fail. Almost, but lost! A believer lost!

### **Blessings Of Faith**

Let us consider some examples of faith which received God's blessings. The cleansing of the lepers, recorded in Luke 17: 12-19, is an example of faith with a blessing. To one of the ten Jesus said, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. "

There were ten men who had the dreadful disease of leprosy. They were banished from their friends and their loved ones because of their disease. If anyone should come near them, they were supposed to cry out, with uplifted hands, "Unclean, Unclean!" But on this occasion when they saw Jesus coming they cried, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. " Don't you know that their plea was some evidence of faith in their hearts? Yet, the Lord did not heal them then. There must be outward manifestations of faith, or action of faith, before a blessing of faith could be expected. In reply to their cry Jesus said, "Go show your selves unto the priests"—something for them to do; not faith only!

"And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed, " the record reveals. When were they cleansed? "As they went, " the Bible says. They did what they were told to do. Their faith was expressed by acts of obedience. One of the ten came back, fell at the feet of Jesus and expressed his thanks—truly a manifestation of faith. It was to him our Lord declared, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. " Only one man out of the ten received this blessing of faith, and that was after he had completely manifested his faith by his actions.

### **Believers Who Did Become God's Children**

Ladies and gentlemen, the believer has the right to become a child of God. There are examples of believers who did become children of God, as well as those examples of believers who did not become God's children.

The first example of believers who did become children of God is found in Acts, the second chapter. The first gospel sermon, offering remission of sins in the name of Christ, was delivered. Reaching the climax of his address, the apostle declared, in verse 36, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. "

According to verse 37, of Acts 2, when the people heard the gospel preached by the apostles, setting forth Jesus as Lord and Christ, they were made believers: "Now when they heard this they were pricked in their heart, " that is to say, they were made believers in Christ, having heard the divine testimony of Jesus. This is in harmony with the teaching of Paul in Romans 10: 17, where he declared: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. " Also, in Romans 10: 10 the apostle declared, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. " They were believers. They heard the gospel and being pricked in their heart, they believed; As believers, they had the right to become Christians. What did they do to become children of God?

### **Believers Baptized To Become Christians**

Having heard the gospel and become believers in Christ, the Pentecostians inquired, "What shall we do?" Do not be misled by religious teachers who would have you believe that all one need to do to be saved is just believe. The three thousand were believers; but they realized that, as believers in Christ, they must **do** more to **become** children of God.

My friends, won't you hear me! Are you listening? The



inspired apostles would not misinform these honest and sincere believers. They told them **what** to do, as believers, to **become** Christians. Hear the command of Peter, verse 38 of Acts 2: "**Repent**, and be **baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for **the** remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "

What were these believers told to do? "**Repent and be baptized** for (unto) the remission of sins, " was the inspired command. As believers, they repented and were baptized for the remission of sins. In verse 41 it is recorded that the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

The 3, 000 **believers**, who were **baptized, did become Christians** by virtue of their faith in Christ which was manifested by their obedience to the Lord's commands. One cannot become a child of God unless he is a believer, but not every believer becomes a child of God. The believer only-only has the **right to become a child of God!**

### **Some Believers Baptized Second Time**

Another class of believers who did become Christians is revealed in Acts 19: 1-5.

Paul came to Ephesus and found certain disciples and inquired, "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?"

Notice, they were **disciples**. A disciple is one who has been taught. They were **believers**. A believer is one who has heard the word. They were disciples who were believers, who had been baptized, but they were **not** Christians.

The second question Paul asked was, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" They answered, "Unto John's baptism. "

How different Paul was from many modern preachers of today. The second question he asked was, what about your baptism? Denominational preachers today often ridicule this command of the Lord, declaring that baptism is **not** "for

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remission of sins, " not essential to salvation.

The Ephesians replied by stating they received John's baptism. Believers? Yes! Baptized believers? Yes! That is, they were baptized into John's baptism. But Paul declared, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. " Then, "when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. "

Here is a class of believers who had been baptized of John's baptism; a group of baptized believers who were doing their best to serve God, the best they knew, but they were not Christians. Although they were believers who had already been baptized of John's baptism, when they learned that they were wrong they immediately **became** Christians. As **believers** who had the **right to become** children of God, **they were baptized into Christ**; they **became** Christians. Obviously, the baptism of John was not valid after the baptism authorized by Christ became effective. Paul declared that there is "ONE BAPTISM" (Eph 4: 5).

According to verses 4 and 5 of Acts 19, to believe on Christ is to obey the Lord, including being baptized into Christ.

### By Faith After

An example of faith may be found in Heb. 11: 30: "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. " By **faith** the walls fell! But, when? The Bible states, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down **after**"-**AFTER**-after they did what God told them to do, thereby manifesting their faith. God told them to march around the walls once daily for six days and on the seventh day march seven times (Joshua 6: 3-20). They marched the first day, the second day, the third day, the fourth day, the

fifth day, the sixth day. Every step they made was a step of **faith** because Hebrews 11: 30 declares it was "by faith. " Finally, on the seventh day they began marching. They marched around the walls the first time, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth and yet the walls were standing, because God said for them to march seven times on the seventh day. They marched the seventh time on the seventh day, completing their obedience to God, thereby manifesting their faith, then God did what He said He would do. The walls of Jericho fell. "By faith, " but by faith **after—AFTER** they proved their faith by obeying God's commands; **not by faith only!**

### **Child of God By Faith After**

In Galatians 3: 26, 27, the apostle declared that one is a child of God **by faith**, but **not by faith only**. He said, "For ye are all the sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. " Yes, children of God, by faith, in Christ. Observe that in the American Standard Version the expression "through faith, " is a prepositional phrase. One is a child of God in Christ, but he is not a child of God in faith. He is not a child of God by faith (only) in Christ, but a child of God **in Christ**, through faith.

### **How Many and When?**

My friends, may **I** ask, **how many are in Christ?** As many as believe only? How many believers are in Christ? The Bible answer is: "As many of you as have been **baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.** "

**It is the faith that obeys which is the faith that saves!** Believers are sons of God, in Christ, but the believers are "**baptized into Christ**" to "**put on Christ.** " Therefore, baptism is essential to becoming sons of God, in Christ, just as faith is essential to becoming a child of God! Jesus

commanded, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16).

### **Jailer Saved By Faith And Baptism**

Did Paul tell the jailer to be saved by faith only? According to Acts 16: 30-33, the jailer asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul told them, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved..." However, Paul did not say believe only! Quite the contrary. He told them to believe; then he told them **WHAT TO BELIEVE**. A person cannot believe unless he is told what to believe. Paul, the same writer, quoted the prophet, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?... So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10: 14-17).

Having told them to believe on the Lord, verse 31, he spoke unto them the word of the Lord telling them **what** Christ commands men to do in order to be saved (verse 32): "They spake unto him the word of the Lord. " The word of the Lord is: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (Mark 16: 16); therefore, they preached Christ's command: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. " Verse 33 states clearly: "He took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes: and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. " Why were they baptized? Obviously because they believed the word of Christ and obeyed the gospel, being baptized the same hour of the night! Saved by faith that obeyed. Not by faith alone!

The term "believe" or "belief" is a generic term, a comprehensive term. In Acts 18: 8 it is revealed, "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. " Question: did Crispus believe

only? Positively, no! As a **believer**, he was **baptized into Christ**. In 1 Corinthians 1: 14, Paul said that he baptized Crispus himself.

Salvation is not by faith only. According to Hebrews 11: 17, Abraham was told to take his only son and offer him as a sacrifice upon the altar. We can see father Abraham as he took his only son and made the sad, heart-breaking march out in the loneliness of the mountain to take the life of his only son. What great faith! Surely no man would dare suggest faith alone. What action of faith!

With unwavering faith and complete obedience to God, he placed his son upon the altar and raised his hand to take his life. It was then Jehovah said to this great man of faith, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me" (Genesis 22: 1-12).

Observe, God said: "**Now I know** that thou fearest God. " It is said, "**By faith** Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac. " After Abraham proved his faith by his obedience, God said: "**Now I know** that thou fearest God. " God was saying to him, now I know that you believe!

Each person should ask himself, is my faith sufficient that God would say: "**Now I know thou fearest God**"? Faith, the assurance of things hoped for, must be an obedient faith. One must obey the gospel of Christ and live a faithful consecrated Christian life, adding to faith the Christian virtues of life—"receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (Mark 16: 16; Matt. 28: 18-20; 2 Pet. 1: 5-11; 1 Pet. 1: 9).

Salvation is by faith, through obedience! In that ultimate grand and glorious day, faith will be lost in sight when the redeemed of God's people shall be eternally saved.

## SAVED BY BAPTISM—No. 1

Ladies and gentlemen, did you know that baptism is a command of the Lord and is essential to salvation? The Bible says:

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. " (Mark 16: 15, 16).

"When once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3: 20, 21).

### Obedience To Gospel Essential

Obedience to the gospel of Christ is essential to salvation. Paul declared in Romans 1: 16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. " The apostle Peter declared, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth... having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God... " (1 Peter 1: 22, 23).

In Hebrews 5: 9, it is affirmed that, "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. "

From these scriptures it will be observed that obedience to the gospel is imperative. The serious consequence of not obeying the gospel is revealed in II Thessalonians 1: 7, 8, 9. Paul declared that Jesus is coming in "flaming fire, rendering

vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might. "

### **Baptism Part Of Gospel**

Christ, the author of salvation, made baptism a part of the gospel; therefore, baptism is essential to salvation. In Matthew 28: 19, 20, He commissioned the disciples to preach the gospel of salvation, which includes baptism in water: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. "

Jesus predicates man's salvation upon certain conditions. He commanded, "Preach the gospel... He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. " The gospel must be believed and the believer must be baptized. There is no case of conversion in the book of conversions, the Acts, where one obeyed the gospel without being baptized into Christ. There is no exception! In every case they heard the gospel, they believed the gospel, and they were baptized, as commanded by the Lord. Obedience to the gospel is essential to salvation. Baptism is a part of the gospel, therefore, baptism is essential to salvation!

### **Believe And Baptized—Saved**

The command of Christ in Mark 16: 15, 16 is a complex declarative sentence. Notice the sentence, **He shall be saved**. But, who shall be saved? "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, " is the solemn declaration of our Lord.

Christ did not say, "He that is baptized shall be saved. " Neither did he say: "He that believeth shall be saved. " But

He did say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. "

### **"Believe And Not Baptized"—Saved?**

My friends, where is the teacher who would be willing to add just the one word, "NOT, " to the Lord's divine injunction in Mark 16: 16? Remember, Jesus said, "He that believeth and is **baptized** shall be saved. " Would anyone dare add the word, "**not**" as if to make the Lord say, "He that believeth and is NOT baptized shall be saved"? Yet, that is exactly what is being done by many religious leaders today. If baptism is nonessential, then the Lord Jesus didn't mean what He said in Mark 16: 16, when He said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. " Some would have it read, "He that believeth and is **not** baptized shall be saved. "

Beloved, don't you know such is a perversion of God's word? Don't you know that the curse of Almighty God rests upon any man who would pervert the gospel of Christ? Read Galatians 1: 7, 8.

### **Salvation Bargain?**

Would anyone desire to pervert the Lord's commandment and seek to offer salvation for less than that required by the Lord? Suppose a salesman is working for one in a store and he is informed, "Here is an article which must sell for \$25. 00. " The price tag is plainly marked \$25, but the salesman sells the article for \$10, knowing that the price of the article is \$25. Would you not consider that an act of dishonesty? Obviously, the owner of the store could sell the article for \$10, if he desired, but if any salesperson sold the article for less than the stipulated price of \$25, without authority to do so, that would be nothing short of dishonesty. Jesus Christ offered salvation to those who believe and are baptized. By His authority, salvation must be offered on the condition: "He that believeth and is baptized



shall be saved. " Should one offer salvation for less than the requirements given by the Lord, would not such a proposal be dishonest? How could any man proclaim salvation on the basis of less terms than those affixed by Christ, who is the author of eternal salvation? Jesus said "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" and nothing less will be sufficient.

### **Baptism For Remission of Sins**

Ladies and gentlemen, the Bible teaches that baptism is for remission of sins. When a condition of salvation is stated there can never be less than that condition. There may be more, but never less! Baptism is definitely a condition of salvation.

In the record of Acts 2: 36-41, in response to the question, "What shall we do?" Peter commanded, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (v. 38).

The question in view of the answer, very obviously, is, "What shall we do for remission of sins?" They were **not** told "Repent for remission of sins. " They were **not** told, "Be baptized for remission of sins only. " They **were** told, "**Repent** and be **baptized** for remission of your sins. " Baptized for what purpose? "For **remission** of sins, " the same thing they were to repent for—"repent and be **baptized** for remission of sins. "

### **For, Because Of, Unto Remission Of Sins**

The Greek word for the preposition, unto (for) is **eis**. It literally means into; therefore, baptism puts one into remission of sins, that is, into a state of remission of sins.

In the King James version of the New Testament the word **eis**, in Acts 2: 38, is translated "for"; therefore, many preachers and teachers, who deny that baptism is essential to salvation, assert that "for" in the passage means "because

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of. " But it so happened that God combined repentance and baptism with the little conjunctive word, "and"; therefore, whatever baptism is for, repentance is for. If baptism is "because of" remission of sins, that is, because you already have remission of sins, then repentance is "because of" remission of sins. The absurdity of a person repenting of his sins because he has no sins!

The Greek word *eis* in this passage can mean only, "unto" or "in order. " The same word is used in Matthew 26: 28 when Jesus said, "For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many unto (for) remission of sins. " "For remission of sins" or "unto remission of sins" in this passage is essentially the same as "unto (for) remission of sins" in Acts 2: 38. Surely the preacher who misinforms one by saying the word "for, " in Acts 2: 38 means "because of, " would not affirm that the same word in Matthew 26: 28 also means "because of!" Who would affirm that Christ shed His blood because the sins of men had already been remitted? We are taught in Matthew 26: 28 that Christ shed His blood in order to, in prospect of, the remission of sins. So it is that Peter commanded sinners (Acts 2: 38) to repent and be baptized unto, in order to, the remission of sins.

I submit two or three quotations from the testimony of scholars of different denominations on this passage of Scripture,

Heinrich Meyer (Lutheran), comments on Acts 2: 38: "'Eis' (unto) denotes the object of baptism, which is remission of the guilt contracted in the state before 'Metanoia' (repentance). "

Charles B. Williams, well known Baptist scholar, in his translation of the New Testament renders Acts 2: 38 as follows (page 261): "Peter said unto them, 'You must

repent and, as an expression of it, let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ that you may have your sins forgiven'. "

Dr. Williams very clearly and rightfully renders the passage, "Be baptized that you may have your sins forgiven. " Baptism is essential to remission of sins, although the denomination of which Dr. Williams is a member denies this great fundamental truth of the gospel.

### **Remission, Sent Back To God**

No doubt many honest and sincere people, who have been immersed, consider themselves to have been baptized "for (unto) remission of sins, " yet, they do not fully understand the meaning of "remission. " Literally the word means to "send back. " A person may repent of his sins, even declare he would like to go back to his days of childhood innocence and start all over again, but that cannot be done. There is only one way for a penitent believer to begin anew. The believer who repents sends back his sins to God in the act of baptism, which is called, "remission of sins"; then, God forever pardons and removes the guilt of sin. Some honest and sincere people have so grossly misunderstood God's word that they even claim to have been baptized "for remission of sins, " while at the same time claiming to have been saved from their sins before they were baptized.

### **Baptism Saves**

The apostle Peter declared that water baptism saves. He did not say that baptism alone saves, but he did affirm that baptism saves: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us" (1 Peter 3: 20, 21).

Eight souls were saved by means of water during the days of Noah. Peter declared they "were saved by water. " He then draws from the figure a definite application and

conclusion, that is, water "baptism doth also now save us. " Notice these words in this text which I emphasize: "WATER, " "BAPTISM, " "ALSO, " "NOW, " "SAVE, " "US. " Question: If baptism saves, as affirmed by the apostle, what does it save from? Obviously, salvation is from sin!

The apostle furthermore concluded that baptism does **not** save from "filth of the flesh, " but is "the answer of a good conscience toward God, " which is another way of saying that water baptism saves. Remember, Christ commanded, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16). If the Lord Jesus Christ commanded baptism as a condition of salvation, and obedience to the gospel of Christ is essential to salvation (and it is — 2 Thessalonians 1: 7, 8), then water baptism is essential to salvation and no honest and sincere soul who has been taught the gospel can have a good conscience toward God without obeying the Lord's command to be baptized.

### **Baptized Into Christ**

My friends, Paul explains why baptism saves. Baptism puts one **into** Christ. Salvation is in Christ. Baptism puts one "INTO CHRIST"; therefore, baptism is essential to salvation. "For as many of you as were baptized **into** Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3: 27). Question: How many are saved in Christ? Hear the answer from God's word: "For as **many.** " How many? How many would you say? How many does your preacher say? How many does Paul say? Hear it? Are you listening?... "For as **many** of you as **were baptized into** Christ did put on Christ. " How many put on Christ? "**As many as were baptized into** Christ, " Paul declared! Can one be saved out of Christ? Surely, surely, if baptism is essential to being in Christ, baptism is essential to salvation!

## SAVED BY BAPTISM - NO. 2

### Forgiveness — Redemption In Christ

Ladies and gentlemen, according to Colossians 1: 13, 14, redemption and forgiveness are in Christ: "In whom we have our redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins.

One is a new creature in Christ: "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new" (2 Cor. 5: 17).

The Bible says we are baptized into Christ; therefore, baptism is essential to being in Christ where we obtain forgiveness, redemption, and where we become new creatures! If responsible men can be saved without being baptized into Christ, they can be saved without redemption; they can be saved without forgiveness; they can be saved without becoming new creatures in Christ!

The 3, 000 converts of Acts 2: 38, 41 were "baptized for remission of sins" when they obeyed the Lord. It is recorded that "they then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. " From this statement there are at least two conclusions we must observe. First: The word of the Lord, as preached by Peter, included baptism for remission of sins. Second: Everyone who heard and obeyed the word submitted to baptism as a part of their obedience to the gospel, which was essential to their salvation. All who received the word of the Lord were baptized! These are inevitable conclusions.

**Baptism is essential to salvation:** "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16). **Baptism is "for (unto) remission of sins"** (Acts 2: 38). Baptism saves:

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"baptism doth also now save us" (1 Peter 3: 21). **Baptism puts one into Christ:** "as many as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3: 27).

### **Baptized — Wash Away Sins**

The conversion of Saul, ' recorded in Acts 9: 1-18 and 22: 3-16, reveals the necessity of baptism, as a condition of salvation. Saul inquired, "Lord, what will thou have me do?" Christ replied, "Arise, go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do. " Something "MUST" be done! When the messenger came with the word of the Lord he commanded, "Arise and **be baptized, and wash away thy sins**, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22: 16). Saul's sins were not forgiven or "washed away" by virtue of the blood of Christ, until he was baptized. Later Paul declared that he was baptized into the death of Christ: "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6: 3).

### **What Is Baptism?**

My friends, what is baptism? The words, baptist, baptism, baptize, baptized, and baptizing are all from Greek words, which have been anglicized to satisfy the demands of English euphony, and transferred to the English versions of the Bible. The word, "baptisma, " rendered "baptism, " occurs 22 times in the New Testament. "Baptismos" occurs four times, three times rendered "washing" and one time "baptism. " "Baptistee" occurs fourteen times, connected with John, and is rendered "Baptist. " "Baptidzo" occurs eighty times, seventy-eight times rendered "baptize, " or "baptized, " and one time each "wash" and "washing. " The meaning of the word "baptidzo, " rendered in the English, "Baptize, " never had any meaning but to immerse, dip, cover up, overwhelm, or bury. I submit a few quotations from eminent Bible scholars on the subject.

From Encyclopedia Americana: "Baptism, that is, dipping, immersion from the Greek word, Baptidzo. "

Edinburg Encyclopedia: "The whole person was immersed in water. "

Butterworth renders baptidzo, "to dip, immerse, or plunge. "

Martin Luther declared, "The term baptism is a Greek word; it may be rendered into Latin by Mersio; when we immerse anything in water, that it may be entirely covered in water. And though this custom be quite abolished among the generality (for neither do they entirely dip children, but only sprinkle them with a little water), nevertheless they ought to be wholly immersed, and immediately to be drawn out again, **for** the etymology of the word seems to require it. "

John Calvin: "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and the rite of baptism was practiced by the ancient church. "

John Wesley, in his notes on Romans 6: 4 and Colossians 2: 12 said, "Buried with him, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion. "

Let us appeal to the New Testament for information. The Holy Scriptures teach that baptism is a burial.

### **Baptism—A Burial**

**In** Romans 6: 3, 4, Paul wrote, "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were **buried** therefore with him **through baptism** into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. " This passage and a similar passage found in Colossians 2: 12, states: "**buried** with him **in baptism**, wherein also ye are risen with him. "

There are three things implied in the act of baptism or burial. First: the thing to be buried. Second: the thing buried

in. Third: the act of the burying. A burial may differ in many ways as to the thing buried. It might be a man, a horse, or a treasure. It may differ as to the thing buried in. It might be buried in earth or in water, but in the act of burying there can never be a difference. There must be a placing in and covering up in every burial. An individual, therefore, cannot be buried in a few drops of water, or when a small stream is poured upon him. A person is immersed in water when he is buried in baptism, as the inspired apostle declared, and he is baptized only when he is immersed.

### **Baptism—A Resurrection**

Baptism is both a burial and a resurrection. Paul explained in Colossians 2: 12: "Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. "

Having stated that one who is buried by baptism into Christ is baptized into his death, Paul concluded: "For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Romans 6: 3-5). Baptism is a burial and a resurrection! It is impossible for "sprinkling" and "pouring" to be a burial and a resurrection; therefore, sprinkling or pouring is not baptism!

When the man of Ethiopia was baptized, "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8: 36-39).

Repetitions in the Bible are not without purpose. It should be observed in this text that when the Ethiopian officer was baptized the inspired record says: "They went down **both** into the water, **both** Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. " Surely, this repetitious explanation is not



without divine purpose —"they went down **both into the water, both** Philip and the eunuch. " Evidently God did not want any man to misunderstand what baptism is. "**BOTH**" — inspiration emphasized; **both** — the man being baptized and the man who did the baptizing, "**went down into the water.** " Sprinkling or pouring of water for baptism would hardly require **both** — **both** the man being baptized and the administrator of the baptism — **going down into the water and both** coming "up out of the water. "

### **Baptism—Born Of Water**

Baptism is a birth of water, as declared by Jesus when he said to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3: 5). A birth always contemplates delivery; therefore, when a man is born of the water he must be delivered from, or come forth out of "it. It is physically impossible for one to be delivered from, or come forth out of that in which he has never been; therefore, it of necessity follows that a man must be placed in water before he can be delivered from the water, or born of it. To be born of water one must be immersed in it that he may emerge from it. Honestly, how could one be born of water with only a few drops sprinkled or poured upon his body?

Surely, we must understand that it is impossible for anything to be born of something smaller than itself. Could you imagine the possibility of a child being born of a mother smaller than the child itself. We know this is impossible. Man cannot be born of a substance smaller, or less than himself. Born of the water is to be buried in baptism and raised to walk in newness of life, as a new creature in Christ!

### **Obey Form—Then Free**

In Romans 6: 17, 18, Paul wrote, "But God be thanked,

that ye were servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin... " They were made free from sin when they obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine. The form of doctrine which they obeyed is stated in preceding verses 3 through 6 of the same chapter. "Buried therefore with him through baptism into death" and "raised from the dead" to walk in a new life, he declared in verse 4. We cannot obey the literal death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, but we can obey the **form** of it. Here is both the reality and the form. A beautiful picture! Number one: Christ died. We die to the practice of sins, which is repentance. Number two: Christ was buried. We are buried, not in the tomb, but in a grave of water. Number three: Christ was raised from the dead. We are raised from the watery grave. Number four: He walked with His disciples for a while. We walk in the new life in fellowship with Christ and with one another. Last, number five: Christ ascended to the Father in Heaven. We, too, shall live with the redeemed of all ages, if we obey from our hearts the form of doctrine which has been delivered unto us and live faithfully until the end of our journey here below.

### **Origin Of Sprinkling**

Sprinkling of water for baptism was officially adopted at the council of Revenna in 1311 A. D., being instituted by the Roman Catholic Church. The Greek Catholic Church did not accept the practice of substituting sprinkling of water for baptism in water then and they still do not accept it today, although authorized by the pope. The Catholic scholars will admit that the meaning of the original Greek word, "baptidzo" is immersion.

### **Who Were Baptized?**

Beloved, who is the proper subject for baptism? When

Christ gave the great commission He said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. " The record clearly states that those who were baptized were they who were **taught**. Again, in Mark 16: 15, 16, Jesus commanded: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that disbelieved shall be condemned. " The Lord most clearly states that those who are to be baptized are they who believe and those who believe are they who have heard the gospel.

Again, I submit a few quotations from eminent Bible scholars on this question.

Bishop Burnet said, "There is no express precept of rule given in the New Testament for the baptism of infants. "

Martin Luther said, "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles. "

Dr. Wall states, "Among all the people that are recorded as baptized by the apostles, there is no express mention of any infant. There is no express mention of any children baptized by them. " Other quotations could be added.

### **No Infants**

My friends, the first baptism which occurred under the divine commission of our Lord was the baptizing of the 3, 000 on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection, recorded in Acts, chapter 2. Peter preached the gospel. Thousands heard, believed, repented and were baptized. Could you imagine infants and children being told to **repent and be baptized?** The record states that they that **gladly received his word were baptized**. Infants cannot receive or believe the word; therefore, infants were not baptized.

But, someone might suggest that the case of the conversion of Lydia and her household, recorded in Acts 16: 13-15, might suggest that infants were baptized on that occasion. Let us observe a few details of this conversion. The suggestion that infants were baptized is purely presumption. First, it would have to be assumed that infants are in every family and were baptized when a household was baptized. To prove that infants were baptized with Lydia's household, the first proposition would be to prove that Lydia was married, or had children. Second: that some of the children were infants. Third: it would have to be proved that these infant children were with her, although she lived in Thyatira and was then in the city of Philippi, 300 miles from her home. All of which is unfounded presumption and is in direct contradiction to the Scriptures.

### **One Baptism**

The apostle Paul stated most conclusively that there is "one baptism" (Ephesians 4: 5). The same author, in the same chapter and verse, who said there is "one Lord, " affirmed there is "one baptism. " That could be none other than baptism in water, commanded by our Lord, the burial, the resurrection, the birth, the washing away of sins, the action of the "one faith" that puts one **into** Christ!

The "**one** baptism, " to which the apostle referred, surely was the baptism authorized by Christ when he gave the great commission, as recorded in Matthew 28: 19, 20, and Mark 16: 15, 16.

The administrators of the "one baptism" were to be disciples of Christ; not Christ himself, not the Holy Spirit, but Christ's disciples. The "one baptism" was begun to be taught and practiced on Pentecost when Peter commanded, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38).

Just before Jesus returned to his Father in Heaven he announced that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24: 47, 48).

All things must have a beginning. The "one baptism" **had** its beginning in Jerusalem because the preaching of the "remission of sins, " in the name of Christ among all nations, originated on this memorial day, the first Pentecost after the Lord's resurrection, in the city of Jerusalem. Since baptism was "for the remission of sins" and "remission of sins" was to be preached in Christ's name, beginning at Jerusalem, the inevitable conclusion must follow that the "one baptism" was "for remission of sins" and had its beginning in Jerusalem on Pentecost of Acts, 2nd chapter!

The **purpose** of the "**one baptism**" was **to be "saved"** (Mark 16: 16), "for remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38), to "**wash away thy sins**" (Acts 22: 16), to put one "**into Christ**" (Gal. 3: 27), to "**save us**" (1 Peter 3: 21). Do you ask, "Why be baptized?" One may as well ask, "Why be saved?"

### **One Baptism, Water**

There can be no doubt that the "**one baptism**" is **water** baptism. When the Ethiopian officer was baptized he requested, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Having confessed his faith in the Son of God, "they went down both into the **water**, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up **out** of the **water**, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8: 36-39).

The inspired apostle Peter, who commanded the 3, 000 to "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38), testified that the "one baptism" was **water** baptism.

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To these same people, identified in Acts 2: 9-11. and I Peter 1: 1, he referred to the saving of Noah's family as "eight souls were saved by water, " and concluded that "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us" (I Peter 3: 20, 21).

### Four Baptisms

All Bible students are aware of the fact that the New Testament refers to more baptisms than the "one baptism" in Ephesians 4: 5. But there is no contradiction. Let us briefly consider other baptisms in the New Testament.

### Baptism of **John**

The baptism of John was called "John's baptism, " Acts 19: 3, because it was John's baptism. He was the administrator and it was done by his authority. Multitudes "were baptized of him in the Jordan" (Matthew 3: 5, 6).

The purpose of John's baptism was preparatory, for the coming of Christ. He baptized where there was "much water" (John-3: 23) and "unto repentance, " saying "that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus" (Matthew 3: 11; Acts 19: 3, 4).

My friends, don't you know that John's baptism is no longer valid, since the "one baptism, " authorized by Christ, was begun. In Acts 19: 1-5, we have the record of the disciples at Ephesus who had formerly believed and had been baptized of John's baptism; yet, when they learned of the "one baptism" they "were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19: 3-5). These believing disciples were **baptized the second time.**

### **Satisfied With Baptism**

Frequently those who have been baptized, but **not** baptized "for remission of sins, " may be heard to say, "I'm satisfied with my baptism. " But the fact is, the Lord, who

authorized the "one baptism, " which is "for the remission of sins, " may not be satisfied. No doubt, many honest and sincere souls should become dissatisfied, just as the Ephesians of Acts 19: 3-5.

### **Baptism Of Holy Spirit**

Another baptism of New Testament times was the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, however, was never at any time given as a command to be obeyed. No man has ever, nor may ever administer Holy Spirit baptism. John the Baptist declared that only Christ was the administrator of Holy Spirit baptism (Matthew 3: 11).

The element of Holy Spirit baptism was the Holy Spirit. It was not a baptism by the Holy Spirit, but baptism of the Holy Spirit. Those who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit were completely overwhelmed, submerged, and possessed by the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a **promise** given to the apostles (Acts 1: 2-5), and fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 1: 26; 2: 1-21).

The purpose was to reveal God's will to mankind, offering remission of sins in the name of Christ, to bring to the remembrance of the apostles Christ's teaching and to "guide you into all truth" (John 14: 26; 16: 13). One thing is certain: that is, Holy Spirit baptism is one, and water baptism is one. **One plus one equals two**, therefore, two baptisms! But Paul says there is "one baptism" (Eph. 4: 5).

### **Baptism Of Fire**

The baptism of fire was promised in Matthew 3: 11, 12, with Christ as the administrator, with hell-fire the element and future punishment as its purpose. Verse 12 of this text leaves us no doubt that the baptism with fire will occur when the righteous are separated from the unrighteous. In Palestine

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the Jews often used a fan in separating the chaff from the wheat. But when Christ comes again "he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. "

The baptism of fire is yet future and will be punishment **of the wicked in hell.** When our Lord comes he will thoroughly purge by separating the wheat from the chaff and he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire!

### Only One Today

Ladies and gentlemen, hear it! Are you listening? There can be no denial of the fact that the inspired apostle declared that there is "one baptism" (Eph. 4: 5). Observe the key word, "IS, " in the text. It is present tense. Today, now, since the day of Pentecost, including the day Paul wrote those words to the church at Ephesus, **there IS one baptism.** The baptism of John and the baptism of the Holy Spirit are in the **past.** The baptism of fire is yet future. Today there IS ONE BAPTISM, baptism in water **"for remission of sins, " to "wash away thy sins. "**

### Don't Reject Baptism

Baptism is not a mere ceremony, or church ordinance. It is a solemn act of obedience to God. To reject the command of baptism is to reject the gospel of Christ, because everyone must admit that baptism is a part of the gospel. If one can be saved without baptism, he can be saved without obeying the gospel. To reject baptism is to reject the counsel of God. In Luke 7: 30 is recorded the lawyers and Pharisees "rejected for themselves the counsel of God, not being baptized of Him. "

Beloved, will you not obey the commands of the Lord? To every man on earth He commands: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. " Hear Him! "Why call ye me, **Lord, Lord,** and do not the things which I say?"



## SAVED BY GRACE

Greetings, my friends! Is it possible for a child of God to fall from grace and be lost? Before one can fall from the grace of God and be lost he must have been saved by God's grace. Without the grace of God, no man can be saved. Paul emphasized the merits of God's grace when he wrote:

"But God, being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, (by grace have you been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus: for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2: 4-9).

Definitely, the New Testament teaches that man is saved by grace. Were it not for the grace of God no man could be saved. We wish, therefore, to learn from the teachings of the Scriptures how men are saved by the grace of God.

### What Is Grace?

It is important that we understand the meaning of the term, "grace. " Webster defines grace as, "favor, mercy, pardon. Undeserved kindness and mercy of God. " The inspired apostle defines or describes grace in these words, "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. " From this inspired definition of grace we learn that grace is favor and kindness of God, shown to us through Christ, his Son.

We are not unmindful of the fact that some would have

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us believe that being saved by grace is neither intelligent, nor explainable, but to be saved by the grace of God is to have some peculiar experience, or peculiar feeling, that is "better felt than told, " something you cannot explain. It must be denied that this theory of salvation is true. Being saved by the grace of God is a most intelligent matter. To be saved by the grace of God one must be TAUGHT the will of God, which he must believe and obey.

### Grace Appears Teaching

To Titus Paul wrote, in Titus 2: 11, 12, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing (teaching) us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world. "

Notice carefully that Paul said the grace of God appears bringing salvation to all **men**, "**teaching**" them. We must not mistake convulsions for conversions, nor can one. merely depend on his peculiar feeling as evidence of salvation.

Someone might presume that because he has an unusual feeling and his heart beats faster than usual, the rapid pulsations of his literal heart are sure evidence of the fact that he is saved—saved by the grace of God; something he just can't explain, but he feels it anyway. But, all must recognize the fact that fright, or an unusual pleasant surprise, might produce the same effect upon one's feelings. Yet, such peculiar feelings should not be used as evidence of one being saved by grace. One's feelings may be varied and different, caused by different circumstances, not even related to God's grace. Man's salvation cannot be predicated upon his feelings. Being saved by God's grace is a most intelligent matter and there are definite reasons which produce the feeling of one's assurance of salvation.

### Grace Manifested Through Gospel

Beloved, how is the grace of God manifested, or revealed? Paul gave the answer: "That as sin reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5: 21).

Grace, the apostle declared, reigns through righteousness. But you ask, what is righteousness? David declared, "For all thy commandments are righteousness" (Psa. 119: 172). This is in harmony with the statement of Paul in Romans 1: 16, 17, when he said: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jews first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith... "

The righteousness, of God, the apostle emphasized, is revealed through the gospel. But he declared that grace reigns through righteousness; therefore, the grace of God, by which we are saved, is revealed through the gospel of Christ. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, " Paul affirmed!

### God Forgives

Pardon must always take place in the mind of the one who has been offended. Man has sinned against God; therefore, he, man, is the offender, or sinner and God is the offended. Suppose you were to sin against someone. Would forgiveness take place in your mind, or in the mind of the one who was offended? Forgiveness would occur in the mind of the one offended. Furthermore, one thing is certain; regardless of how much you might desire the forgiveness of that error, you would never know that you were forgiven without some means of communication informing you that you were forgiven. Thus, regardless of how much man may

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desire the forgiveness of his sins against God, he will never know that his sins have been pardoned without the proper means of communication from God, informing him of the conditions of his pardon and the state of his forgiveness. Just because one may feel that his sins have been pardoned is no definite assurance that his sins have been forgiven. God forgives, but he forgives on certain conditions, which are made known through the gospel.

### By God's Grace

Salvation is by grace. It was because of God's love, mercy, and kindness, which he had for man, that he provided a plan of salvation. Man did not deserve it. He had no lawful claim on God. Man could claim no equitable grounds of right or title to salvation. He was a sinner, a rebel, a transgressor. But God was so abounding in mercy, kindness and grace that he gave his Son, who interposed with his blood, to atone for our sins. Apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission, according to Hebrews 9: 22.

The extent of salvation, through God's grace, is unlimited. The apostle declared, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. " In giving the great commission, Jesus commanded, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16: 15). Regardless of the color of one's skin, or the language he may speak, salvation is offered to every man. To all classes and degrees of men. To the rich and the poor, noble and ignoble, monarch and the peasant, the ruler and the slave, Christ offers the blessed hope of salvation. To all men of all grades of moral guilt the conditions of pardon are offered in the **name of Christ**. It includes the moralist and excludes not the profane. Men of all ages, who are responsible before God, are included in the universality of salvation. Salvation warmly embraces the young, receives the middle-aged, and rejects not

the aged. How wonderful is the offer of salvation! Are you **not** glad that you have the opportunity of being a Christian?

### **Not Universal Salvation**

Beloved, won't you hear me! Are you listening? Although salvation is offered to all men everywhere, salvation is not universal. Only those who appropriate the blessings of salvation, offered through the grace of God, will God save. There may be many good things of life to enjoy, blessings that are free, but unless we avail ourselves of the good things offered to us, we will not be benefited by them. One might stand by a cool, refreshing spring of water and die of thirst, unless he appropriated the blessings of water by drinking of the life-sustaining blessing of the water!

### **Paul Saved By Grace**

Surely, there can be no better example of salvation by grace than the example of the inspired author of the text of Ephesians 2: 4-9, Paul, himself. This great man of God wrote to the early Christians (1 Cor. 15: 10): "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain... yet, not I, but the grace of God which was with me. "

Truly, Paul could write, not only by divine revelation, but by his own personal experience, "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)".

Let us briefly consider Paul's own conversion, the record of which is found in the 9th and 22nd chapters of Acts. According to Paul himself, Acts 23: 1, he was a man who lived before God always in all good conscience, having been taught the law, and was "zealous toward God. " He was a very religious man, sincerely devoted to God, but as yet not

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saved by the grace of God.

Just because a person is honest, sincere, feels a deep sense of security, lives before God in all good conscience, is deeply religious and devoted to a religious cause, does not mean that he is saved by the grace of God.

### Jesus Appeared To Saul

While on his way to Damascus to persecute the church of our Lord, Jesus appeared to Saul and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Saul replied, "Who art thou, Lord?" Jesus answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. " Then, trembling and astonished, Paul inquired, "Lord, what will thou have me do?" Christ, the Savior, replied, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9: 6).

### Must Be Taught

It will be observed that, although the Lord talked with Saul directly from heaven, which occurred during the days of miracles, he was not saved by some direct manifestation of grace. Jesus informed Saul that he would be TOLD what he MUST do. The experience of salvation by grace is not some peculiar feeling, "better felt than told, " as a result of some heavenly vision, or direct manifestation from God. Saul was saved by grace. He was TOLD what he MUST do to be saved by grace!

### Saved By Grace — Baptized

Saul waited in the city of Damascus to hear what he must do to be saved. For three days and nights he was deeply penitent and prayed. Still, he was unsaved. Finally, the gospel, which is the power of God to save the believer (Romans 1: 16), was brought to him by Ananias. According to Acts 22: 16 Saul was commanded, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling

on the name of the Lord. "

He was saved by grace when his sins were forgiven, or washed away, but his sins were not "washed away" until he obeyed the Lord's command: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 15, 16).

But, someone may inquire, "Was not Saul saved **on the Damascus road when he** received his sight?" My friends, Saul received his physical eyesight three days later in Damascus. He was struck blind on the Damascus road (Acts 22: 9-13). **The** restoration of physical eyesight was in no way related to salvation by grace.

If Saul were saved before he was baptized, the Lord didn't know anything about it because Christ informed him that he would be **told** what he **must** do. If Saul were saved before he was baptized, he was saved with his sins still unforgiven! Remember, he was told, "**Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins.** " Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Every condition of grace, revealed in the gospel, is essential to salvation and none is less essential than another. It is obvious from the text that Saul was a penitent believer, who had confessed Christ as the Son of God, and was baptized into Christ. By God's grace, Saul was saved! Truly, the apostle could declare, "By the grace of God **I am what I am.** " Remember, it was he who wrote: "**For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them**" (Eph. 2: 8-10). Truly, salvation is by grace!

## **FALLING FROM GRACE**

Ladies and gentlemen, did you know that a child of God, one who has been saved by the blood of Christ, may fall away and be eternally lost in hell? There are more than 2, 500 warnings in the Bible concerning man's falling away. This fact is very clearly taught throughout the Bible. It should challenge our thinking and induce more faithful obedience to God's holy commandments.

Paul, the apostle, wrote to the early Christians:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5: 14).

### **Devil A Fool**

If it is impossible for a child of God to be lost, then the devil is very foolish. For some 6, 000 years the devil has been trying to get one, or more, of God's children and send his soul to hell, but he has never gotten one yet, according to the theory of unconditional salvation. The devil isn't wise enough to know it is impossible for him to cause a child of God to be lost, so he just keeps on trying, although he can't get him anyway. Do not be deceived! The devil is very successful in sending teeming millions to hell, including some of God's own children!

### **Forsake God And Be Forsaken**

Almighty God has solemnly warned that if His people



forsake Him, then God will forsake man. If man does not forsake God, then God will never forsake man.

This is the word of God: "And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth the hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever" (1 Chron. 28: 9).

God warns: "Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; the Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you" (2 Chron. 15: 2).

### **Take Heed Lest Ye Fall**

The venerable apostle Paul warned God's people of the danger of falling. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he **fall**" (1 Cor. 10: 12).

As the apostle considered his own personal responsibility, he wrote, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9: 27). Paul realized there could be a possibility of being lost himself, although he was a faithful apostle of Christ.

In his letter to the Hebrews, the apostle warned God's children: "Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God" (Hebrews 3: 12).

In Hebrews 6: 4-6, the apostle declared: "For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the

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Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (ASV).

Notice, the description of children of God:

1. Once enlightened
2. Tasted the heavenly gift
3. Made partakers of the Holy Spirit
4. Tasted the good word of God
5. Tasted the powers of the age to come

What better identity of a child of God could one find? Yet the apostle declared, "**then fell away.** "

Do you ask what will be the end of a child of God whose life is unfruitful? Let the apostle give his conclusion of the matter: "But if it beareth thorns and thistles, it is rejected and nigh unto a curse; whose end is to be burned" (Hebrews 6: 8 ASV). What will the end be, Paul? The application and conclusion of Paul's teaching in Hebrews 6th chapter, is the regretful fact that the unfruitful plant in God's kingdom, the rejected child of God, **is to be burned**!"

### **Last State Worse Than First**

My friends, the apostle Peter made it very definitely known that a child of God may fall away and be lost: "For if, after they escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2 Peter 2: 20, 21).

Observe the identity of these people and the final results:

1. They escaped the defilements of the world
2. They escaped through the knowledge of Christ
3. They turned from the holy commandments
4. They may again become entangled and overcome
5. The last state worse than the first.

### Born Into Kingdom — Gathered Out

Christ declared that one must be "born again" to be in His kingdom, John 3: 3-5. Yet, He warned that when He comes again some will be gathered out of His kingdom and cast into hell:

"The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13: 41, 42).

### Falling From Grace — Objections

We now consider some objections offered by those who contend that it is impossible for a child of God to fall away and be lost.

#### Objection No. 1: ETERNAL LIFE NOW

It is affirmed that the believer has eternal life now, the moment he believes, and cannot be lost:

"He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5: 24). The statement, "hath eternal life, and shall not come **into** condemnation" is misunderstood. "Shall not come into condemnation" does not mean **impossible** to be condemned. In **John** 3: 36, Jesus also said, "He that believeth on the Son **hath** everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life. " In John 5: 24, we are taught that the believer **shall not** come into condemnation. " If John 5: 24 means that it is impossible to become an unbeliever and be lost, then **John** 3: 36 teaches that it is impossible for an unbeliever to become a believer and be saved. The term "**shall not**" is as **permanent** and authoritative in one passage as the other. In one passage the **believer shall not**" **come into condemnation**. In the other passage the **unbeliever "shall not see life.** "

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The conclusion: The two scriptures are not contradictory. If an unbeliever may become a believer and "see life" then the believer may become an unbeliever and "come into condemnation. " A child of God, therefore, can be lost!

### **Hope For Eternal Life**

A child of God has eternal life as a promise:

"And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (1 John 2: 25).

A child of God hopes for eternal life: "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1: 2). Again, in Titus 3: 7, "Being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. "

Question: Paul, what are you hoping for? Hear his answer:

"For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what man hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8: 24, 25).

### **Eternal Life At End**

Eternal life is rewarded the believer at "**the end.** " Paul said, "But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life" (Romans 6: 22). Our Lord declared: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2: 10).

### **Eternal Life In World To Come**

Our Lord promised eternal life in the world to come. Hear him! Are you listening? "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this

time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10: 29, 30). In the **world** to come, Jesus declared!

#### Objection No. 2: MY SHEEP NEVER PERISH

An objection has been raised against the teaching of the Scriptures, which declare eternal life is yet to come, because Christ said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10: 27-29).

But this passage does teach that eternal life is conditional. Let us observe the passage closely:

1. "My sheep hear my voice"
2. "I know them"
3. "They follow me"
4. "I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish"

The sheep follow Christ after they know Him. Christ gives unto them eternal life after they follow Him; and, eternal life will be given at the judgment. Read carefully Matt. 25: 31, 34, 46.

#### Not **Pluck From Father's Hand**

Objection is also raised, stating that because Christ said, "no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand, " it is, therefore, impossible for a child of God to be lost.

It is true the devil cannot, like a wolf, snatch away a child of God and send him to hell. If man is lost it will be by virtue of his own choosing. God does not allow man to be tempted above that which he is able to bear, but man must do the escaping. Hear the apostle in 1 Cor. 10: 13: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the

way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it. "

God makes the way of escape, but man may or may not escape — all depends on him. James declares, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4: 7). Man himself must do the resisting to put the devil on the run.

#### Objection No. 3: CANNOT SIN

Another objection is offered because John said, "Who-soever is begotten of God doth not commit sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God " (1 John 3: 9).

Beloved, this divine declaration is often misunderstood. To say that it is impossible for a child of God to sin would be an absolute contradiction of the same writer in 1 John 1: 8, 9. In this passage John declares, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. " It must be remembered that John was addressing children of God, and included himself when he said, "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us" (1 John 1: 10).

Actually, as long as a child of God is faithful to the word of God, the "seed, " which "**abideth in him,** " he cannot sin. However, "**cannot**" **does not mean "impossible"** in this case. A Christian may be asked, or tempted, to engage in some sinful practice, but he answers: "**I cannot** because I'm a Christian. " That doesn't mean that it would be impossible for him to engage in the sin. Obviously, one could engage in the sinful practice but **as a Christian he cannot.**

A parent may tell his child, "You cannot do that. " Does that make it impossible for the child to disobey? Of course not! Actually, when one says, "You cannot do that, " it is implied that it is possible to do it. The child cannot do that and please his parents; nevertheless, it is possible for the child to disobey, if he chooses to do so.

A child of God cannot please God if he disobeys his will; but he surely may sin against God if he chooses to do so. If he disobeys the commandments of God, he has sinned! John said, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2: 4). Therefore, it must be concluded: a child of God can so sin as to be lost.

#### Objection No. 4: WILL NOT CAST OUT

Again, objection is raised: But, Christ said, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6: 37).

True, Christ will send nobody to hell. Every person who will go to torment will go there of his choice and volition. We must remember that Christ invites all that labor and are heavy laden to be saved (Matt. 11: 28). Yet, he declares the unprofitable servant will be cast out! (Matt. 25: 30). Yes, the unfaithful child of God may be cast out; he may be lost!

#### Objection No. 5: ABLE TO KEEP FROM FALLING

Inasmuch as we are told in Jude 24 that God "is able to keep you from falling, " many have concluded that it is impossible for a child of God to fall. Yet, when we read the 21st verse of Jude we are told, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. " Keep yourselves in the love of God, was the divine injunction! A personal responsibility. God will do his part to keep one from falling, but the child of God has a personal responsibility to "keep yourselves in the love of God. "

#### Objection No. 6: LORD FORSAKES NOT HIS SAINTS

"For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints: they are preserved forever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cast off" (Psalms 37: 29). This passage is often quoted as an objection to the hundreds of scriptures which

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teach the possibility of a child of God being lost, but it is misapplied. No, God will not forsake his children and leave them for the devil. But, when man forsakes God, God forsakes man, 2 Chron. 15: 2: "The Lord is with you, while ye are with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. "

### Objection No. 7: NOTHING CAN SEPARATE

This very familiar passage of scripture, Romans 8: 35-39, is often used to sustain a denial that the word of God does teach the possibility of a child of God being lost. In this divine statement Paul concludes, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. "

Truly, there is nothing that separates us from the love of God. God loves His children. God loved the world when man was completely alienated from Him, even to the extent that He gave His only Son for man's salvation. Nothing can ever separate us from the love of God. But, man's OWN sins can separate him from God: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that he cannot save: neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59: 1).

Nothing can separate us from the love of God, but God admonishes his children, "Keep yourselves in the love of God ... " (Jude 21). Keeping ourselves in the love of God is the condition of not being separated from the love of God.

### Love Of World Vs. Love Of God

A Christian must divest himself of conflicting affections and interest. The attractions of the world, which appeal to the lusts of the flesh, **alienate the Christian from God.** To



**the** child of God, John wrote: "Love not the world, neither **the** things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2: 15). Would **this** not be strange and meaningless language to Christians, if it were impossible for a child of God to be lost? Because of love for sins of the world a child of God may become guilty of alienation of love and affections for Christ, to whom he is spiritually married (Rom. 7: 1-4; Eph. 5: 22-32).

James warned Christians of the conflict of affections: "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" (James 4: 4).

### **Unfruitful Branches Burned**

Jesus, our Lord, declared, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15: 5, 6).

Christ is the vine and his disciples are the branches. What happens if "**a man**" (**branch**) **does not continue to abide in the vine (Christ) and becomes "withered"**? **Jesus gave the answer. Hear Him! Are you listening?** "They gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned"!

### **CONCLUSION:**

Hear the words of the apostle! And I say, are you listening? "For the freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled in a yoke of bondage... Ye **are** severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace" (Gal. 5: 1, 4).

A child of God can be "severed, " cut off from Christ. It would be impossible to **sever** a finger from your hand unless the finger were part of the hand. It would be impossible for one to be "**SEVERED**" from Christ unless he were in Christ

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— a Christian. Paul wrote this admonition to those in Christ, children of God (Gal. 3: 26, 27). A child of God may fall from grace and be lost!

The unfaithful members of the Lord's church, the disloyal citizens of Christ's kingdom, who were saved by the blood of Christ (Acts 20: 28), will be cast into outer darkness of eternity, if they do not "repent and do the first works" (Matt. 13: 14; Rev. 2: 4, 5). The saved, therefore, may become unsaved!

The erring child of God must be converted, turned again to the Lord, that his sins may be forgiven (James 5: 19, 20). The terms of pardon for the fallen child of God include: repentance and prayer (Acts 8: 13-24; Rev. 2: 5), and confession of sins (James 5: 16).

Christians, those redeemed by the blood of Christ and faithful to the Son of God, march on under the blood-stained banner of the Prince of Peace to a glorious victory in Christ!

May we, as God's children, be faithful and diligent, even faithful unto death, that we may receive the "crown of life" (Rev. 2: 10). Then, in the beautiful home of the soul, in the city foursquare whose gates are of pearl, with walls of jasper, and the street of pure gold, the saints of God shall bask in the sunlight of His eternal smile of love, where death and sorrow are unknown and joy and happiness are supreme, throughout all ages of eternity! Don't you want to go to heaven, too? Don't you miss it!

## BAPTISM OF HOLY SPIRIT—No. 1

My friends, many honest and sincere people are confused about the baptism of the Holy Spirit; so confused that when the Bible speaks of the Holy Spirit they think only of the baptism of the Holy Spirit; or, when the Bible speaks of baptism some think of the Holy Spirit baptism. What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit? A few important questions will enable us to better understand this subject.

1. Who was the administrator of Holy Spirit baptism?
2. To whom was the baptism of the Holy Spirit promised?
3. Who was baptized with the Holy Spirit?
4. Why were they baptized of the Holy Spirit?
5. May we expect the baptism of the Holy Spirit today?

### **Christ, Administrator Of Holy Spirit Baptism**

The Holy Spirit baptism was never given as a command to be administered by man, neither to be obeyed by man. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a promise to be received by certain men chosen for a certain purpose. In the beginning, the Holy Spirit was an agent of the Father and Son, depending upon them for right of action.

In regards to the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit, the Bible most emphatically declares that Christ, the Son, was the administrator. John, the immerser, said: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to hear: **he** shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire" (Matt. 3: 11).

John, the **Baptist**, could and did baptize in water, but Christ, and only Christ, could baptize with the Holy Spirit. It

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was Christ, the Son, in his farewell message to his apostles, who commanded them to wait for the power of the Holy Spirit: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8). Luke reveals that Christ commanded the apostles to tarry in the city until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke 24: 49).

From John's prophecy we observe his specific prediction as to the identity of the administrator of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, that being Christ. John spoke to a mixed audience, including disciples and sinners, the wheat and chaff; therefore, he not only spoke of the baptism of the Holy Spirit but he spoke of the baptism of fire. One fundamental thing should be understood, however. John did not mean to include all disciples, with reference to being baptized in the Holy Spirit; neither did he mean that all of the multitude, which heard him, would receive the baptism of fire. He simply made a prophetic declaration, regarding these matters, to the multitude that heard him.

Who?—The Apostles!

The logical question now in order is, who was baptized with the Holy Spirit? There can be no doubt about the identity of those who were promised the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This promise was made to the apostles. The very nature of the baptism of the Holy Spirit will bear evidence of this fact.

The apostles were chosen ambassadors of Christ, to be guided by the Holy Spirit, revealing to them all truth (2 Cor. 5: 18-20; John 16: 13). In order for them to reveal all truth, and nothing but the truth, there was the necessity of complete possession of their speech and their writings, being completely endowed by the Holy Spirit, or baptized with the

Holy Spirit, having ordained them unto this great mission. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15: 16).

### **Promise Limited**

Jesus himself did not promise the baptism of the Holy Spirit to all the world; neither did He promise it to all His disciples, but only to His apostles. In giving His commission to them He said, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24: 49).

Just before Christ ascended to the Father, He referred to the very prophecy of John and applied it to His apostles. Hear Him: "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts 1: 4, 5). The "ye, " who received this promise, were the apostles.

To be more specific, as to the identity of those who should receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we need only to read Acts 1: 2 where the identity is definitely narrowed to the apostles: "... He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen. " Notice: He "gave commandment **unto the apostles.** "

### **Not Many Days Hence**

Another fact, indicating that all disciples for all time to come would not receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, was the setting of the time when the baptism of the Holy Spirit would be received. "Not many days hence, " Jesus said.

Not many days hence" surely does not mean 1900 years

hence. The days of the fulfillment are fully stated in the Bible. We need only to read the remaining part of the first chapter and the second chapter of Acts to learn that "not many days hence" was the first Pentecost after the Lord's resurrection from the dead.

### **Not 120 Disciples**

Ladies and gentlemen, it is believed by many religious leaders that the baptism of the Holy Spirit came upon the one hundred and twenty disciples gathered in Jerusalem, but a careful and honest analysis of the scriptures will refute this false conclusion.

In the first place, the promise of the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit was never made to anyone, except to the apostles. It is true that John, the Baptist, did not specify all who were to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He did say that some, whom he had baptized in water, would be baptized in the Holy Spirit, but he made it known that he could not administer Holy Spirit baptism. Christ only could baptize with the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3: 11). This promise was only to the apostles. They did receive the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit.

Before Christ left the earth, He told the apostles He would send them the Holy Spirit to bring to their remembrance the things He had taught them and to guide them into all truth (John 14: 26; 16: 7-15). To know the identity of those who did receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we need only to read the account of its administration. The record is found in Acts, beginning with verse 1, chapter 1:

"The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Spirit had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his

passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, (Notice: with whom? "With them"—the apostles) charged them (Charged whom? He charged "them"-the apostles) that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye (Whom, we ask? The apostles, unquestionably!)... ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. When they (Whom? The apostles!) therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? and he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his power. But ye ("ye" whom, we ask? The apostles, of course) shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 1-8).

After this specific promise of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, Christ ascended to the Father in heaven.

Beloved, hear me! Are you listening? As absolute evidence that the Lord fulfilled this promise of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, we read the account of the administration of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Beginning with the last verse of Acts, 1st chapter and continuing through Acts 2: 4, we read:

"And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (May we pause and emphasize the question, who were "they"? What is the antecedent of "they" in this verse? There is but one answer—the apostles!) were all with one accord in one place.

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And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they (Again we pause and inquire, who were "they"? The antecedent of "they" can only be the apostles) were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 1: 26; 2: 1-4). Surely, the identity of the apostles in this text cannot be mistaken!

Friends, there can be no doubt about it, the apostles only were they who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on this day, the first Pentecost after the Lord's resurrection from the dead. They waited in Jerusalem, as they were commanded, until Jesus fulfilled his promise to them by baptizing them in the Holy Spirit.

### **Multitude, 120 Not Present**

The multitude, including the 120 disciples, was not even present when the baptism of the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles. In verse 6, of Acts 2, it is revealed: "Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them (and again I emphasize, "them", the apostles) "speak in his own language. " As evidence that the multitude did include the 120 disciples, we need only to read Acts 1: 15. The revised version definitely states, "the company of persons was in all about a hundred and twenty. " Of the multitude it was said, "and they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own language wherein we were born?"

Don't you know that such questions as those of Acts 1: 15 would not have been asked of the 120! Were the 120 all Galileans? Why was the multitude amazed? Obviously,



because they were listening to twelve men, who were baptized with the Holy Spirit, speak God's word which was heard and understood in at least sixteen languages of different nations. The multitude "came together" and was amazed as they listened!

Carrying out this divine purpose, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the record reveals: "But Peter, standing up with the eleven (May I pause and ask, standing up with whom? Does the Bible say, "But Peter standing up with the 120"? No, my friends, the 120 did not receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the apostles, for it was not God's purpose that they should receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit! The word of God says: "But Peter standing up with the eleven") lifted up his voice and spake forth unto them" (Acts 2: 14). Peter stood up with the other apostles who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. You do understand that, don't you?

### **Fulfillment of Prophecy**

Having been accused of being drunk, because the multitude did not understand the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the apostle answered that criticism by quoting the prophecy of Joel to confirm the fact that they were endowed with the Holy Spirit.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (Acts 2: 17-21).

The apostle said: "**This** is **that** which was spoken by the Prophet Joel. " He plainly says, "These are not drunken... but **this** is **that** which was spoken by the Prophet Joel. " Some men claim the same baptism of the Holy Spirit is being

administered on men and women today. They have misunderstood the prophecy of Joel and do not get the full import of Peter's application of the prophecy.

**Objection: "All Flesh"**

But an objection is raised, declaring, "Did not Joel say, 'I will pour forth my Spirit upon all flesh, ' meaning all men and women of the earth?" The prophet did say, "I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh. " What is the meaning of "all flesh"?

In the first place, "all flesh" could not literally mean all flesh. Paul, by the Holy Spirit, says, "All flesh is not the same flesh: but **there is one kind of** flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, **and** another of birds. " (1 Cor. 15: 39). Surely, we would agree the baptism of the Holy Spirit was not promised to the animals. But, someone suggests, "all flesh" means all "human flesh. " That is no better, for "all human flesh" would include the drunkard, the fornicator, the reprobate and all sinners. Surely, no Bible student would advocate the theory that all human beings are to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then the statement, "all flesh, " must have a definite application, its meaning being that of all races, both Jew and Gentile.

When Joel made the prophecy, the Jew and Gentile were separate peoples. The Gentiles were separate from the covenant of promise. Paul wrote, "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands? That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2: 11, 12).

Even the Old Law, which was to be abolished, was a barrier between Jew and Gentile: "For he is our peace, who

hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. 2: 14-18). Also read Col. 2: 13-15.

#### Not All Jews And Gentiles

We are not to conclude, however, that "all flesh" means all Jews and Gentiles. As already pointed out, that would include all sinners. There can be but one answer: that is, the promise was given to representatives of both Jews and Gentiles.

The promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was limited by Christ, the administrator, himself, limited by "all flesh, " representatives of both Jews and Gentiles.

The baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit was administered to the Jews, as we have discussed from the second chapter of Acts, on the day of Pentecost, while the special miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit was administered to the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10: 44-47). "All flesh, " therefore, has received the miraculous administration of the Holy Spirit.

## BAPTISM OF HOLY SPIRIT—No. 2

### One Baptism—Water Baptism

Ladies and gentlemen, we continue our discussion of the subject, "The Baptism of Holy Spirit. " The Holy Spirit, having sent to this world the gospel of Christ, which was confirmed by the mighty works of the spirit, will abide perpetually in that same gospel, which was proclaimed on Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius, to save the world.

Today, there is only **one baptism**. Hear the Spirit, through the apostle: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4: 5). Language could not be plainer. One baptism! The same Spirit, in the same book, chapter and verse, who said there is **one Lord**, declared there is **one baptism!** That one baptism is water baptism. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28: 19). According to Mark, He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 15, 16). Peter commanded, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38).

Saul was commanded, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22: 16). Later Paul wrote by the Spirit, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6: 3, 4).

Peter, by the Spirit, wrote, "Wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us... " (I Peter 3: 20, 21).

Jesus declared, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3: 5).

Philip preached the gospel to the man of Ethiopia: "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8: 36-39).

"One baptism "-WATER BAPTISM! Surely, there can be no doubt of it. There is **"one baptism"** today (Eph. 4: 5).

My friends, Holy Spirit baptism is one, water baptism is one, and the baptism of fire is one. One, plus one, plus one, equals three. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is in the past, Christ having fulfilled his promise to the apostles. The baptism of fire is yet future, baptism of fire in hell for the unsaved (Matt. 3: 11, 12). Three minus two equals one, therefore, **"one baptism,"** " water baptism.

There can be no denial of the fact that the inspired apostle declared that there is "one baptism" (Eph. 4: 5). Observe the key word, "is" in the text. It is present tense. Today, now, and until Christ comes, since the day of Pentecost, including the day Paul wrote those words to the church at Ephesus, there is **"one baptism, " baptism in water,**

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"for remission of sins, " to "wash away thy sins, " which puts a believer "into Christ" (Gal. 3: 26, 27; Rom. 6: 3, 4).

### Baptism Of Fire

The baptism of fire was promised in Matthew 3: 11, 12, with Christ as the administrator, with hell fire the element, and future punishment as its purpose. Verse 12 of this text leaves us no doubt that the baptism with fire will occur when the righteous are separated from the unrighteous. In Palestine the Jews often used a fan in separating the chaff from the wheat. But when Christ comes again "he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. "

We have heard honest people pray for the baptism of fire, but friends, hear me! Are you listening? You don't want the baptism of fire! It is yet future and will be punishment of the wicked in hell. When our Lord comes he will thoroughly purge by separating the wheat from the chaff and he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire!

The baptism of fire will be administered by the Lord when he comes again. The wicked, ungodly, and disobedient will be banished from the presence of the Lord, baptized in fire, to be punished throughout eternity.

Jesus, himself, declared: "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13: 49, 50).

### Gifts Of The Holy Spirit

The kingdom of Christ was inaugurated with distinctive gifts of the Holy Spirit in a baptismal measure, which enabled the apostles, under complete, divine domination, through revelation, to proclaim the gospel of Christ, offering re-

mission of sins in the name of Christ. The beginning of the kingdom was a great and notable miracle with physical manifestation, signs and tongues, enabling the apostles to attract the attention of the multitudes and speak, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God's word of salvation without fault. This power, the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit, with miraculous gifts, came directly from heaven without human aid as a fulfillment of Christ's promise to His apostles.

### **Miraculous Gifts—Corinthian Church**

The church at Corinth was characterized by a diversity of apostolic gifts. These gifts are referred to in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters of 1 Corinthians. Paul reveals the character of these gifts in 1 Cor. 12: 1-11.

From the study of Paul's dissertation on spiritual gifts we learn much about the nature, the distribution and object of the miraculous gifts in the early church. It seems that the gifts were so numerous in the Corinthian church that it was necessary for the inspired apostle to regulate the use of them (I Cor. 12th and 14th chapters).

The objective of the spiritual gifts is obviously stated. The different types of gifts, the distribution and value of them are unquestionably stated. The duration of the spiritual gifts is not left without attention.

It will be observed that all the gifts were not given to all the believers (verses 18-20). All believers did not receive the same gifts. Some of the gifts, evidently, were more important than others. Included in the catalogue of gifts were the gifts of "healing, " gifts of "miracles, " gifts of "tongues, "and gifts of "knowledge. " All these gifts were important in their time, but the apostle concludes, in verse 31, there is "a more excellent way. "

### **Gifts Of The Spirit By Imposition Of Apostles' Hands**

Ladies and gentlemen, the gifts of the Spirit, by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, were indirect, miraculous gifts peculiar to the apostolic age. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was immediate and direct from God, bearing directly upon the spirit of man, resulting in the human mind being completely subject to the dictates of the Divine Mind in revealing all truth.

In addition to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, as a result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, which were performed only by the apostles, there were miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit conferred upon other Christians through the laying on of the hands of the apostles. The apostles only possessed the rare gift of transferring miraculous gifts to others, but they could not confer the power to pass these gifts from the first person to second persons. These special gifts were not imposed beyond the first receiver.

No one could impart miraculous gifts of the Spirit to others, except the apostles. As evidence of this fact let us first consider the ministry of Stephen and Philip.

Of them it was said: "And the saying pleased the whole multitude and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them" (Acts 6: 2-6).

### **Had Holy Spirit Before Laying On Hands**

We have no further reference to the works of all these men, but we do know something about the works of Stephen and Philip. It should be observed that these men had the Holy Spirit before the laying on of hands of the apostles. One of their qualifications was to be "full of faith and of the Holy



Spirit. " These men had obeyed the gospel and thus had received the Holy Spirit. In Acts 5: 32 it is affirmed that God gives the Holy Spirit to them that obey him: "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. " The Holy Spirit dwells in all God's children (I Cor. 3: 16), but all of God's children do not have miraculous gifts of the Spirit.

For one, other than the apostles, to perform miraculous gifts of the spirit, it was necessary for the apostles to lay hands on him. The apostles laid their hands on Stephen and Philip, along with the other chosen five. Of Stephen it was said, "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people" (Acts 6: 8). He eloquently preached the word and did great works for the Lord. "They were **not able** to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" (Acts 6: 10); therefore, they stoned him to death.

Philip, on whom the apostles had laid their hands, became the first evangelist and a great preacher who worked for the Lord. He "went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed, And there was great joy in that city" (Acts 8: 5-8).

### **Philip Could Not Transfer Power**

The apostolic hand had been laid on Philip, which enabled him to do the "signs and great miracles, " but he could not transfer that power to another person. Only the apostles had this particular power. A person, on whom the apostles had laid hands and conferred the miraculous gifts of **the** Spirit, could perform the mighty works of the Spirit, but **that** person could not in turn lay his hand on another person

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and confer the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Only the apostles could impart spiritual gifts.

### **Laying On Apostles Hands**

When Peter and John, apostles of Christ in Jerusalem, who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, heard that the Samaritans had received the word of the Lord they went to Samaria and conferred on the baptized believers the miraculous gift of the Spirit, through the laying on of hands. This is the divine record:

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they went unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8: 14-17).

Simon evidently recognized that it was through the laying on of hands of the apostles that miraculous powers were imposed upon the Samaritans (Acts 8: 18). He "saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given" and he offered the apostles money to purchase that power. Peter informed him that this "gift of God" could not be purchased. Furthermore, he declared, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter" (verses 20, 21). From this text we are forced to the conclusion that the "gift of God, " obviously, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, were received only by the early Christians through laying on of the apostles' hands.

Another example of the laying on of the apostles' hands is found in Acts 19: 1-6. At Ephesus Paul "laid his hands upon them and the Holy Spirit came upon them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. " The Ephesians spoke in

tongues and prophesied only after they had received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the apostle Paul's hands. There can be no doubt about the necessity of the imposition of the apostles' hands before the Christians of New Testament times could speak in tongues, prophesy, and do miraculous works. It is, therefore, false to presume that men today can speak in tongues, prophesy, and perform miracles since there are no apostles on earth with power to confer such miraculous gifts through the laying on of hands. When the last apostle died, therefore, the laying on of hands, imparting miraculous works of the Spirit, ceased!

### **Gift Of Holy Spirit And Cornelius**

Several years after the apostles had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, on Pentecost (Acts 2), Cornelius, a Gentile, received a miraculous "gift of the Holy Spirit. " The divine record is found in Acts, Chapters 10 and 11. Cornelius, a good, devoutly religious man, but not a Christian, was told to send to Joppa and get Peter, an apostle and a Jew, who would tell him, "words, whereby thou shall be saved, thou and thy house" (Acts 11: 14).

In the process of time, God performed a miracle before Peter's eyes, convincing him that he should call no man "common or unclean, " preparing him, a Jew, to preach the gospel to a Gentile. Peter knew that Gentiles were looked **upon** with disfavor by the Jews, and, no doubt, realizing he **would** have to give an account of his actions, he carried along **with** him six Jewish brethren. This fact, itself, is important to **an** understanding of the reason for the special administration of the gift of the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius.

Peter, the apostle, proclaimed the gospel of Christ to **Cornelius**, having introduced his sermon by stating, "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness,

is accepted with him" (Acts 10: 34, 35). What a glorious thought! The gospel is for all. He is Lord of all! The Gentiles are now to become Christians, beginning with Cornelius.

On Pentecost the purpose of the miraculous administration of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was to guide the apostles in the revelation of the gospel. At the house of Cornelius, the miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit was evident in two ways. First, the Holy Spirit directed Peter, without prejudice, to preach the gospel to the people of another nation, to "make known among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, " to prove to the Jews that the Gentiles were a part of "every creature, " a part of "all flesh, " who should obey the gospel of Christ and be saved. Secondly, the miraculous "gift of the Holy Spirit" was poured out on Cornelius, a Gentile, to convince the Jews that salvation in Christ was also granted unto the Gentiles. (Acts 10: 44-48).

When Peter related these facts to his Jewish brethren, they were accepted as God-given and all criticisms were silenced: "When they heard these things, they held their peace and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts **11: 18**).

### **Not Baptism Of Holy Spirit For Cornelius**

Peter reported that he remembered the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit "fell on them, " that is, Cornelius and his household. This miraculous incident carried Peter back to that eventful day when they, the apostles, received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as had been promised by Christ, and 3, 000 believers were baptized in water for the remission of sins and received the gift of the Holy Spirit. This "like gift" came upon the Gentiles that believed, in a miraculous way, but it was not the same baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit, like the apostles received; neither was it for the same purpose.

This was a miraculous administration of the Holy Spirit, not merely the Holy Spirit as a gift, which all believers receive when they obey the gospel.

Cornelius received this miraculous "gift of the Holy Spirit" before Peter had finished speaking the word of the Lord, before he was commanded to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. This was a miraculous incident which reminded the apostle of the miraculous incident they experienced on Pentecost at the beginning.

### **Like Gift**

The "like gift" the apostle refers to, no doubt, is the miraculous gift of speaking in tongues. In Acts 10: 44-46, it is revealed that the Jews who came with Peter were astonished "because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. "

### **Purpose**

My friends, are you listening? Surely there can be no doubt about the purpose of this miraculous administration of the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was to convince the Jews that God had "also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11: 18). The evidence resulting from the "gift of the Holy Spirit" upon the Gentiles, that brought this conviction to Peter and his Jewish brethren, even so much as to astonish them, was the fact that "they heard them speak with tongues" (Acts 10: 45, 46).

The object of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which the apostles received, was more than the miraculous gift of speaking in tongues. It was to guide the apostles in revealing all truth and the ability to perform miracles for the purpose of confirming God's word. Furthermore, the apostles, who had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, could impart the

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miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit to other Christians by the laying on of hands. It was necessary for the apostles, Peter and John, to go to Samaria and lay hands on the disciples to confer the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8: 14-17). No one else had the power to confer this miraculous gift of the Spirit. There certainly is no evidence that Cornelius had the power to confer the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands. Neither is there evidence that he could proclaim the gospel in its fullness, divinely guided by the Holy Spirit, as did the apostles. The reason: he did not receive the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit as did the apostles.

### **Miraculous Measure Holy Spirit Ceased**

The day of Pentecost, the beginning of the gospel dispensation, the inauguration of the kingdom among the Jews, with the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, has never been and never will be accomplished again. The miraculous administration of the Holy Spirit at the house of Cornelius and the inauguration of the Kingdom among the Gentiles have never been and will never be duplicated!

The baptism of the Holy Spirit, having endowed the apostles with all truth and having borne public testimony that the gospel is for "all nations, " "every creature, " "all flesh, " having been confirmed by miraculous works of the Spirit (Mark 16: 20; Heb. 2: 3), there is no longer need for the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the administration of the affairs of the kingdom of God and its mission in the world. The miraculous administrations of the Holy Spirit have never occurred since those of New Testament times and will never happen again.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an incontrovertible fact, revealed in the scriptures, that miraculous gifts, by the power of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and laying on of the

apostles' hands were to cease.

Paul declared, "Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13: 8-10). The apostle emphatically declared, they "SHALL CEASE, " "SHALL FAIL, " "SHALL VANISH AWAY, " and "SHALL BE DONE AWAY. " Prophecies, tongues and knowledge (supernatural knowledge, of course) were all to cease at the same time. They did cease when there was no longer the source of miraculous power to perform such miraculous works.

## SPEAKING IN TONGUES

Ladies and gentlemen, is it possible for man to speak in tongues today? The miraculous power of the Holy Spirit enabled the early Christians to perform great and mighty works. One of the most marvelous works of the Spirit was that of speaking in "tongues" by the apostles on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2: 1-11. Part of the text reads as follows: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. "

This was a great miracle! If men could speak in tongues today it would be as much a miracle as it was on Pentecost, because speaking in tongues would be as impossible today as it was nineteen hundred years ago, without direct intervention of the Holy Spirit.

### **What Was Speaking In Tongues?**

What is meant by speaking "with other tongues"? A careful study of the text should leave no doubt as to the Bible meaning and purpose of speaking in "other tongues. "

The text, Acts 2: 6-8, clearly states that the multitude was "confounded because that every man heard them speak in his own language. " They concluded: "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?"

In this text, speaking in tongues was not a matter of speaking a language unknown to anyone, but it was the ability, by guidance of the Holy Spirit, to speak a language which was known and understood by the hearer, but unknown to the speaker; a language he had never known or



spoken before.

The text reveals that there were at least fifteen different countries, or provinces, represented in the audience which heard the apostle? speak in "tongues, " therefore, some fifteen different languages or dialects. The people from each country heard them speak in their own native tongue. Benson's Commentary, Vol. 4, page 687, states: "These disciples had not only never learned any of these languages, but had not learned any foreign tongue... Most of them had never so much as heard any of these languages spoken, or had any idea of them. They did not speak now and then a word of another, or stammer out some broken sentences, but spoke each language which they spoke as readily, properly, and elegantly, as if it had been their own mother tongue: for whatever was produced by miracle was the best of the kind. "

The fact that the great miracle of speaking in tongues by the apostles, enabling, every man to hear them "speak in his own language" was accomplished, caused the multitude to marvel and to be amazed.

### **Not Unintelligent Sounds**

My friends, the apostles preached the gospel to more **than** 3, 000 people representing at least fifteen different nations, and "every man heard them speak in his own language" wherein he was "born. " When they spoke in tongues, it was not a jabber, jargon, conglomeration of unintelligent sounds. They spoke words that brought conviction to the hearts of the people. "Now when they heard this they were pricked in their heart" (Acts 2: 37), the divine word reveals.

### **Men Speak In Tongues Today?**

Many people, and not a few religious leaders, have become confused about the possibility of speaking in tongues. " Some claim to speak in "unknown tongues. "

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It is quite evident that men today cannot speak in "tongues" as was done in New Testament times. Where is the man or woman who can speak fifteen different languages that he has never heard and has never learned? Would it not be as amazing today as on Pentecost, for a man to preach the gospel to an audience of fifteen different nationalities and every man hear and understand in his own tongue, or language, wherein he was born, yet the speaker had never known the different languages? That would be as much a miracle today as it was on Pentecost!

Ladies and gentlemen, hear it! Are you listening? If there are people today who can speak in "tongues, " like those of New Testament times, may I suggest a most opportune place to do so. Why not go before the Assembly of the United Nations in New York and preach the gospel to the representatives of the nations of the world? If one could speak in "tongues, " by the power of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he could speak so that every man of every nation could hear and understand in his own native language! The arrangement for such a meeting is not unrealistic. If a person can be found who could really speak in "tongues" I am sure the arrangements could be made because this accomplishment in communications would be so amazing that the United Nations and the world would welcome it. No doubt, every radio and TV station in the world would want to broadcast such "speaking in tongues" without charge because it would be an "unheard of, " amazing and astonishing performance. If a person who claims to speak in "tongues" will give assurance of his power and ability to speak in "tongues, " and will volunteer his services, a world wide audience to hear the message in their own native languages will be provided.

### **Power By Baptism Of Holy Spirit**

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a source of

miraculous power which enabled the apostles to speak "with other tongues" (Acts 2: 2-4): "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. "

The antecedent of the pronouns, "they" and "them, " is the apostles as stated in the last verse of the first chapter of Acts. The apostles, therefore, were they who received this baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit: "And they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance, " the text declares in verse 4.

The Holy Spirit made sure that identity would not be mistaken:

"And there appeared unto them (remember, "them", the apostles) cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each one of **them**, " the apostles (verse 3).

From this text we would conclude that each apostle, who was speaking "with other tongues, " was identified by the tongue "like as of fire, " which sat upon his head, all of which caused the multitude that gathered to be amazed. There can be no doubt that the apostles were they who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and did the speaking in "tongues" because in verse 7 it is said, "Are not all of these that speak Galileans?" The apostles were all Galileans. The one hundred and twenty disciples, also present, were not all Galileans.

### **Spoke As Spirit Gave Utterance**

From this text under consideration (Acts 2: 4), we must conclude that the apostles were "filled with the Holy Spirit" before they could speak "with other tongues. " Furthermore, they spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance. "

Again I quote from Benson's Commentary, Vol. 4, page 687, "They spoke not from any previous thought, but as the Spirit gave them utterance' — He furnished them with the

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matter, as well as the language. "

My friends, where is the person today whom the Holy Spirit has identified as one to "speak with other tongues" by miraculously pointing him out with a "cloven tongue like as of fire" upon his head? Where are the persons today who can speak with "other tongues, " languages they have never known, a message they have never known, "as the Spirit gave them utterance"?

It must be concluded that men do not speak in "tongues" today, as in New Testament times, because men do not receive the miraculous baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit, as did the apostles in Bible times; neither are men divinely guided in delivering a message as were the apostles who spoke "with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. "

### **The Gift Of Tongues**

Let us give more consideration to the texts referring to the gift of speaking in tongues.

According to Acts 10: 44-46, the Gentiles, who received the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit, did "speak in tongues and magnify God. "

In Acts 19: 6 it is revealed: "And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them and they spake with tongues and prophesied. "Question: Has the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, which would enable one to "speak with tongues" and prophesy, been imparted to anybody today through the laying on of the hands of the apostles, especially now that the apostles have been dead almost 2, 000 years? If not, then no one has the miraculous gift of the Spirit, through the imposition of hands, to speak in tongues!

### **Divers Kinds Of Tongues**

The apostle declared in 1 Cor. 12: 10, that there were

"divers kinds of tongues. " The matter of speaking in tongues by miraculous power of the Spirit evidently included different gifts, possessed by different people, for different purposes. According to the examples in the New Testament at least two primary purposes are revealed: that of divine revelation and that of edification. It seems that in some cases the gift of "tongues" enabled one to interpret "tongues" (1 Cor. 14: 26-28). Yet, it seems that others were to be their own interpreters (1 Cor. 14: 5-13).

As the church of our Lord grew in New Testament times some congregations were made up of men and women of different nationalities, different tongues, who possessed the miraculous gift of "divers kinds of tongues" for a time, as well as other "spiritual gifts" (1 Cor. 14th Chapter). Paul's estimation of the value of speaking in "tongues, " as the church grew more to maturity, was revealed when he said: "Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?" (1 Cor. 14: 6). The apostle concluded, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words of my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue (in a tongue)" (1 Cor. 14: 18, 19).

### **Speaking In Tongues, Raising The Dead, Healing The Sick**

From a study of the scriptures it is evident that those who were to perform miraculous works of the Spirit were promised:

"In my name shall they cast out devils; if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16: 17, 18). Question:

1. If one can speak in tongues today, can he "drink any

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deadly thing" and not be hurt?

2. If one may receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues today, may he not "lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" from an incurable disease?

3. If one can speak in tongues by the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, could he not by the same power "raise the dead"?

4. If one may receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and is able to speak "with other tongues, " would he not be able to prophesy, or speak by divine revelation, "as the Spirit gave them utterance"?

### Unknown Tongues **And** Interpreter

In 1 Cor. 14: 2, 22, Paul wrote: "For he that speaketh in an **unknown tongue** (in a tongue—ASV) speaketh not unto men, but unto God. " Furthermore, the apostle said, "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not. " The question is, should there ever be an UNKNOWN tongue? The inference is that if one speaks in a tongue that is not understood by man, then it would be an unknown tongue. Even though God understood, it would be of no value to men. The very fact that Paul says that "tongues are a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not, " is evidence that "tongues" were for the benefit of man. If for "them that believe not", then speaking in tongues would not be an "**unknown**" tongue spoken to God without man's understanding.

The apostle concluded, "So likewise, ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air" (1 Cor. 14: 9). Furthermore, why should there be the necessity of an interpreter if speaking in "tongues" were not for men who were to profit from what they heard? We may not fully understand the full significance of speaking in tongues in

New Testament times, whether to convert the sinner, or edify the church, but two things are certain! One: speaking in tongues was done by direct and miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. Two: the speaking in tongues was definitely for man's benefit who intelligently understood what was said. Speaking in tongues was a miraculous association with divine revelation.

### **Tongues Spoken To God Or Man?**

Were the messages of those who spoke in "tongues" in New Testament times directed to God or to man? Some people, who claim to speak in tongues, affirm that speaking in tongues in New Testament times was a matter of speaking to God and not to man. This argument is offered as proof that men speak in "tongues" today. It is obvious that no one understands those who claim to speak in "tongues, " and, according to their argument, no one is supposed to understand because they are speaking to God and not to man. Let us consider the matter.

The apostle's statement, "Speaketh not unto men" (V. 2), indicates that the speaking was **not** understood by men; **not** that it was **not** intended to be understood by men. The context completely refutes the idea that "speaking in tongues" was addressed to God and not to man. Paul actually states that the primary purpose of "tongues" was for the benefit of "them that believe not" (V. 22).

The apostle's statement that the speaking was "**unto God**" simply indicated that such "speaking in tongues, " under those circumstances, would be understood only by God and not by man. According to Paul this would refute the purpose of speaking in "tongues. "

The apostle concluded, "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air" (1

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Cor. 14: 9).

Speaking in tongues, whether to God or man, was a miraculous gift, whether by the power of the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit, as in Acts 2nd chapter, or by the laying on of the apostles' hands, as in Acts the 8th chapter, or the 19th chapter. In 1 Cor. 12: 7-10, Paul definitely declared that these miraculous administrations of the Spirit include the word of knowledge, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking tongues, and interpretation of tongues. If tongues continue today, then miracles definitely have not ceased and these other miraculous administrations of the Spirit must be in evidence just as much so as speaking in tongues. Where is the person who definitely has supernatural knowledge, who receives divine revelations from God in heaven? If such a person could be found, then the inspired men of God falsified when they declared that the gospel of Christ, the word of God, is the complete and final revelation from God to man.

Hear the apostle! Are you listening? "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1: 6-8).

Where is the person with the gifts of healing, who can heal an incurable disease, cleanse the lepers, and raise the dead? Wherever you find people who can heal incurable diseases, raise the dead, and speak by divine revelation, as in New Testament times, you may also find those who can speak in tongues. If you find one, you will find the other. The claim that tongues are directed to God, rather than to man, and you can't understand them, will make no difference. If you couldn't understand their tongues, you could certainly understand and be convinced if they really healed a



body diseased with leprosy, or raised a person from the dead! You will find neither because miracles have ceased.

### Tongues For a Sign

Let us give more consideration to the texts referring to the gift of speaking in tongues. In 1 Cor. 14: 22, the apostle said that "tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not. "

According to Acts 10: 44-46, the Gentiles, who received the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit, did "speak with tongues and magnify God. "

The Jewish brethren, who accompanied Peter, were "amazed... for they heard them" and understood them, even as the people on Pentecost heard and understood the apostles speaking in tongues (Acts 10: 23; 44-46; Acts 2: 6-11). If they had not understood, how could they have known that those speaking in tongues (languages) were speaking the "mighty works of God" and "magnify God"? Their speaking in tongues, languages unknown by the speaker, but understood in native languages of the hearers, was a sign to confirm the Word of God (1 Cor. 14: 22; Heb. 2: 3, 4). God "bare witness unto the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands" (Acts 14: 3; John 20: 30, 31; Mark 16: 17-20).

### Tongues Not For Personal Devotion

The miraculous signs, including "tongues", were not for the benefit of those who had the gifts, but for the unbelievers and hearers. If all may have the miraculous gift of tongues, then all should seek the miraculous gift of prophecy, of supernatural gift of knowledge, which Paul declared was

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greater than tongues (1 Cor. 14: 5). Why be content with a lesser gift and ignore the greater gift? Furthermore, if anyone should seek the gift of "tongues" for his own personal devotion, inspiration and edification, he should at the same time seek the miraculous gift of an "interpretation", for without this gift, words in a tongue would be worthless compared to words understood—ten thousand to five! (1 Cor. 14: 5; 13-19).

If the gift of tongues were for personal benefit of an individual and his relationship with God, then there would be no use for the gift of interpretation. In New Testament times people who spoke in tongues were individuals of special circumstances, who by direct miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, spoke for the benefit of others and not themselves.

In Acts 19: 6 it is recorded: "And when Paul laid his hands upon them; the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. " Question: Has the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, which would enable one to "speak with tongues" and prophesy, been imparted to anybody today through the laying on of hands of the **apostles**, especially now that the apostles have been dead almost 2, 000 years? If not, then no one has the miraculous gift of the Spirit to speak in tongues.

### **Tongues Associated With Fakes**

In October 1969 issue of Look magazine senior editor, Mr. Hedgepeth, describes some of the hysterical happenings of A. A. Allen healing meetings. It is almost unbelievable that reasonably intelligent people would be caught in such a conglomerated fictitious affair conducted in the name of religion, especially by such a fake and impostor as the self-styled, "God's man of faith and power, " A. A. Allen. The

editor quotes one of the spellbound Allen faithfuls as she presumes to speak in tongues. He said, "A hand-waving woman clamps her eyes, bursts into tongues at his touch. He grabs the microphone, 'This is what's happening tonight. ' He thrusts the mike to her face. 'ASHALALOOH-MAANWAH, ' she says. 'You see, ' cries Allen, 'everybody's gettin' it. Even Catholics are gettin' it. They'll have to go underground now 'cause they sure can't go back to church! He puts the mike to her mouth again, 'AHS-HASHALAMALALOHLH, ' she says, and is gently led off the ramp. "

What a word! Evidently an "unknown" tongue to an unknown God, or to an unknown person. This is an example of the so-called "speaking in tongues" by misguided and deceived souls.

A. A. Allen, who claimed to speak in "tongues", because he was "filled with the Holy Spirit", was a **fake** and an **impostor**. He was **arrested for drunk driving** in the state of Tennessee in 1955 and then skipped bail rather than face charges in court. These facts may be verified by the Department of Safety, Tennessee Highway Patrol, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The fake "healer" Allen, who claimed to speak in "tongues" because he had received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit", died drunk in a hotel in San Francisco, June 11, 1970, according to United Press International which reported that coroner Dr. Henry W. Turkel stated that the "healer" who was found dead in a hotel room June 11, died of "acute alcoholism. "

The "healer", who claimed divine revelation from God with miraculous power to speak in "tongues" and "heal" the sick, deceived thousands of honest souls and collected millions of dollars from his followers. The United Press reported that he built his religious group into a multi-million dollar

organization. In spite of all his claims of miracles, Mr. Allen is dead and will stay dead. If Mr. Allen could speak in "tongues" and heal the sick as he claimed, why did he not "heal" himself of alcoholism? Why did not some of his fellow "miracle performers" heal him? Even now, why doesn't some "healer" raise him from the dead? In the same verse in which Jesus said, "heal the sick", He also said "raise the dead" (Matthew 10: 8).

Ladies and gentlemen, we are aware of the fact that all people today who claim to speak in tongues are not fakes and impostors. Many honest and sincere people have been misinformed and deceived. But one thing about the claims of the **fake healer, drunk driver Allen**: he at least was consistent in his claims of miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. He claimed to have had the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and such miraculous power of the Holy Spirit not only enabled him "to speak in tongues", but to perform miracles such as healing incurable diseases and raising the dead. **Speaking in tongues** was a miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit in New Testament times and if any person could speak in tongues today it would be as much a miracle as in New Testament times! The purpose of these gifts was fulfilled in the first century, they were never intended to be permanent in the church.

### **Gospel Once For All**

The inspired language of Jude is proof of the cessation of miracles. He declared, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints, " Jude 3.

Surely there can be no doubt about the affirmation, in this text, of the complete revelation of God's will. The

theory of progressive additional revelations is condemned, beyond doubt, and Paul adds that the curse of Almighty God rests upon everyone who would pervert, add to, or take from, the word of God (Gal. 1: 7-9). There was a period of revelations to the saints and those revelations were confirmed by the signs and miracles performed by the saints, but miracles are neither needed nor performed today. Jude exhorts that we should "earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints, " meaning that the faith of the gospel was once and for all time delivered unto the saints.

#### A More Excellent Way

Ladies and gentlemen, these miraculous works of the Spirit were never intended to be permanent in the church. They were given in the infancy of the church to last until "that which is perfect is come. " Having admonished the Corinthians to covet the "best gifts, " Paul added, "... Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (1 Cor. 12: 31). Of all the gifts in the Corinthian church, some were to "pass away" and some were to abide. The apostle makes comparisons in these words: "Though I speak with tongues of men and angels, (no doubt, referring to the "divers kinds of tongues" of 1 Cor. 12: 10) and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy (no doubt, "the word of wisdom" of chapter 12: 8) and all knowledge; and though I have all faith (no doubt, miraculous faith of chapter 12: 9) so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13: 1-3).

In these verses the apostle gives appraisal of the value of love over the miraculous gifts. There must be a reason. The gifts of the Spirit were transitory; they would "pass away. " Love was superior in contrast to the impermanent miraculous gifts, including "divers kinds of tongues, " because love "abideth" forever.

### **Miracles—Limited Time—Ceased**

Beloved, it is an incontrovertible fact, revealed in the scriptures, that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were to cease. Paul declared, "Love never faileth: but where there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13: 8-10). The apostle emphatically declared, they "SHALL CEASE, " "SHALL FAIL, " "SHALL VANISH AWAY, " and "SHALL BE DONE AWAY. "Prophecies, tongues, and knowledge (supernatural knowledge, of course) were all to cease at the same time. They have ceased!

### **Full Grown-Miracles Not Needed**

With the completeness of the revelation of the gospel, the church had grown from infancy to maturity. Paul illustrated this fact by comparing childhood with maturity (1 Cor. 13: 11). From childhood to maturity prophecy and supernatural knowledge were fragmentary and imperfect; therefore, the infant accompaniments of the gifts of miracles, tongues, and the word of knowledge. They were only given in part. Now that attainment of "that which is perfect is come, " that which "is in part" is "DONE AWAY. "

The apostle Paul furthermore described the duration of the miraculous period of the church and the purpose of the spiritual gifts, including speaking in tongues, in Ephesians 4: 11-14.

He declared: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. " The church is now full grown, having attained the "unity of the faith"; now a "perfect man". The miracle of **speaking in tongues**, along with other miracles, has ceased.

At the writing of James 5: 14, 15, healing was practiced, the year of 60 A. D. In A. D. 64 Paul recommended medicine for Timothy. In A. D. 65 Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletus. Miracles came to an end. We have no record of any miracles and healing, such as speaking in tongues, following the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70.

The books of the New Testament written after the destruction of Jerusalem include 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, written in the year of A. D. 90, and Revelation, written in the year of A. D. 96. There is no record of miracles and spiritual gifts being practiced or performed in the church in these epistles. There can be no doubt about it. Miracles, which had been given to confirm the word of God, had already ceased. It seems evident that miracles had become limited, or even ceased, during the lifetime of those who did perform miracles as is pointed out in the case of Paul's recommendation of medicine for Timothy, and, the fact that he left Trophimus, his traveling companion, sick at Miletus. Without fear of successful contradiction, we may conclude that after the death of the last apostle and the death of the last person upon whom an apostle had laid his hands, there has never been another miracle performed, through the instrument of man, upon this earth.

With the gospel revelation completed, established and confirmed, its perpetual validity must be accepted without additions or subtractions:

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22: 18, 19).

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"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

When men claim to speak in tongues, by the power of the Holy Spirit, such is a denial of the power and validity of the gospel! There is not another gospel! Hear me, my friends! Are you listening? To pervert the gospel, or preach another gospel, though claimed to be revealed from heaven, is to be accursed of God. The inspired apostle concluded: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1: 6-9).



## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION —No. 1

My friends, there is much misunderstanding concerning the operation of the Holy Spirit in conversions. Many honest souls have been led to believe that the Holy Spirit operates directly from heaven upon the heart of the sinner to bring about his conversion. Some have gone to their graves, lost for eternity, waiting for the intervention of the Holy Spirit to bring them to salvation. Others claim conversion by the direct power of the Holy Spirit and relate their experiences as evidences of their salvation. Their experiences, usually very emotional, varied and unusual, are relied on as evidence of salvation more so than the positive teaching of God's word. A false conception of the Holy Spirit as a mysterious, unknown power, likely to descend from heaven anywhere, any time, and take possession of the soul of man is, no doubt, responsible for much of the misunderstanding of the operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion.

When we speak of conversion, we speak of a person being born again, regenerated, redeemed by the blood of Christ — one who has been reconciled unto God. A meaning of the term convert is, "To change into another state, form or substance; transform. "

### **Word of God in Conversion**

All responsible men on earth are sinners by reason of transgression. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3: 23). Man has become alienated from God by reason of his own sins. To be saved from his lost state he must become converted, changed to another state, become reconciled unto God. He must be—transformed. He must become a new creature.

The apostle Paul stated most conclusively that one is to

become a new creature in Christ in order to become reconciled unto God. But the power of this transformation conversion, or reconciliation, is within the Word of God (2 Cor. 5: 17-20). He affirmed that God gave to the apostles the ministry of reconciliation, having committed unto them "the word of reconciliation. " The same apostle declared that the gospel of Christ is the "power of God unto salvation unto everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1: 16). If the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, then the Holy Spirit does not have some separate or additional power to save.

If the gospel of Christ is not the power of God unto salvation and the Holy Spirit has additional or separate power, then who is responsible for the heathens in lands where the word of God has not gone? In lands where the Bible, the word of God, has not gone, there are millions who have never heard of Christ or the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit operates upon the heart, directly from heaven, independently of the gospel of Christ, then why does He not go to the millions in lands where the Bible has not gone and convert them to Christ? Don't you know that it is necessary that we take the gospel to all men on earth in order for them to be converted, to be saved! Jesus commanded. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 15, 16). The apostle Paul declared that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1: 21).

### **The Spirit, the Truth, the Word, the Seed**

The Holy Spirit is the person who revealed the gospel of salvation to the apostles, whom our Lord chose as His ambassadors. So inseparable is this operation that the Spirit is said to be the "truth. " The truth is the word of God, the seed of the kingdom, which received life from the Spirit by which

one is born again:

"And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth" (1 John 5: 7).

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17: 17).

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8: 11).

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1: 22, 23).

Surely there can be no doubt about it! The Holy Spirit uses the "word", the "truth", as the "seed" of which one is born into the kingdom.

### **The Spirit and the Word**

Ladies and gentlemen, hear it! Are you listening? The claims of direct revelations since the close of the apostolic age are false claims. Paul said: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11: 13, 14).

Let us observe these characteristics of the word of God, through which the Holy Spirit operates. Can the Holy Spirit do more, separate and apart from the word?

1. The word is that which furnishes the man of God completely (2 Tim. 3: 16-17).

2. The word is that which enlightens man's soul (Psa. 19: 8).

3. The word makes one wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3: 15). Does the Holy Spirit, apart from the word, do more than that?

4. The word is perfect, converting the soul (Psa 19: 7). If the word is perfect, converting the soul, then why the theory of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit?

5. The soul is begotten by the seed, the word, the truth. The spirit is the truth (1 Pet. 1: 22, 23; 1 Jno. 5: 6).

6. The word produces faith in the heart (Rom, 10: 17). "Faith, " the apostle declared, "comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. " Does the Holy Spirit instill faith apart from the word? The heart is purified by the word, 1 Pet. 1: 22, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth. " If the soul is purified by obedience to the word, the truth, then what would be the work of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the word of God in conversion, or in sustaining the Christian in his daily life?

If God should today convert a soul by direct operation of the Holy Spirit, through miraculous intervention, He would set aside the whole scheme of redemption revealed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles in the New Testament.

When Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles to do His work in conversion, He said, "I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment... " (Jno. 16: 7, 8). Without question, this work is to be accomplished through the word, the gospel, revealed to the apostles by the Holy Spirit. There is positively no case of direct intervention of the Holy Spirit in any conversion recorded in the New Testament. To ascertain how the Holy Spirit operates in conversion, we give brief attention to some conversions recorded in the New Testament.

### **Holy Spirit and the Conversion of Lydia**

My friends, if any recorded case of conversion of New Testament times, during the days of miraculous works of the Holy Spirit, should bear evidence of direct intervention of

the Holy Spirit in conversion, the case of Lydia surely would be one. There was not a gospel preacher on the continent of Europe where she lived. From Sabbath to Sabbath she was attending a prayer meeting on the river bank, although she was some three hundred miles away from her home. She was a Jewish business woman of Thyatira, or she was a most devout woman who had been converted to the Jewish faith. She worshipped God according to the dictates of her conscience, but, obviously, was not a Christian.

Since there was not a minister of the gospel within hundreds of miles, why could not the Holy Spirit have converted her, directly from heaven, independently of the gospel of Christ? The simple answer is: the Holy Spirit does not and never has operated upon the heart, independently of the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God to save the believer. It was necessary for a preacher of the gospel, in this case, Paul, to present the word of the Lord by which this God-fearing woman and her associates might be begotten unto a new and living hope.

To accomplish this purpose God overruled the course of travel of Paul, Timothy, Silas and Luke, who might have gone to Ephesus in Asia or Bithynia. God directed Paul to go to Macedonia, through the voice which beckoned, "Come over into Macedonia' and help us. " Paul concluded, "the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts 16: 10).

All of these circumstances were incidental to the opening of Lydia's heart; the most essential circumstance was the necessity of a gospel preacher, using the instrument of God's power, the gospel of Christ, to convert the soul of Lydia.

### **Holy Spirit Opened Lydia's Heart**

The Lord Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, opened Lydia's heart and she became a Christian (Acts 16: 14, 15). The

important question is, however, how did the Lord open Lydia's heart?

"Lydia... heard us: whose heart the Lord opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul and she was baptized... "

The gospel, which is the power of God to save the believer (Romans 1: 16), was the instrument which the Lord used to open Lydia's heart. She heard the things which were **spoken by Paul**. She understood; she believed; she was baptized into Christ. She became a Christian only. The Holy Spirit did not in any way affect her heart, independently of the gospel preached by Paul, before her conversion or in the process of her conversion.

### **Holy Spirit in Conversion of Three Thousand; Circumstances Not Conditions**

The record of the conversion of the 3, 000 souls on Pentecost is found in Acts, the 2nd chapter. We must not mistake the circumstances attending the conversion of these people for the conditions of conversion dictated by the Holy Spirit to the apostles. The apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as had been promised by the Lord (Acts 1: 4, 5, 26; Acts 2: 1-4).

The **baptism** of the Holy Spirit was no part of the conditions for the remission of sins obtained by the 3, 000 converts. They received the "**gift of the Holy Spirit**," but not the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

This baptism of the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to speak with "other tongues," which astonished the multitude, for "every man heard them speak in his own language" wherein he was born. Speaking in tongues was no part of the conditions of their salvation; but it was a miraculous demonstration that caused the people to give attention and to hear the gospel proclaimed in their own language, although

spoken by men who did not speak their language. Incidentally, there are people today who claim to speak in "tongues, " by the power of the Holy Spirit, as did the apostles, but it is very obvious that they do not speak in "tongues" so that people of different nationalities can understand them in their own native tongue. There is not a man on earth today who can speak in "tongues" as did the apostles!

The conditions of conversion, or remission of sins, revealed by the inspired men of God on Pentecost, were in no way related to the peculiar circumstances which attended their conversion. Having heard the gospel being directed by the Holy Spirit, they were "pricked in their heart" and, as believers, they were told what to do to obtain remission of sins.

Beloved, the Holy Spirit has a very distinct part in the conversion of every soul to Christ. No man is born into the kingdom of Christ without having been begotten by the Holy Spirit through the word of God.

From the divine truth already cited we have learned that the "Spirit" is the "truth, " the "truth" is the "word, " and the "word" is the "seed" of the kingdom. Christ proclaimed, "Ye must be born again. "

The inspired apostle Peter declared of the elect children of God, who heard the gospel, that they purified their souls in their "obedience to the truth... having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible through the word of God" (1 Pet. 1: 22, 23). Hear it, my friends! Are you listening? There can be but one conclusion: they were begotten by the Spirit through the word, the incorruptible seed. Man is, therefore, begotten by the Holy Spirit through the word of God when he is converted to the Lord, or born into the kingdom of Christ.

### **Begotten by Spirit, Born of Water**

Peter identified those who were "begotten again" (begotten by the "seed, " the "word, " the "truth, " the "Spirit") in 1 Pet. 1: 1 as the same people referred to in Acts 2: 5-11, who heard and obeyed the first gospel sermon offering remission of sins in the name of Christ.

Peter proclaimed unto them the truth, the word. He planted the seed of the kingdom in their hearts. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit... Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls... And the Lord added to the church daily those that were saved" (Acts 2: 37, 38, 41, 47).

The divine record reveals, "Now when they heard this"—**not** when they "FELT THIS" they were saved. They **HEARD** the gospel and obeyed the gospel, thus obtaining "remission of sins. "

To Peter, Christ had declared: "I will build my church... And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven... " (Matt. 16: 18, 19).

By the Holy Spirit, Peter used the keys of the kingdom by preaching the word, commanding faith, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2: 4, 14, 36, 37, 38). The divine record reveals that "they that gladly received his word were baptized" (Acts 2: 41), and the Lord "added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2: 47). Later, the apostle wrote his epistle to them, declaring that they had been begotten again by the incorruptible seed, the word of God. They were begotten by the Holy Spirit through the



"truth, " the "word, " the "seed, " and were baptized unto the remission of sins, born of water into the kingdom of Christ

Christ declared to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3: 5). The three thousand were born of water and Spirit, born into the kingdom of Christ. "They that gladly received his word were baptized, " it was affirmed (Acts 2: 41). Peter declared that they were "begotten again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God" (1 Peter 1: 23). John proclaimed that the "Spirit is the truth" (1 John 5: 6), and Christ declared that the "truth" is the "word, " and the "word" is the "seed, " (John 17: 17; Luke 8: 11); therefore, it must be concluded beyond question, that the three thousand were begotten by the Holy Spirit through the word of God, and born of water (baptized for the remission of sins) into the kingdom of Christ!

It must furthermore be concluded that at no time did the Holy Spirit act independently of the word, proclaimed by the apostles, in the conversion of the Pentecostians. The apostles were divinely guided by the Holy Spirit in proclaiming the gospel. The Holy Spirit brought conviction to the hearts of the sinners who were converted through the preaching of the gospel.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION—No. 2

### Conversion of the Samaritans

Ladies and gentlemen, we continue our discussion of the subject, "The Holy Spirit in Conversion. "

The divine record of the conversion of the people of Samaria is found in Acts 8: 5-25. As in every case of conversion, the Holy Spirit performed his God-arranged part: "And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ... and the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip... But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus, they were baptized into Christ. "

Philip, the evangelist, preached the word, "proclaimed unto them the Christ. " They that heard and believed "Philip's preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ, were baptized, both men and women. " The Samaritans were begotten by the Spirit, through the word, and born of water when they were baptized into the kingdom, as were the three thousand on Pentecost of Acts, chapter 2. The Holy Spirit did not reveal one word unto them about Christ and His kingdom, except by mouth of the man of God with the inspired message. Philip "proclaimed unto them Christ. The multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip... when they believed Philip... they were baptized, " the Bible declares.

The Holy Spirit, at no time, revealed himself directly from Heaven with a message to the sinner. Sinners who were begotten by the Holy Spirit and saved from their sins were they who heard the gospel, believed the gospel, and obeyed

the gospel by repenting and being baptized into Christ.

### **Laying On of Hands No Part of Conversion**

Someone may inquire, "Did not the Samaritans receive the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit?" Yes, but this was a special administration of the Holy Spirit which could be performed only by the apostles. Although Philip was a minister of Christ and could perform miracles, as was done in the apostolic age of the church, to confirm the word when preached, he could not confer miraculous works of the Spirit on others. The apostles at Jerusalem came to Samaria and "laid their hands on them that they might receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8: 14-17). It was necessary for the apostles to come and confer the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands. Only the apostles had this power.

Simon was informed, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, " when he sinned by offering to obtain this gift of God with money (Acts 8: 18-21). The Samaritans, like all Christians, received the Holy Spirit, through the word of God, when they obeyed the gospel, when they believed and were baptized. God gives the Holy Spirit to them that "obey him" (Acts 5: 32). The miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit, however, was through the imposition of the hands of the apostles and could not be accomplished except through the apostles. When the last apostle died, therefore, the laying on of hands, imparting the miraculous works of the Spirit, ceased!

When the people of Samaria were converted they were begotten by the Spirit, through the word of God, and born of water into the kingdom of Christ!

Regenerating life is within the seed. The regenerating power of the Holy Spirit is inseparable from the gospel of Christ, the truth, the word, the seed of the kingdom!

### **Holy Spirit in Conversion of Saul**

In Acts 9: 1-8 and Acts 22: 3-1. 6, we have the record of the conversion of Saul, who became Paul, the great apostle. A man who later declared, as an apostle, that he was guided by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 1: 11, 12). He did not have the Holy-Spirit before his conversion. It was necessary for Saul to change his religion and reverse his conscience concerning the Christ and His church before he was converted to Christ. The Holy Spirit, about which this great man of God wrote so much after his conversion, had a part in his conversion, but did not appear to Saul directly from heaven and convert him.

According to Paul, as recorded in Acts 22: 3 and 23: 1, he was a man who lived before God always in all good conscience, having been taught the law, and was zealous toward God. He was a very religious man, deeply devoted to God, but he was not a Christian at that time. After he did become a Christian he referred to himself as being the "chief of sinners" before he became a Christian (I Tim. 1: 15).

My friends, just because a person is honest, sincere, lives before God in all good conscience, is deeply religious, and is devoted to a religious cause does not mean that he is a Christian. Saul was a very honest man and "zealous toward God, " but he was unsaved. Then, question: "What did Saul do to be saved?"

### **Not Saved Directly by Holy Spirit**

While Saul was on his way to Damascus to persecute the church of our Lord, Jesus appeared unto him and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Saul replied, "Who art thou, Lord?" Jesus answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. " Then, trembling and astonished, Paul said: "Lord, what will thou have me do?" Christ replied, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9: 6).

Would this not have been the most opportune time for the Lord to save Saul, directly from heaven, if ever a person was to be saved by the power of the Holy Spirit directly from heaven? But, Saul was no exception. He had to obey the gospel, too.

Saul waited in the city of Damascus to hear what he must do to be saved. For three days and nights he was deeply penitent and he prayed. Still, he was unsaved. Finally, the gospel, which he must hear to know what to do to be saved, was brought to him by Ananias. According to Acts 22: 16, Saul was commanded, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. " He was told what he must do, as previously informed by Jesus Christ. Baptism was essential to his salvation. Although other conditions are just as essential, baptism is no less essential.

### **Received Sight—Saved?**

But, someone asks, "Was not Saul saved on the road to Damascus when he received his sight?" How long will men be deceived by those who continue to pervert God's eternal truth? In this record of the Acts we have the account of Paul's call to his apostleship and the record of his conversion. Paul was made blind by the brightness of the light. Later his physical eyesight was restored. Imagine some preacher deceiving honest people by saying Saul was saved when he received his sight, in order to try to get Saul saved before he was baptized. It was a deliberate perversion of truth, beloved! Remember, Saul was told, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. "

Don't you know that if Saul were saved before he was baptized, the Lord didn't know it, because Christ said, "It shall be told thee what thou must do. " Don't you know that if he were saved before he was baptized, Saul himself didn't

know it! I tell you that if Saul were saved before he was baptized, he was the most miserable saved person I have ever read about. Don't you know if Saul were saved before he was baptized, he was saved with his sins still unforgiven! Don't forget, he was told, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins. " His sins were not forgiven until he was baptized. He was saved by the power of the gospel preached by Ananias. He was converted to the Lord. It was Paul who later wrote, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1: 16). Paul received the Holy Spirit when he obeyed the gospel.

### **The Holy Spirit in Conversion of Ethiopian**

The record of the conversion of the Ethiopian officer, recorded in Acts 8: 26-39, is another example of the operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion. Here is a devoutly religious man who had to change his religion to be converted to the Lord. He had been to Jerusalem to worship and was "returning, and was sitting in his chariot, " and was reading the prophet Isaiah. The Spirit directed Philip, the preacher of the gospel, saying, "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. " Philip obeyed the Holy Spirit. He approached the Ethiopian in his chariot and inquired, "Understandest thou what thou readeest?" The Ethiopian eunuch replied, "How can I except some man should guide me?" Philip accepted his invitation to join him in his chariot and beginning from this scripture, "preached unto him Jesus. "

### **Saved Directly From Heaven?**

Ladies and gentlemen, could it be possible that anyone could so stretch his imagination to think that the Holy Spirit appeared directly from heaven and converted this officer of Ethiopia? Surely it is unthinkable! The Holy Spirit was present, but at no time did the Holy Spirit directly intervene,

effecting the man's conversion. The Spirit directed a gospel preacher, Philip, to preach the gospel to this man. If there was ever a time when the Holy Spirit might have intervened in conversion, He could well have appeared to the Ethiopian and revealed the meaning of the word of God which he was reading. The officer stated that he did not understand the prophecy, which related to Christ, the Saviour of man's soul, and could not understand it "except some man should guide me. " If the Holy Spirit would ever convert a soul by direct operation of His power from heaven, why did He not convert the Ethiopian by direct intervention? The answer is obvious! The Holy Spirit does not operate directly from heaven in the conversion of any soul, regardless of all the claims of men to the contrary. Just as every other case of conversion, the gospel of Christ, the Spirit-filled and the Spirit-directed gospel, was proclaimed and the sinner believed and obeyed the gospel.

### **Preached Christ**

Philip preached Jesus Christ to the Ethiopian. In preaching Christ, he preached the commands of Christ. This is evident in verses 35 through 39. "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. "

Question, where did the Ethiopian get the idea that he should be baptized? There can be but one answer. When

Philip "preached Jesus, " he preached the gospel of Jesus. He could not preach Jesus without preaching the gospel of Jesus. No man today can "preach Jesus" without preaching the gospel of Christ. What did Jesus command, as conditions of conversion, in His gospel? This is a most important matter. You must not misunderstand! Are you listening?... Jesus commanded: "Preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 15, 16). Believe and be baptized to be saved, the Lord commanded! The eunuch declared that he believed that Christ was the Son of God. He did not make some confession of some human creed. He confessed his faith in the Son of God and upon that confession he was baptized into Christ where he became a new creature in Christ. He was buried with his Lord in baptism, as pictured in Rom. 6: 3, 4. Both, Philip, the preacher, and the eunuch, the man being converted to the Lord, "went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. " The Holy Spirit had a part in the conversion of this officer from Ethiopia, but only through the gospel of Christ, as in every case of conversion. The Holy" Spirit directed the gospel message that brought about his conversion. Such direct operation of the Holy Spirit was necessary during those days of miracles, because they did not have the written and confirmed gospel of Christ. But, even during the miraculous days no soul was ever converted by the Holy Spirit directly from heaven!

### **Conclusions**

My friends, the Spirit intervened in the conversion of the man of Ethiopia, but not independently of the gospel of Christ (Acts 8: 26-39).

I submit the following conclusions concerning the Holy Spirit and the conversion of the Ethiopian. It must be



observed:

1) The Spirit was present but did not speak directly to the man to be converted; rather, the Spirit directed the evangelist, Philip, to go and preach the gospel of Christ to the Ethiopian officer.

2) The sinner invited the preacher to guide him in an understanding of the truth—"How can I understand except some man should guide me?" he said. The Holy Spirit was to appeal to his intelligence, his understanding, through the teaching of the Scriptures by Philip, the preacher.

3) Philip, from the scriptures, "preached unto him Jesus. " He proclaimed the Spirit-filled truth by which the officer was begotten.

Philip preached Jesus by preaching the gospel of the great commission of Jesus, which included: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 15, 16). No man can preach "Jesus" without preaching the commands of Jesus. After confessing that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, in obedience to the command of the **Lord**, the man of Ethiopia was baptized into Christ.

The Spirit was there. Philip was directed by the Spirit of the Lord to preach the gospel to this honest soul. The Spirit directed the evangelist on his way after the conversion of the eunuch, but at no time did the Holy Spirit speak directly to the convert, or influence the decision or experience of the man's heart, independently of the teaching of the word by the evangelist. The Holy Spirit operates upon the soul in conversion, but not independently of the gospel of Christ, which is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1: 16).

### **Holy Spirit and Conversion of Cornelius**

Cornelius, another devoted, religious man, was converted unto the Lord by the gospel of Christ proclaimed by

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Peter, who was inspired and directed by the Holy Spirit.

Question: Did not the Holy Spirit fall upon Cornelius and his household and convert them? The answer: The Holy Spirit never at any time came directly upon anyone for the purpose of conversion. It is true the miraculous "**gift** of the Holy Spirit" came upon Cornelius and his Gentile household, and, for a very specific purpose, namely, to prove to Peter and the other Jews that the Gentiles were subjects of the gospel as well as the Jews. The miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit was administered by the Lord to the Gentiles, in the case of Cornelius, to establish the fact that the Jews on Pentecost, of Acts the 2nd chapter, had no special privileges over the Gentiles in the Lord's kingdom—that no man should be considered "common or unclean" (Acts 10: 44-47; 11: 15-18).

Beloved, Cornelius was begotten by the Spirit through the word of God which was proclaimed by Peter. Although he was a devotedly religious man, Cornelius was an unsaved man. He was informed by the angel: "Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11: 13, 14).

When Peter was convinced that Cornelius was a subject of the gospel of Christ, he said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10: 47, 48).

Cornelius was told to get Peter "**who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.**" Now, being convinced that both Jew and Gentile are subjects of the gospel of Christ, and seeing that they were believers in Christ, Peter concluded, "what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11: 16, 17). He, therefore, "commanded them to be

baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10: 48).

The heavenly messenger did not tell Cornelius, the sinner, what to do to be saved but directed him to get a gospel preacher, Peter, a man inspired by the Holy Spirit, to tell him "words whereby" he should be saved!

### **Obedience to Gospel**

This is the conversion of a man whose prayer was heard, but the Holy Spirit did not descend upon him and save his soul in direct answer to prayer. Neither did the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit have any relationship to his salvation from sin. This miracle of the gift of the Holy Spirit, although wrought upon Cornelius, was not for the purpose of changing Cornelius, but was for the benefit of Peter and the other Jews. We usually determine what a thing is by the use made of it; especially is this true with divine approbation.

Here is a man, Cornelius, a very good man and a devoted, religious man, but a lost man, who must hear words whereby he should be saved (Acts 11: 14). The only command he was given to obey was, "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10: 48).

The only requirement, therefore, made of Cornelius and his house, in order to be saved, was to be baptized into Jesus Christ. This does not mean that man is saved by baptism alone. It is very evident that they were penitent believers and as believers were baptized into Christ. No doubt, there are many honest, sincere, and even devotedly religious people today who need to obey the Lord by being baptized into Christ in order to be saved, as was the case of Cornelius.

One does not need to feel a consciousness of being the greatest sinner in the world to be conscious of his need of salvation. Every man should look into the mirror of God's word and try to see himself as he is, good or bad, religious or irreligious, and resolve to obey the commands of the Lord as

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they apply to him, even if he need only be baptized into Christ.

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Disobedience to this command of the Lord, even though one might be devotedly religious, may cause one's soul to be lost. Cornelius was lost until he was told by the apostle "words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved, " which were, "be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 11:14; Acts 10: 47, 48). The Holy Spirit had a part in the conversion of Cornelius, but it was through the Spirit-filled "words" spoken by the apostle. He was not converted by the direct power of the Holy Spirit, independently of the word of God!

### **Conversion of Corinthians**

The brief record of the conversion of the Corinthians is recorded in Acts 18: 8-11: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house, and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. " Paul continued to preach the gospel in the city two years.

Crispus and other Corinthians, who were converted, heard the gospel, believed and were baptized. Crispus was baptized by Paul (1 Cor. 1: 14), as Christ commanded in the great commission (Mark 16: 15, 16).

They were begotten by the Spirit through the gospel preached by Paul: "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (I Cor. 4: 15). This is in harmony with the inspired declaration of the apostle Peter when he declared that one is begotten again of incorruptible seed, the word of God (1 Pet. 1: 22, 23). The Holy Spirit gives the regenerating and life producing power of the seed, the word, the gospel, the truth.

Paul emphasized that the gospel he proclaimed was inspired and directed by the Holy Spirit: "But I certify you,

brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1: 11, 12).

The Holy Spirit operated on the hearts of the Corinthians as they heard the gospel, believed the gospel, and obeyed the gospel, as in every case of conversion in the New Testament. There is no divine record indicating that the Holy Spirit ever converted any soul by some direct manifestation of power upon the sinner!

My friends, the Holy Spirit does not operate on the soul of man, independently of the word of God, in converting the soul. When men talk about conversion by direct operation of the Holy Spirit, they are presuming that conversion may be experienced without the Spirit, without life, and without the word of God. Such "conversion, " therefore, of necessity would be Christless, Godless, Spiritless, and lifeless.

In the last day, men of earth will be judged, not by some peculiar experience presumed to have been caused by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, but by the word of God, revealed by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jno. 12: 48).

## INDWELLING OF HOLY SPIRIT

Ladies and gentlemen, is the Holy Spirit a person? Does the Holy Spirit dwell in a child of God? Perhaps there is no subject in the Bible so grossly misunderstood as that of the Holy Spirit. Ignorance of the Bible's teaching on this important subject has caused true Christianity to be exchanged for "saw-dust trail, " "get religion, " and "get the Holy Ghost" feeling religion. Yet, not one time in the Bible was anyone ever told to **"get" religion**, or **"get the Holy Ghost!"** We are told to practice religion, but not "get it. " Many honest and sincere people have been misinformed.

### Person of Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a divine Being who was with the Father and Son in the chambers of the high court of heaven before the worlds began. He is an intelligent speaking personality, not a ghost, clouded in mysticism, making mysterious descents from Heaven, striking the souls of men, causing them to fall out prostrate on the ground or at an altar, losing their physical and mental balance. Such superstition might be associated with ghost tales, but not rightfully with the Holy Spirit and His work. Many honest souls, under the spell of emotionalism, have even lost consciousness and have been made to believe that they were saved by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit and now experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

### Personality, Not Materiality

The Holy Spirit is not recognized in a bodily sense. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24: 39), declared the Master. We should not become confused about personal identity of the Spirit.

There is a difference in personality and materiality. Actually, personality does not pertain to materiality. Bodies which are purely material have no personality. They are dead bodies! "The body without the spirit is dead. " Only the spirit gives evidence of personality. That which is spiritual is not material. Personality becomes distinct and pure to the degree it is uncontrolled and unhampered by that which is material. Personality is the revelation and function of spirituality.

The Holy Spirit is not a physical being. He is a distinct personality, a distinct, personal being. When men claim to be witnesses of material manifestations and revelations of the Holy Spirit, they are false witnesses. The Holy Spirit can not be identified as materiality. When men claim that they saw the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit appeared to them in identity form, they are mistaken. The Holy Spirit does not appear unto man in such material manifestations today.

#### Personal Work of the Holy Spirit

My friends, the personality of the Holy Spirit is evidenced by the work of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is said to do things only a person can do:

1. The Holy "Spirit teaches. Jesus said, "And He shall teach you all things" (John 14: 26).
2. The Holy Spirit reproves. When Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles, He said, "and when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16: 8).
3. The Holy Spirit is a guide. In giving this promise Jesus told the apostles, "he will guide you into all truth" (John 16: 13).
4. The Holy Spirit, characteristically of a person, speaks. Continuing His promise of sending the Holy Spirit, Christ declared, "For he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak"

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(John 16: 13). Paul declared, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly... " (1 Tim. 4: 1). The Holy Spirit, therefore, is a person who hears and speaks!

5. The Holy Spirit is one who is affected as a person. He may be grieved (Eph. 4: 30). He may be vexed (Isa. 63: i0). The Holy Spirit may be lied to (Acts 5: 3). The Holy Spirit may be resisted or rejected (1 Thess. 5: 19).

### **Gifts of the Spirit**

The New Testament church, in its period of infancy, was characterized by a diversity of apostolic gifts of the Spirit, as revealed in the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of 1 Corinthians. The objective of the spiritual gifts was clearly stated. The distribution of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit is unquestionable revealed by the inspired men of God.

The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, including the "gifts of healing, " "gifts of miracles, " "gifts of tongues, " and "gifts of knowledge, " were important in their time, but the apostle concluded that there is "a more excellent way. "

These miraculous works of the Spirit were never intended to be permanent in the church. They were given in the infancy of the church to last until "that which is perfect is come. " Having admonished the Corinthians to covet the "best gifts, " Paul added, "Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (1 Cor. 12: 31).

Of all the gifts in the Corinthian church, some were to "pass away" and some were to abide. The apostle makes comparisons in these words: "Though I speak with tongues" (of chapter 12: 10), "and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophesy" (no doubt, the "prophesy" of chapter 12: 10), "and understand all mysteries" (no doubt, the word of wisdom" of chapter 12: 8), "and all knowledge; and



though I have all faith" (no doubt, miraculous "faith" of chapter 12: 9), "so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13: 1-2).

In these verses the apostle gives appraisal of the value of love over the miraculous gifts. There must be a reason. The gifts of the Spirit were transitory; they would "pass away." Love was superior, in contrast to the impermanent miraculous gifts, because it "abideth" forever.

Paul affirmed, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 1: 11, 12), that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit would cease:

"Love never faileth: but whether there be prophesies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13: 8 — American Standard Version).

The Holy Spirit does not dwell in man today in a miraculous way, as in New Testament times. If it were true, then man would be able to perform the same miraculous works of the Spirit, such as: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead" (Matt. 10: 8); drink "deadly" poison without harm (Mark 16: 18); speak in tongues (languages never known by the speaker and such that hearers would understand in their own peculiar languages (Acts 2: 5-8).

### **No Direct Power of Holy Spirit**

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Miracles and healings have ceased because the means of securing miraculous power to perform miracles have ceased. The New Testament reveals two means of bestowing miraculous power upon men chosen by God. One: The baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 4, 43). Two: The laying on of hands by the apostles (Acts 8: 14-18; 19: 1-7).

According to Acts 2: 4, the twelve apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 10: 44, 45, it is revealed that a special, miraculous "gift of the Holy Spirit" was

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"poured out" upon Cornelius and his household. The apostle Paul, as a special, chosen apostle, was also endowed with the Holy Spirit and was divinely guided by the Spirit (Gal. 1: 11, 12). This last occurrence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which we have record of, was about the year of A. D. 33. Some twenty-three years later the apostle Peter wrote about water baptism which saves (I Pet. 3: 20, 21). The Holy Spirit, through Paul, declared there is "one baptism" (Eph. 4: 5). Obviously, that is water baptism. The man of Ethiopia requested, "See, here is water: What doth hinder me to be baptized?... And they went down into the water... and he baptized him" (Acts 8: 36, 38). We must, therefore, scripturally conclude that there is no baptism of the Holy Spirit now as a source for miraculous works.

The apostles who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit were the only ones in the Jerusalem church who could work miracles until they imparted this power to others (Acts 2: 43 and Acts 5: 12). The seven deacons could perform miracles only after the apostles laid their hands upon them (Acts 6: 6). Stephen could perform miracles (Acts 6: 8). "Philip could perform miracles (Acts 8: 6), but not until after the laying on of the apostles' hands.

Although Philip could do miraculous work, he could not impart this power to others. He went to Samaria, preached the gospel, and confirmed the word with miracles. Many believed and were baptized into Christ (Acts 8: 12), but it was necessary for Peter and John, apostles of Christ, to go from Jerusalem to Samaria and lay hands on the new converts and impart to them miraculous power of the Spirit to confirm the word by miracles (Acts 8: 14-21).

Simon evidently recognized that it was through the laying on of hands of the apostles that miraculous powers were imparted to others (Acts 8: 18). He "saw that through

laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given" and he offered them money to purchase that power. Peter informed him that this "gift of God" could not be purchased. Furthermore, he declared, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter" (verses 20, 21). From this text we are forced to the conclusion that the "gift of God, " the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, were obviously received only by the early Christians "through laying on of the apostles' hands. "

The apostles have been dead more than nineteen hundred years now. The last person upon whom the apostles laid their hands and conferred miraculous power have been dead now about nineteen hundred years. When the last apostle died and the last person upon whom the apostles laid their hands died, miracles by power of the Holy Spirit ceased. Regardless of all the fantastic claims, men do not receive the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit today!

#### Holy Spirit a Gift

Beloved, there is a great difference in miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit as a gift.

The Holy Spirit is received by those who obey the gospel. The apostles declared, "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5: 32).

The apostle John wrote, "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 John 3: 24).

The Christian abides in Christ by keeping His commandments. Christ and the Spirit abide in the Christian as he keeps the Lord's commandments.

#### Holy Spirit Not Seen

To deny that the Holy Spirit dwells in a Christian

because He has not been seen of mortal man would be equal to a denial of God, whom man has not seen. The apostle John concluded: "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (1 John 4: 12-13).

Although man cannot see the person of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian any more than he can see the person of God, we do see the fruits and work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's life.

### **Fruit of the Spirit**

The Holy Spirit may be seen in the child of God by the fruits of the Spirit: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5: 22, 23).

Brethren who hate, bite and devour each other, holding malice and envy in their hearts, give public testimony to the fact that the Holy Spirit does not dwell in them.

Where love rules in the hearts of God's people the Holy Spirit, Christ, and God are the persons on the throne of the soul.

Joy is the spice of a Christian's life. God's people should be the happiest people on earth. The miserable, unhappy, ever complaining member of the church does not bear evidence of the indwelling Spirit.

Peace is the fruit of the Spirit dwelling in the Christian. Our Lord declared, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the Sons of God" (Matt. 5: 9).

Some of God's children seem to have been born in the "objective case" and "kickitive mood"; they object to almost everything and kick about almost anything. They do not seem to be happy unless promoting unrest, disturbance, or

trouble of some kind. A constantly disgruntled person, who is always in trouble in the church, does not have the Spirit of Christ.

Longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control are winning attributes of the Christian who has the Holy Spirit dwelling in his heart. Not only will the Christian in whom the Holy Spirit dwells be saved, but other souls are influenced to be saved by the fruits of the Spirit revealed in the Christian's life.

### **Not of the Spirit, None of His**

Ladies and gentlemen, how does the Holy Spirit dwell in a child of God? A most declarative statement is made by the apostle Paul when he said, "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8: 9).

The Holy Spirit must reign supremely in the Christian's heart; otherwise, he is none of Christ's. Where Christ and the Spirit reign, the deeds of the body are put to death and the fruits of the Spirit are revealed in righteousness:

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8: 10, 11).

The apostle concludes: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God... The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, That we are the children of God" (Rom. 8: 12-16).

### **Spirit Dwells in Child of God**

The Holy Spirit dwells in the child of God as long as the child of God has room for him. He does not share his dwelling with the devil. The Holy Spirit is the royal guest in the body of a Christian and, as the deity of God, He has the right to dictate the terms and conditions of His abiding in the human temple.

To the Corinthian church Paul wrote: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20).

My friends, the child of God and the Holy Spirit live in the same house. The temple of God must remain Holy. The body is only the dwelling place of the soul of man. When man moves out, by reason of death, the body is dead; the temple is unoccupied. If the Holy Spirit is forced to vacate the temple, because of sin and unrighteousness, spiritual death is the result:

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you; If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17).

### **Indwelling of Holy Spirit a Gift**

The apostle furthermore declared that the "love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us" (Rom. 5: 5).

A Christian cannot afford to forfeit his right to have the Holy Spirit occupy the holy chambers of his soul, but the Spirit does not dwell where sin dwells. Jesus, the Son of God, warned man of those things which defile man, when He said: "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the

heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile man... " (Matt. 15: 18-20).

From this divine declaration we must conclude that man is responsible for the deeds of his body. All actions and deeds of the body, good or evil, proceed from the heart. When the Holy Spirit reigns on the throne of the Christian's heart the deeds of the body, borne in the heart, will be none other than the fruits of the spirit, which are good and not evil.

### **How Does the Spirit Dwell?**

A question of much concern to many people is: how does the Holy Spirit dwell in a Christian? Does the Spirit dwell in a child of God independently of the word of God?

Today I am alive. My spirit dwells in me. If you ask me how? I cannot fully explain, but there are some conditions for the abode of my spirit in this mortal body. When I die my spirit will no longer dwell in this body. Likewise, there are certain conditions upon which the Holy Spirit dwells in the body of a child of God.

The Christian's awareness of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not based on his "feelings" of "better felt than told" experience, nor by physical manifestations. A child of God knows that the Holy Spirit dwells in him just as he knows that Christ dwells in him and just as he knows his sins have been forgiven. This is by faith. Paul concluded, "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3: 14). The same apostle declared that faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10: 17).

### **Filled With Spirit - Filled With Word**

In Ephesians 5: 18, Paul exhorts, "Be filled with the Spirit. " Yet, the same apostle admonishes, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3: 16). To be filled with the Spirit, therefore, is to have the word of Christ richly dwelling

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in a Christian.

We are not to confuse the exhortation to be "filled with the Spirit" with the promise of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit. " One might fill a jug with water, yet not "baptize" the jug in water. John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit from birth (Luke 1: 15), yet he was not baptized with the Holy Spirit and worked no miracles (John 10: 41). The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a promise to the apostles which was fulfilled on Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 1: 2 and Acts 2nd chapter.

John, the apostle, declared that the Spirit is the truth: "It is the Spirit that beareth witness because the Spirit is truth" (1 John 5: 6).

Our Lord declared that God's word is truth (John 17: 17). Paul affirmed that the gospel of Christ "is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1: 16).

Any theory of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, through miraculous intervention, separate and apart from the word of God, would nullify the cross and set aside the whole scheme of redemption revealed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles in the New Testament.

When God spoke through Christ, His Son, by the Holy Spirit, He moved and directed the minds of the apostles, giving the world one message of salvation, the heaven-born, spirit-filled message of the cross, offering conditions of pardon and promises of salvation to the obedient. The Holy Spirit moves the mind and convicts the soul of man today, but not independently of the word of God. When man hears and obeys the gospel he hears and obeys the word of the Spirit. The word of God has always been the revelation of the Spirit whom man is obligated to hear and obey.

The Holy Spirit revealed WORDS to the apostles. It was not just a matter of influence. Christ promised, "He shall



guide you into all truth for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear. THESE SHALL HE SPEAK... " (John 16: 13). The word of God is the "sword of the spirit". The Holy Spirit uses the WORD like a sword to "convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16: 8).

The Spirit uses the sword, the word of God, which is "LIVING AND ACTIVE, and sharper than any two-edged sword" which pierces "even to the dividing of soul and spirit", and is "quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4: 12).

The Bible, a material book made of paper and ink, is not the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit uses the Bible, which is the WORD of God, revealed by the Spirit, to convict, to exhort, to guide, to save. The apostle James admonishes, "Receive with meekness the **implanted word, which is able to save your souls**" (James 1: 21). The Holy Spirit dictated the word.

Even in the miraculous age of the church, from the very beginning, the indwelling Spirit directed the apostle Peter, who had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to speak the WORD which brought conviction and obedience to the hearts of the hearers—"THEY THEN THAT RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE BAPTIZED... " (not direct operation of the Holy Spirit, but Spirit directed, inspired word). Acts 2: 37, 38, 41.

It is recorded that: "WITH MANY OTHER WORDS he testified, and exhorted them, saying, save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2: 40).

The Corinthians, in whom the Holy Spirit dwelled, learned of Christ, the glory of the cross and the power of His resurrection through the gospel, the WORD, preached by Paul and not by some direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

Read carefully Acts 18: 8; 1 Cor. 15: 1-4.

### **Life in the Seed**

The Holy Spirit gave the regenerating life to the word of God, which is the "seed of the kingdom" and is the perpetrator of life in the born-again child of God (1 John 5: 7; Luke 8: 11). The child of God is begotten by the Spirit through the word of God. Jesus declared, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3: 3). Peter declared, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit... Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Peter 1: 22, 23).

The Holy Spirit, as a person, does dwell in the body of a child of God, having begotten life through the seed, the word of God. Man's own spirit dwells in the natural body, having been begotten through the seed which produces natural life. It is not within the realm of human wisdom to fully understand how this is possible regarding spiritual life or natural life. It is a fact! Just how God in His providence, through the Spirit, may overrule and direct the life of His children we are not prepared to say. Surely that is God's part. Our part is to follow the direction of the dictates of the Spirit through the word of God and trust Him. Men may speculate on how the Spirit intervenes on behalf of the child of God, but that does not change the fact that the body of a Christian "is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you" (1 Cor. 6: 19).

### **Word of God Spiritual Food**

Man is born into this world through life in the seed by which he was begotten. Unless that life is sustained by proper nourishment and treatment the spirit will move out of the body. We call it death. The child of God is "born again" by

the Spirit giving life to the seed, the word, by which he is begotten. The spiritual life must continually be nourished by the word of God which sustains and perpetuates the life and growth of a Christian. Unless the child of God receives proper spiritual nourishment and engages in proper spiritual exercises and activities, he will die spiritually. The Holy Spirit moves out!

The apostle John surely refers to the spiritual life of a child of God, declaring that this new, begotten life is sustained and maintained "because his seed abideth in him" (1 John 3: 9). The apostle positively does not mean in this scripture that a child of God cannot sin, for the same apostle in the same epistle, chapter one and verse eight, declares: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. " The child of God, however, who does "walk in the light, as he is in the light" has the assurance that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1: 7, 9). This spiritual life is predicated upon the promise that "his seed remaineth in us. " If the seed is not nourished to active, spiritual growth the child of God will die spiritually. He will be lost!

### **Sealed By Holy Spirit**

Beloved, the Christian has the seal of promise by the Holy Spirit, which is an earnest of inheritance:

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1: 13, 14).

The apostle made the same declaration to the children

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of God at Corinth: "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1: 22).

The earnest of the Holy Spirit is the seal of promise, the guarantee deposit, from the highest power there is, an omnipotent God, assuring the child of God of his eternal inheritance and final redemption. The child of God, therefore, must not grieve the Holy Spirit, nor force him out of the dwelling place occupied by both the Christian and the Holy Spirit. Paul admonished the Ephesian Christians, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4: 30).

### **Indwelling of Spirit a Reality**

It is the Holy Spirit dwelling in the body of a Christian that will quicken the mortal body on the resurrection day: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh" (Rom. 8: 11, 12).

The indwelling Spirit enables the Christian to put to death the deeds of the body. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8: 13).

Our access to God is affected by the indwelling Spirit. The indwelling Spirit who generates life to the child of God, has a distinct relationship to the word of God through faith. Hear the apostle! Are you listening?... "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. " (Eph. 2: 18). But access by the Spirit is predicated upon faith in God through His word, "... by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5: 2). This grace, to which we have access by faith, appears unto man teaching him. The

apostle wrote: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2: 11, 12).

My friends, one of the great difficulties in understanding the fact that the Holy Spirit is a person who dwells in the child of God, is the fact that so many people do not recognize the Holy Spirit as a person, but consider him as an influence, a power, or an ideology. But the Holy Spirit is a person, one of the Godhead, three, omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal. If it be a matter of rejecting the reign of the Holy Spirit in the Christian, in his body, as a temple, because it is not "reasonable, " then one would be forced to deny his own existence in the body, because no man on could identify the soul of man, the person who lives in the body, by any physical measurements or identities.

### **Glory of His Personality**

The glory of the personality of the Spirit is described by David when he said: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee: but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee" (Psalms 139: 7-12).

The Christian may not fully comprehend the Spirit and His divine personality, but we can comprehend His message, His methods, and the fruits of His power. Beloved, hear me! Are you listening? The Holy Spirit is God's gift to His

children that obey him. Lift high your own spirit to the mountain top of God's infinite power. Through His word behold the glory of the divine Spirit who will live with you and abide in the same house with you, in your body, until the time shall come when He will transform our mortal bodies, into the glorious image of Him who died for us that we might live with Him in eternity".

The Bible says: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3: 18).

"For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3: 20, 21).

Yes, the Bible says: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3: 2).

My friends, no human tongue can describe the glory that shall be revealed to the saints of God who have been kept by the power of God unto that day. Won't you say with me, "Come into my heart, Lord Jesus: come into my heart to stay!"

## THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Ladies and gentlemen, the subject for discussion is, "The Second Coming of Christ. " It is a subject that has caused much speculation by religious teachers. Some of the most fantastic theories concerning the Lord's second advent have been advocated by religious "would be" prophets. However, the second coming of Christ is the one hope and promise that fills the Christian's life. The Bible abounds with clear and specific teaching regarding the things we should know about His second coming. Speculation about His coming is foolishness.

### He Is Coming

We have full assurance that Christ will come again.

1. Jesus is coming again because He promised to return. In John 14: 1-3, our Lord declared: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also. " "I will come again, " was His solemn promise! We have as full assurance that He will come again as we believe that He came the first time. He made His first advent from heaven, which was proven and established beyond any shadow of doubt. The same established evidence gives full assurance of His second coming.

2. We believe in the second coming of our Lord because the apostles, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, declared that Jesus would come again. In Hebrews 9: 28, the apostle affirmed that Christ would appear a second time. Again, in 2 Thessalonians 1: 7-10, Paul testified that Jesus would come

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again. Hear him: "And to you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. "

3. We believe that Jesus is coming again because the angels testified of His return. After our Lord had arisen from the dead, on the day He was taken up in a cloud, the angels of God stood by the apostles and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. " These messengers of God from the unseen world gave full assurance of the Lord's return.

These scriptures, ladies and gentlemen, leave no doubt in the minds of those who believe in God and the inspiration of the Bible about the second coming of Christ. Surely, He is coming again!

### **Coming When?**

Now, the question is no doubt in your mind, "When is Jesus coming again?" This question has provoked much speculation and guesswork. Date after date has been set for His return by false teachers. Today you hear much about the immediate return of the Lord and His reign upon the earth. My friends, don't be misled by such false teachers. There isn't a preacher on the radio, nor one to be found in any pulpit in the land, who knows one thing about "**when the Lord will return.** " All of this talk by these false prophets is foolishness. They are beside themselves!



Today, you may read much literature and hear much over the radio about the second coming of Christ. These teachers usually tell us that the Lord is coming right away, and, He is going to come back to the earth, and, He is going to git down with the Jews in a troubled spot of the world, Jerusalem, and reign on earth a thousand years.

Friends, hear it! There is not a verse in ail the Bible that even suggests that the Lord will ever set foot on this earth again, much less to reign on earth for a thousand years from the city of Jerusalem. He is coming again, but **not** to this earth. Christians will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, not on the earth. This meeting will be in the air. The apostle Paul leaves no doubt on this matter. By inspiration he declared: "then we that are alive that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4: 17).

### **Foolish Speculators**

Friends, these religious speculators, concerning the second coming of Christ, have been here for a long time. They come and go, deceiving and being deceived. Go with me back to the year of 1831. It was this year that William Miller began preaching on the second coming of Christ. He figured it all out that Jesus would come and the end of the world would occur sometime between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844. Mr. Miller figured it out that the Biblical periods spoken of as 2, 300 days, the "seven times" of Gentile supremacy, and the 1, 335 days in the book of Daniel, were prophetic periods, and adding them up he had it definitely figured out that the world would end by March 1, 1844.

It so happened in 1833 there were unusual signs and wonders in the heavens; the greatest meteoric shower of all time blazed and lighted the skies for some six hours. Also,

about the same time there were violent shocks from earthquakes in India, Mexico, England, and the West Indies. All of this helped make many disciples of Mr. Miller's believing and teaching that the end of the world was at hand.

### **Christ To Come 1844**

Mr. Miller, who had it all figured out — he thought — went from place to place telling the people of the impending doom. Christ is coming. The end of the world is here, he preached! Not only would Christ return to the earth, he said, but according to the prophecies of Ezra and Daniel, of the Old Testament, the earth would be destroyed by fire. "He comes! He comes!", declared preacher Miller and his followers. The date had been set by him. But March 21, 1844, of course, passed without incident. Miller then re-checked his figures and predictions. He concluded that he had made a mistake. Imagine that! Just a little matter of missing the date of the second coming of Christ and the end of the world! But he set another date, this time for sure. He was to come on the day of October 22, 1844, just seven months from the date he originally set.

With this date definitely set for Christ's return, Miller and his disciples began an intensive campaign to win more converts to his cause. Some 700 preachers united with him in his effort. Groups were organized in cities and communities to carry on the prophetic propaganda. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of pieces of literature of all kinds, telling of Christ's coming on this date, were placed in homes, on trains, on ships, and in public places.

The days passed. The eventful day was at hand! Inspired by fear and panic, excitement and enthusiasm steadily increased! Many committed suicide. Hundreds of Millerites marched the streets going from house to house seeking out the unbelievers and skeptics, pleading for them to repent.

As the appointed day approached, personal matters were settled. Personal belongings were given away or destroyed. Storekeepers opened their doors to the public and abandoned their merchandise. Farmers left their fields with their crops to rot or be choked to death by the weeds and grass. Then came the day, **the second coming** of Christ, foretold by the false prophet Miller, October 22, 1844. The day was dark and gloomy. Rain clouds were heavy overhead. Surely this would be the day! The disciples of Miller prepared to meet the Lord. Dressed in white robes, they left their homes and gathered on hilltops, and in cemeteries, where they expected to rise with the resurrected dead. The shadows of night gathered about them. Great fires were built to light **the** sky! There were shouts of joy and sobs of sorrow! Midnight came. The Lord did not come! Anxious and disappointed, they looked at each other; still, He must come because, their preacher, Mr. Miller, said He would!

### **Deceived People**

All through the night there was a struggle between faith and unbelief. Faith passed away with the fleeing shadows of the night. Dawn came and the sunlight of a new day brightened the eastern horizon. Christ did not come. Miller's prediction was a mockery of God. The gloom of Miller's followers was beyond words to describe. There was anger, weeping, and shamefacedness! The groups disbanded in shame and embarrassment, with their white robes wrinkled and soiled, and with empty hearts they crept back to empty homes; no food, no furnishings, no business, no merchandise, and no crops. A deluded and deceived people! William Miller, who remained at home, wept tears of shame and disappointment. He had been so foolish as to preach to the people that he knew when the Lord was coming again.

Friends, hear me! Are you listening? There is not a man

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on this earth who knows one thing about when the Lord Jesus will come again. All of this talk you hear from preachers over the radio, from their pulpits, and through their literature about the second coming of Christ soon, and His reign on earth, is foolishness. They don't know any more about His coming than Mr. Miller knew. More than a hundred years have passed since Mr. Miller made his wild predictions. Those wild ideas and fantastic theories about the Lord's return are constantly heard from modern "would be" prophets. To claim when the Lord will return is to claim the knowledge of something that Jesus himself does not know.

### **Only God Knows When**

In Mark 13: 32, Jesus said, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man; no not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. " Only God, the Father, knows when Christ will come again. In this text we are admonished by the Lord to watch, for we know not when He shall come again. We must watch and be prepared for His coming whether it be today, tomorrow, or a million years from now.

### **How Will He Come?**

A question of interest to all is, "How will the Lord come again?" Some religious teachers, more recent than Mr. Miller, set dates for the Lord's return, and, since Jesus did not come as they predicted, they decided to try to cover up their big mistake by declaring that Jesus really did come, and He is on earth today, but we just don't see Him! Such men as Mr. Charles T. Russell and Judge Rutherford advocated this theory some thirty-five years ago. It is still taught today and is the basis for many other related theories about the second advent of Christ. Let us inquire from the Bible as to how the Lord will return.

In Acts 1: 9-11 it is revealed that Jesus will return in like

manner as He went away — in the clouds. He was taken up and the cloud received Him. Again, in Revelation 1: 7, it is said that He cometh with the clouds and every eye shall see Him. Hear it: "Behold, he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen!" How different from the modern theories you may hear today. He is coming in the clouds and every eye shall see Him. In view of this statement of inspiration, imagine the absurdity of the theory that He is already here, but we just don't see Him!

### Why Will He Come?

Now, the question of vital importance is before us. Why will He come again? What is the purpose of His second coming? The scriptures speak emphatically on these questions!

He is coming to raise **the dead**. Hear the apostle in 1 Thessalonians 4: 16: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. " From this scripture it is evident that the dead in Christ will rise before the living shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. The dead in Christ shall rise first, that is, those who are still living when He comes will not precede the dead. The dead shall be raised first, then all together be caught up to meet Him in the air.

Ladies and gentlemen, are you listening? When this time comes, referred to in the passage of scripture just quoted, there can be no time for an earthly reign of Christ on earth. To save your own soul from perdition, you could not get a thousand years, or even one day, in this time between His second coming and the judgment. When He comes, time will

be no more. The day of preparation will have gone forever!

### **Resurrection of the Dead**

When Jesus comes again, not only will the dead in Christ be resurrected, but **all the dead** will be raised. Listen to the words of our Lord himself, recorded in John 5: 28, 29. Hear him: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which **all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth**; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. " When Jesus comes, He said all will be raised from the dead — at the same time, both the righteous and the unrighteous; the good, resurrected unto eternal life; the evil, resurrected unto eternal damnation! There is no such thing taught in the Bible as two resurrections a thousand years apart. Such a theory is false and deceptive!

### **Execute Judgment**

**When our Lord** comes again He **will** come **to** execute judgment and take vengeance on them who know not God and who obey not the gospel of Christ (2 Thessalonians 1: 8 and John 5: 27). He will come to separate the righteous from the unrighteous, the sheep from the goats, to reward the faithful with the crown of life and banish the unfaithful to eternal damnation (Matthew 25: 32 and 1 Peter 5: 4). Remember, friends, eternal damnation in hell will last just as long as eternal life in heaven —both are eternal!

Friends, will you not hear me? Don't you know we are all, everyone, bound to meet the Lord in Judgment! What will be your destiny? If you are not a Christian, will you not accept the overtures of God's love and mercy and be saved upon the terms of His pardon!

## THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND RESTORATION OF JEWS

Friends, we continue our discussion of matters relating to the second coming of Christ. Did you ever hear a preacher say that when Christ comes back again, He is coming back to the **earth** and will make His landing in the city of **Jerusalem**, where He will set up a kingdom, the kingdom of David, and reign over the earth from the city of Jerusalem for a period of **1, 000** years? Did you ever hear a preacher state that when Jesus does come back, He is coming to the city of Jerusalem and all the Jews of the nations will gather in the city of Jerusalem and be saved and reign with Christ as their king for 1, 000 years?

### **Not Coming to Earth**

Ladies and gentlemen, the Bible does not teach that Christ will ever set foot on this old sin cursed earth again. Yes, He is coming again, but not back to the earth. He is coming again but we shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Him in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord, so declared the apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4: 17. These fantastic ideas about the Lord's return to earth, the restoration of the Jews as a nation, and Christ's reign on the earth a 1, 000 years, are positively false. There are no such arrangements. Such ideas are purely figments of man's imagination. Many men have taken certain prophecies from the Bible, which have' already been fulfilled, and by certain manipulation and interpretations, have made honest and sincere people believe these fantastic claims. Let us consider the matters from the teaching of the Bible.

### **Land Promise**

First: It is claimed when God made certain promises to

Abraham concerning his seed, he promised to give the land of Jerusalem to the Jews for a reign of peace on earth at Christ's second coming. I call your attention to some of these promises:

God made three covenants with Abraham. The first was a **Land Covenant**. In Genesis 15: 18-21 He said, "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. " Again, Genesis 17: 8: "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. "

These passages of Scripture reveal the full import of God's promise to Abraham and his seed, relating to their land of habitation. They had a very definite meaning. Unfortunately, men today have perverted that meaning and deceived many honest souls. Let us look at these promises in the light of what they meant when God spoke them to Abraham, and not in the light of some man's imagination.

### **Promises Fulfilled**

These promises of the land inheritances were renewed to Abraham's seed from time to time. Now the question is: were they fulfilled? Here is the answer. Listen! Joshua 21: 43-45. "And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest, round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers; and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass. " Did you hear it, friends? God declared in His word, "The Lord gave unto Israel **ALL the land** which he swore to give unto their fathers. There failed



not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel—ALL CAME TO PASS. "

Joshua declared that all these promises came to pass. They are not to be fulfilled when Christ comes again. The Jews will not go back to Jerusalem and reign with Christ. No Jew can hope for any future fulfillment of any promise made to Abraham, or his seed, prior to the emphatic statement of Joshua when he said, "**all came to pass.** "

### Promises Conditional

The promises that God made to Abraham and his descendants were conditional. In Jer. 18: 1-10, God, through the prophet, warned of certain things to happen if they did not obey. In the 19th chapter of this same prophecy, God declared to Israel, "Even so will I break this people, (the Jewish nation) and this city (the city of Jerusalem) as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that **cannot be made whole again**".

Hear it, friends! Are you listening? This is God's word spoken to the Jewish nation of Old Testament time. Hear it again! Are you listening?... God said, "I will break this people, (that is, the Jewish nation) and this city, (the city of Jerusalem), as one breaketh a potter's vessel that CANNOT BE WHOLE AGAIN. "

In spite of this solemn warning and declaration by Jehovah, men today predict falsely that the Jews will be gathered together again in the city of Jerusalem for the Lord's return. This is an absolute contradiction to God's **declaration**, which I have just quoted, when He said, "I will break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again. " Preachers, did you hear it? God said, "CANNOT BE MADE WHOLE AGAIN. " You say—"**will be** put together again and dwell in Jerusalem **with Christ a thousand years.** " **God says, "not so... I will** break this people and this city and **cannot** be put together

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again. " Both cannot be right. One has uttered falsehood. I do not believe God declared a falsehood, do you? He spoke the truth!

### **False Prophets**

Ladies and gentlemen, many false teachers are proposing to the Jews a false hope. This has been true ever since God made His promises to Abraham in the long ago. God warned against such false teachers. Hear him! "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophecy unto you; they make you vain; they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, the Lord hath said, ye shall have peace, and they say unto everyone that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, no evil shall come upon you" (Jeremiah 23: 16, 17).

Friends, is not this statement of Jehovah a true description of would-be prophets today who are telling the world that they are speaking the voice of God, making great promises to those who have rejected Christ, telling them that the Lord hath said they shall dwell with the Lord in Jerusalem in peace and no evil shall come upon them? Read Jeremiah 23: 16, 17, and observe how God warned against these false prophets. Read verse 31 of that chapter and hear what God says about such false prophets "that use their tongue and say, he saith. " Yes, my friends, it is a common thing for these false prophets, making spectacular promises and assurances about Christ's second coming, to say, "He saith!" or, "This is what God says, " and then palm their own false prophecies and vain promises off as the word of the Lord.

### **Seed Promise**

The second covenant that God made with Abraham was

the Seed Covenant (Genesis 12: 1-3): "Now the Lord said unto Abraham, get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee. I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curse thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. "

This covenant, without doubt, is fulfilled in Christ, the Son of God. The apostle Paul so declared in Galatians 3: 6-9: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. "

Surely, friends, language could hardly be plainer. This covenant with Abraham was a spiritual one and its blessings belonged to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. The apostle declared, "They which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham. " But who are they which are of faith? Those who have obeyed the gospel of Christ, because of faith in Christ, both Jew and Gentile (Galatians 3: 26-29). There is **no special blessing to the Jews**, as a nation, in this Seed Covenant between God and Abraham. Both the Old and the New Testaments declare this to be true.

### **Covenant of Circumcision**

But, let us look at the third covenant, the **Covenant of Circumcision** (Genesis 17: 9-13). This covenant of circumcision was for the Jewish nation only — between God and Israel. It is stated that the Covenant was an everlasting Covenant. The land covenant also was said to be an

everlasting covenant, but does that mean a covenant without end? If the land covenant is an everlasting covenant, and the Jews will all go back to Jerusalem and possess the land and reign with Christ in Jerusalem, then the Covenant of Circumcision would have to be a never-ending covenant, too. This conclusion is positively untrue and denies the truth of the New Testament scriptures.

The Apostle Paul tells us, in Galatians 5: 6, that "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love. " How does the faith work and what is the blessing of faith? The apostle gives us the answer in the same letter. Hear him. Are you listening?

"For ye are all children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3: 26: 20).

### **Both One in Christ**

What about God's promise to Abraham and the fulfillments? You can't misunderstand what the apostle said, unless you let some false prophet or preacher misinform you and deceive you. Do not be misled by these future kingdom prophets who know about as much about the prophecies of the Bible as they know about the secrets of the Atomic Bomb. You can understand what Christ said through the apostle Paul. He declared that those who have faith in Christ and are baptized into Christ have put on Christ. You can understand that, can't you? **"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. "** That's what the apostle said. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, " he said.

"Ye are all one in Christ Jesus, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise, " he concluded. You have no difficulty in understanding that, do you?

All Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, are heirs according to the promise God made to Abraham. All become Christians in exactly the same manner. The apostle declared, "For as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ... and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. " There is no such thing as a special hope for Israel, or restoration of the Jews to Palestine for the coming of Christ and a special reign of Christ with the Jews on earth. Such dogmas of men are positive denial of the gospel of Christ and a refutation of the New Testament.

As I have pointed out to you already from the Bible in this address, the Jews, as a nation, have been rejected by God and shall always be rejected. Both Jews and Gentiles may obey the gospel of Christ, and become Sons of God, the seed of Abraham, and heirs of God according to the promise. But, there is no special blessing to any man or nation of earth, here, or hereafter! God is no respecter of persons, the apostle Peter declared when talking about this very matter of the difference between the Jews and the Gentiles (Acts 10: 31-13).

### **Israel Destroyed**

Ladies and gentlemen, are you listening? Concerning Israel as a nation, God had this to say: "Therefore, behold, I, even I will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence, and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten" (Jeremiah 28: 39. 40).

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Friends, did you hear that? Do you know more about it than God? Preachers, are you going to restore Israel to Jerusalem even though God said, "I will utterly forget you and I will forsake you and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence, and bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten"? Beloved, that is what God said about the future of Israel as a nation. I believe God, don't you?

### **Christ Rejected**

Now let me read to you from the New Testament what Jesus said about this matter. "Hear another parable. There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard, and hedged it around about, and digged a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants more than the first, and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, they will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir, come let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him" (Matthew 21: 33-44).

Now, think of this for a few moments. The husbandmen are the Jews. God sent servant after servant to them for their salvation, but they refused such overtures of God's mercy and stoned and killed God's servants. Finally, God sent His own Son, Jesus Christ. They crucified him upon the rugged tree of the cross. Now, what will be the end when the Lord of the vineyard cometh and what will He do unto those husbandmen, is the question proposed by Jesus in the parable? Will He gather all the Jews back in Jerusalem and give them the blessing of peace and allow them to rule with

Him over the earth for one thousand years? My friends, such an idea is preposterous.

This is what Jesus said. Hear Him! Are you listening? "They say unto him. He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen which shall render him the fruits of the season. " Then our Lord concluded, "Did you ever read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner; this was from the Lord, as it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken away from you and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And he that falleth on this stone shall be broken to pieces, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will shatter him as dust. "

Ladies and gentlemen, honestly, can you possibly conceive of men denying such plain, emphatic declarations of God and building a theory to suit their own imaginations, contrary to the truth of God? It seems unbelievable. The word of God teaches clearly and most emphatically that the only time Jews or Gentiles will ever reign with Christ is now, while Christ is the King of His Kingdom. Furthermore, only those who obey the gospel of our Lord now may receive the benefits of His Kingdom.

There will be no future reign of Christ on earth for Jews or Gentiles. When our Lord returns, this earth will not be a very comfortable place to stay. The Bible states that the earth will melt with fervent heat. This old world will be destroyed (2 Peter 3: 10). We beg you all, our Jewish friends and our Gentile friends, obey the gospel of Christ today and live a faithful, consecrated life while on this earth, so that when the Lord returns, you may meet Him in the air and so ever be with him and the redeemed of ages in heaven, through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

## THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND MILLENNIALISM

My friends, I shall continue the discussion of the subject, "Christ's Second Coming and the One Thousand Year Reign. " There is much confusion and misrepresentation of truth on the subject.

### **Kingdom Not Postponed**

**Millennialists, or pre-millennialists, tell us that the Lord came to earth the first time to establish His kingdom, but because the Jews rejected Christ, He postponed the establishment of the kingdom and established the church as a substitute. My friends, can you imagine any man, or group of men, mortals of earth, defeating the purpose of God to the extent that God had to change His plans and try it all over again at some future date—when Christ comes back the second time? Let me ask you. If God changed His mind and His plans the first time because the Jews rejected Him and postponed the establishment of His kingdom, what assurance is there that the Jews might not reject Him the second time? If they reject Him again, would God again change His mind and postpone the kingdom? Oh, such foolish ideas!**

No man has ever, or shall ever defeat the divine purpose of God! The church of our Lord was not an accident, but was established according to the eternal purpose of God. Read Ephesians 3: 10, 11. Furthermore, the church is the kingdom of Christ and there is no remote possibility of a future kingdom on earth. The church, or the kingdom, was established on the first Pentecost, following the resurrection of Christ, the record of which is found in Acts the 2nd chapter. Since that eventful day, Christ has been reigning on the throne of David as the king of His kingdom and the head of His church (1 Timothy 6: 15; Ephesians 1: 22; Colossians



1: 13; Revelation 1: 5, 6; Acts 2: 29-47).

### **Church and Kingdom**

The church of Christ is the kingdom of Christ. Jesus told Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my church... I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven... " (Matthew 16: 18, 19).

The church is blood-bought (Acts 20: 28). The kingdom of Christ is blood-bought (Revelation 9: 5, 6). Therefore, the church of Christ is the kingdom of Christ. If the kingdom of Christ is not in existence today, there isn't a child of God on earth today, for to be a child of God is to have been born again. To be born again is to be in the kingdom (John 3: 5). To be delivered from the "power of darkness" is to be "translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love" (Col. 1: 13).

Christ will not come the second time to establish His kingdom because His kingdom is already established. Rather, when our Lord returns, "then cometh the end when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father" (1 Corinthians 15: 24).

### **Imminent Coming?**

"But, still, " someone inquires, "what is the hope of salvation for the Jews, if they are not going to be restored to Palestine and saved at the Lord's second coming?" Let us observe the basic fallacy of the presumptuous theory.

### **Jewish Nation Converted?**

The millennialists tell us that the Jewish nation must be converted and restored instantly with the Lord's return. Then, if that be true, and the Lord's return is immediate, it would mean a miraculous transportation of a nation, instantly, to the land of Palestine. Such absurd claims would completely nullify the gospel plan of salvation which Jesus

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gave to the world, as the power of God unto salvation, both to Jews and Gentiles (Romans 1: 16). Such a phenomenal transportation of an entire race of people, a nation of Jews, from all parts of the world across the seas, separating continents of the earth, would indeed be a miracle that would make the ancient crossing of the Red Sea, recorded in the Old Testament, look like the crossing of a mud puddle in the middle of a road. Beloved, how can people become so mixed up in their thinking!

### Salvation of Jews

Now to the question, what about the salvation of the Jews? My friends, the principles and conditions governing the salvation of the Jews are very specific and understandable. The conversion of Israel is subject to the great commission of our Lord recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The great commission, which our Lord gave, is for all nations. Hear him. Matthew 28: 19, 20, "Go ye therefore and teach **all nations**, baptizing them.. " As recorded by Mark, Jesus said, chapter 16, verse 15, "Go ye **into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.** " Furthermore, Luke records, Luke 24: 46, 47, "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name **among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.** "

Ladies and gentlemen, hear it! Are you listening? Jesus said that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name **among all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem. You will find that the gospel was preached to the Jews first, beginning at Jerusalem, and about 3, 000 of them obeyed the gospel of Christ on that day, the day of Pentecost, by repenting and being baptized for the remission of their sins. They were saved and the Lord added them to His church and made them citizens of His kingdom (Acts 2: 36-47; Colossians 1: 13). My friends, that is the hope of salvation for

the Jews! It is the only hope, whether Jews or Gentiles. Just as Jesus declared, the gospel plan of salvation is for all nations, the Jews not excepted.

### **No Respector of Persons**

In Acts, chapter 10, verses 34 through 37, the great commission, imposing the conditions of salvation, was definitely applicable to the Jews. The apostle Peter makes plain, positive statements to that effect. He declared that God is no respecter of persons and that all in every nation are acceptable subjects of the gospel of Christ. In the eleventh chapter of the Acts he took time and effort to convince his Jewish brethren that God makes no difference in nations when the matter of salvation is at hand.

In Acts 15: 9, it is clearly and positively affirmed that there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile in God's sight and the same terms of salvation are offered to both Jew and Gentile alike, now, in the future, and for all time! The great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ ends with this age, in which we are living, the Christian dispensation. If the Jews do not accept the gospel of Christ in this dispensation, there are no provisions for them, or anyone else, in another age. This is the last. Read 1 Peter, chapter 1, verses 10 through 25. According to Acts 13: 16-46, if the Jews reject the gospel of Christ, they will be lost!

### **All Israel Be Saved?**

Perhaps someone is thinking that Paul, in the eleventh chapter of Romans, declared that all Israel will be saved someday when the Lord returns. Paul does not even remotely suggest the idea of the salvation of the Jews at the Lord's return. Let us read the verse, Romans 11: 26. "And so, all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and he shall turn away ungodliness

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from Jacob, for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins".

The expression, "And so all Israel shall be saved, " seems to give many people much trouble. But there is nothing difficult about this passage of Scripture. Look at it for a moment. The word "so" in this verse is an adverb of manner not an adverb of time. "So all Israel shall be saved"; so, in this manner, all Israel shall be saved like the remnant shall be saved. In other words, all Jews will be saved like the part, or remnant, that is already saved. Romans 11: 26, therefore, is not a promise of universal salvation to the Jews, or national restoration of Israel, but is a declaration of the conditions upon which all - all alike - should be saved. The Jews who were to be saved then at the writing of Romans, were to be saved like the Jews on Pentecost of Acts 2. The Jews who are to be saved today, are to be saved like those of New Testament times. All Jews, and Gentiles, too, will be saved alike — in the same manner. So, Paul declared, all Israel shall be saved — and in no other way — it is the same salvation to all, on the same terms, in the same manner; so all Israel shall be saved as the remnant had been saved. Friends, I know you can understand that, can't you!

### **1, 000 Years Not Literal**

My friends, not only is it falsely taught that the Jews will be restored to Palestine and be saved, but it is also propagated that the Lord will come back to earth and reign on the earth for a period of 1, 000 years. We are told that Christ will be the literal king on a literal throne and reign a literal period of 1, 000 years. We are told that He will have governors and princes under Him, reigning over other parts of the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me tell you, the word "Premillennial, " which is so close to the hearts of many

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people, is not even in the Bible. The prefix, "pre, " means "before. " The word, "millennial, " means "one thousand. " But I assure you the Bible teaches nothing about either "pre-millennial" or "post-millennial. " The false doctrine of "pre-millennialism" contends that Christ will return to earth at the beginning of the one thousand year period of Revelation's 20th chapter. It is falsely taught that Christ begins His reign on David's throne at that time and the saints will be bodily resurrected from the dead and they will live and reign with Christ on earth a literal thousand years.

I ask you, my friends, to read carefully Revelation's **20th chapter**, and the first six verses in particular. I declare to you, beloved, there is no thought in this passage, or any other passage of Scripture, that even remotely suggests one single part of the doctrine of "pre-millennialism. "

First: Revelation 20 does not even mention the second coming of Christ—so peculiar to the millennial theory.

Second: This passage does not even mention a reign on **earth**.

Third: There is no mention of a literal throne of David.

Fourth: There is nothing said about Christ on earth.

Fifth: There is no mention of a bodily resurrection.

Sixth: There is no reference to us, Jews, or Gentiles, reigning with Christ on earth.

Let us briefly review some of the high points of Revelation, Chapter 20. Verse 1, The vision of Revelation states, "I saw an angel coming down out of heaven"—NOT **CHRIST** coming down to earth.

Verse 4 states, "I saw the souls that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus" - NOT bodies, but **SOULS**. These were souls of early Christian martyrs who were "beheaded for the testimony of Jesus"—NOT someone else living today, nor in the future! Furthermore, it is said, "They

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lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. " It is not even implied that the reign was to be on EARTH—at some future date, nor any other time. Actually the word "millennium" is not in the Bible. The "thousand years" is not a literal period but symbolic years, a round number.

Verse 5: "The rest of the dead" refers to the bodily resurrection of the dead, good and bad, at the judgment. According to Christ, all the dead will be raised at the same time (John 5: 28, 29), not two resurrections—one at the beginning of the "millennium" and another at the end of a "**thousand year** reign of Christ. " The "**first resurrection**" refers to the resurrection of verse 4. The "**second death**" refers to the separation from God at the judgment.

When Christ comes again He will come to execute judgment (II Thess. 1: 7), NOT to establish His kingdom. When He comes again He will deliver His kingdom to the Father (1 Cor. 15: 24).

Ladies and gentlemen, it is very peculiar to me that these experts on prophecy are so literal in their interpretation on some things and so far removed from literal application to other related matters. To illustrate: none of these "would-be" prophets will accept the twentieth chapter of Revelation literally. May I ask, was this a **literal key, a literal chain, a literal dragon, a literal bottomless pit, a literal sea?**

"Oh, no", they would say, "those are not literal!" Then I must say, why say the thousand years is literal? If one is literal, then the other is literal! I am sure that you can see the absurdity of such a false theory.

Ladies 'and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening?... If the chain, the key, the dragon, and the sea are figurative, then they are all figurative! If one is literal, then they are all literal! I say to you, my friends, there is no statement of Revelation 20 that even hints that Christ will reign on David's

throne, or any other throne, on this earth.

I declare to you that Revelation 20 has nothing to say about a bodily resurrection of the saints and a reign of a thousand years with Christ on earth. Such theories are from men and not from God! In Revelation 22: 18-20 is revealed the serious consequence of adding to the word of God: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book. "

The book of Revelation is a book of symbols and signs. Figurative language is used in presenting the great apostacy, the dark ages, and the triumph of the everlasting gospel of Christ, bringing salvation to all men who believe and obey that gospel. This gospel shall be preached until He comes again. He will not come to establish a kingdom, but to deliver the kingdom, already established, back to God (2 Corinthians 15: 24). Then will be the end. Where will your soul spend eternity?'

We plead with eternity-bound souls: be prepared to meet God at the judgment day, that yours may be eternal joy and happiness to live with God, Christ, and the redeemed of all ages, throughout all eternity!

## THE TWO BUILDERS

On what are you building today? Jesus ended His celebrated sermon on the Mount by referring to the two builders, the record of which is found in Matt. 7: 24-27.

Listen:

"Everyone therefore that heareth these words of mine and doeth them shall be likened to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock; and the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house and it fell not because it was founded upon the rock. And everyone that heareth these words of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and smote upon that house and it fell, and great was the fall thereof. "

In the preceding verses Jesus had declared, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the **kingdom** of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not **prophesy** in thy name, and by thy name cast out demons and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will profess unto them I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7: 21-23).

It is obvious from this reading that there will be many disappointments on the judgment day. How regretful it is that today there are thousands of builders building on the wrong foundation. Too, it is regretful that many thousands of people never attempt to build. Our lesson concerns the "Two Builders" referred to in the text.

### Two Builders Heard

First, I should like to point out to you there were some



points of resemblance between these two builders. Both the wise and the foolish builder had heard the word of Christ. This lesson, therefore, does not refer to some heathen, ignorant of Christ's gospel, or some infidel who utterly rejects Christ and His sacred teaching. Both builders are they who have heard the word of Christ.

May I impress upon you today, my friends, that hearing the gospel of our Lord is absolutely essential to your salvation. I am not unmindful of the theology of man which says there is nothing a man can do to be saved; he must wait for the direct operation of the Spirit of God upon his heart before he can even believe in Christ. However, this is a false, unscriptural conclusion! Such a false doctrine would make man a mere tool, or machine, to be manipulated by God at His will. If this theory were true, then we must accuse God of being responsible for every lost person in history. The theory asserts that man can do nothing himself but wait for God to send down His Spirit; then, if God doesn't send down His regenerating power and save man, he must go to Hell. Then, who is responsible? Not man, because he could do nothing in the first place. God must be responsible then for every lost soul. Can you believe that? It seems incredible to me that any intelligent person could ever reach such a conclusion. Yet, beloved, that is the theory taught by many religionists in many denominations today. It is a part of the creed of many denominations. Such a theory of religion and salvation could never be sustained in the word of God. Man is a free moral agent. He may choose to serve God or Satan. I'll tell you, ladies and gentlemen, there will not be one person in Hell who did not choose to go there.

The first step, therefore, in seeking man's redemption, is the necessity of hearing the word of Christ. No one can be a believer without first having heard the truth. In Rom. 10: 17,

Paul concludes, "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God". And, no man can please God without faith (Heb. 11: 6). It is, therefore, imperative that we first hear the word of God.

In the case of the two builders to which the Lord alluded, both heard the words of Christ. But hearing alone is insufficient. My friends, I must tell you, everyone listening to me this day might hear the truth, but unless you obey, do what the Lord commands, your soul will be lost in eternity. How foolish to hear the gospel and yet refuse to obey it. The foolish man of our text realized the folly of hearing only after it was too late!

### **Both Were Builders**

The "Two Builders" were much alike, in the second place, because they both saw the necessity of building a house, or place of refuge. There are many people today who see the necessity of religion and erect some kind of building on some kind of foundation, but even so, they will learn someday, when it is too late, that they were foolish builders.

In the case of the "Two Builders," both actually erected a house. They built something, both the wise man and the foolish man. Most unfortunately there are many people in this world who propose and resolve to build, but abandon their plans completely. They never get around to it. Others may begin the work on the building, but cease at the slightest provocation. According to our text, both the wise and foolish man resolved, began and proceeded unto the completion of the building. They were both builders, but one was wise and the other was foolish.

Not only did they actually build a house, but both houses were exposed to the storms that beat against them. Ladies and gentlemen, hear me today. Are you listening?... There is no man upon the earth who will escape final

judgment of Almighty God. All men, with their works, will be judged. The venerable apostle Paul wrote the church in Corinth, I Cor. 5: 10, "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad. "

Yes, my friends, even the rains of affliction, while on earth we live, may try us; the floods of Jordan, the very stream of death itself may try us. The storms of eternity will ultimately be the final test. What are you building on, may I ask? Are you building on the eternal truth of God, the mighty solid rock, or, are you building on the sand that will not stand?

### **False Security**

My friends, I must remind you that both builders rested with seemingly sufficient security in the house that each had built—until the final day of test came. Where is the man who can live in true happiness, without hope and without confidence as to the future? All men must trust in something. But we must be sure that our hopes and our fond anticipations will not be blasted upon the sands of destruction when the test comes. The sad feature of this narrative, related by our Lord to teach you and me a lesson, is the fact that one of the builders was so foolish as to build upon the sand, by refusing to do what the Lord said do. What an insecure foundation! How foolish! How foolish! A builder who has gone to the trouble and expense of erecting a building, but built upon the wrong foundation because he wouldn't do what he was told to do. Isn't it regrettable that many thousands today will spend their talent, time, effort, and money in building, but building upon the sand because they refuse to do what Jesus, the Son of God, commands.

## 548 THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, ARE YOU LISTENING?

Now, let us consider the things in which the two builders differed so much.

### **Wise and Foolish**

First: they differed in their personal character. One was wise, the other was foolish. A wise man considers the value of his soul, meditates upon its value, and is anxious to follow divine instruction to assure its security. The foolish man needs not follow instruction, for he is wise in his own conceits and knows, far better than God or Christ, what he should do to be saved. The foolish man reasons: to follow the divine commands of Christ, without addition or subtraction, is the character of a legalistic mind, who has not yet learned the modern ways of building according to the plans and specifications of human wisdom.

The modern structure of denominationalism today is a true example of the foolish builder. The plans, blueprints and specifications, from the foundation up, are drawn and executed in the erection of the many different religious organizations according to the opinions, doctrines, and commandments of men. The buildings are as varied as are the creeds and founders of the different denominations. It is estimated that there is an average of one new denomination coming into existence each year. Building? Yes, but foolish builders!

Friends, why?... I say, why can not people everywhere be satisfied with the word of God and do only what Christ has commanded? Not only hear the word of Christ, but do what he tells us to do. It is sad that the modern architecture of religion today is to follow your own feelings, or be guided by your own human reasoning. If you are satisfied with your building, then God ought to be satisfied. How foolish! How foolish!

To the church at Corinth, Paul wrote: "For seeing that

in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them believe" (I Cor. 1: 21). To the foolish builder, who will not do what Christ commands, it is a foolish thing to believe and obey the gospel of Christ. But the wise builder realizes that his wisdom is but foolishness when compared with the infinite wisdom of God, therefore, he gladly builds, with true faith, from the foundation up, according to God's own plan and specifications.

The great apostle was said to be a "wise master builder. " Said he, "As a wise master builder I laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3: 10, 11). Indeed, he was a wise master builder.

### **Hearing Without Action**

Another difference between the builders, the wise builder and the foolish builder, was the difference in their practice. One, the wise 'man, was a doer. The other, the foolish man, was a hearer only. One, the wise man, had the profession and possession for his security. The other, the foolish man, had only the profession. His possession lasted only until the time of the test. Then, great was the fall thereof.

Yes, my friends, there is something to do. Never doubt it. Christ himself did not redeem and save man by sitting in majesty on His heavenly throne, but by hanging, bleeding, and dying upon the shameful cross.

Brethren, those of you who are members of the Lord's church, who have started your building upon the rock, what are you doing today? Are you doers of the word? Actually, I have known of brethren who would contend for the word of Christ with a neighbor or friend, yet absent themselves from

## 550 THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, ARE YOU LISTENING?

the Lord's house on the Lord's day, neglect their duty as Christians, and in some cases, live a hypocritical life. A word to every member of the church who is listening to me today You have started building. Yes, but today you are such a foolish builder. You are not doing what our Lord commands you to do to be saved. Perhaps you have grown weary, you have fallen by the wayside, or you have become choked with the cares, riches, and pleasures of this world. Perhaps you are holding in your heart malice and hate toward one of your own brethren. Maybe you have been engaging in gossip and slander. I don't know what has come between you and your Lord. I don't know what has come between you and your brother in Christ. You should know. Surely God knows. How foolish! How foolish! Why don't you do the right thing; do what God commands you to do, repent of your sins, confess them and pray to God for forgiveness that your soul might be saved when the great day for the test comes. You will be glad that you did!

### **Building for Others**

I am thinking today that I am talking to some fathers and mothers who have been building so foolishly. There are your own children. Yes, you love them; you would give your life for them. But what have you done about teaching them and leading them to be Christians? If they should follow the example you have set before them, you will send their soul to Hell, because you have not been a faithful Christian yourself. You have neglected your own Christian duty and wasted opportunities to influence others to follow Christ. Brethren, I feel that one of the most complimentary things that can be said by a child about his parents is: "Yes, my daddy is a Christian; my mother is a Christian. " And truly, one of the greatest delights to a Christian father or mother is for them to be able to look upon their own son or daughter and say,

"Yes, he is my son... he is a Christian gentleman, faithful in the service of God; yes, she is my daughter; she is a Christian lady, a devout member of the Lord's church. "

Again, I ask you today, are you a wise builder or a foolish builder? Are you a hearer only? Or, are you one who not only hears, but obeys the word of the Lord? Think it over! You won't have time when the rains and the winds begin to beat upon the house. It will be too late then. Great will be the fall!

Beloved, how members of the Lord's church can absent themselves from the Lord's house on the Lord's day, or any time for worship, and willfully neglect their Christian duties is beyond my understanding. Surely you are not satisfied. You aren't happy. You couldn't be. You may pretend that you are, but honestly, you aren't—are you? Why don't you do something about it today. Not tomorrow, or some other time, but today—this very day. That would be a wise decision. How foolish if you don't!

Friends, I tell you a faithful Christian gets a great delight and inspiration out of serving the Lord and doing what He wants us to do. We aren't really happy unless we are endeavoring to do what He wants us to do.

### **Wrong Foundation**

The third primary difference between these two builders is the difference in the foundations upon which they built. Throughout this lesson I have endeavored to emphasize the importance of the proper foundation. In this case, one built upon the rock, while the other built upon the sand. Regardless how costly and attractive the building may be the results depend largely upon the foundation upon which it rests. Nothing can make up for this critical error made in the foundation. What a contrast. Rock and sand!

As pointed out already, the apostle declared, "Other foun-

dition can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. " It is Christ and His word or ultimate destruction. He is the Rock of all the Ages, the firm foundation that standeth forever, strong-firm-immutable—all-sufficient. But what about the sand? It's a mere profession—a hearer but not a doer of the word, unstable and insecure when needed most. Human reason, dogmas, peculiar experiences, morality alone, and death-bed repentance are characteristics of the shifting sand, the insecure foundation of the foolish builder.

### **Final Day**

And now, the last difference between these two builders — the final results. He who built upon the rock stood the test and weathered the storm. He stood steadfast and unmovable, resting his faith upon the word of the Lord. He offered no substitutes for His word, but in humility obeyed the commands of Christ, which assured absolute security in the house he built. Now, in the eternal paradise of God, he lives in the city four square, with the street of pure gold, with walls of jasper and gates of pearl, whose builder and maker is God. He was the wise man!

But, my friends, look at the foolish man. He built upon the sand. He would not obey the word of the Lord. When the test came, he was dismayed and overwhelmed. The winds and storm beat upon that house and it fell. And great was the fall thereof! Oh, who can tell how great is the fall. Surely it is beyond the imagination of the finite mind of man.

It must be a disappointment of cherished hopes. Surely this foolish builder thought that all was well, and, that he was in perfect security in his house, But, when he looked for light, he found darkness; when he looked for life, he found death; when he looked for Heaven, he found Hell.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, great was the fall for the foolish builder who built upon the sand! It is a fall that is



total and irreparable! Many mistakes of life may be changed. Many scenes may be reversed while we are building. But the great fall, at the judgment day, is the loss of all and forever. Then, the time of building is gone, opportunity has fled, harvest has passed, and summer is ended.

A burning candle gives light until it be consumed, so it is, beloved, every Christian must be occupied, doing the Lord's will, building upon the rock, as long as we live. Jesus, himself, declared:

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9: 4).

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5: 14-16).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven" (Matt. 7: 21).

## THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN—No. 1

Ladies and gentlemen, do you not dislike deceit? Who likes to be deceived? Yet, it must be admitted that millions of honest people are so greatly deceived today by the master of deceit, Satan, that they are happily on their way to hell and are enjoying it for the time being. My subject is, "The Deceitfulness of Sin. " The apostle warned the early Christians, "Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God: but exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called today; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3: 12, 13).

We are told by inspiration that sin is a transgression of the law, and "all unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5: 17). Yet, sin is a mystery. It came into a world created and governed by the Almighty God of power and love. We know that sin must have had a beginning, for only God is from everlasting to everlasting. We know, of course, that sin had its beginning on earth with Adam and Eve. Sin had to have a beginning. We know that sin began with him who is called Satan, or the Devil, who is the father of all sin, John 8: 44. In 1 John 3: 8, the apostle declared, "He that doeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. " There are mysteries about the origin and work of the devil which no human mind can comprehend. Yet, no intelligent person can allow the deceitfulness of sin to cause him to ignore, or deny the power of sin. The evidence of sin is too abundant. We have seen its destructive work, and even today we are shocked as we view its desolation and ruin wrought upon society.

## Devil, Master Deceiver

The deceitfulness of sin is so evident everywhere. No greater deceiver has the world ever known than the devil. It was he who deceived Adam and Eve in the very beginning. The devil used the very effective and deceptive means of truth mixed, with error to introduce sin, sorrow and unhappiness into the world. He took one part truth and one part lie, put them together and deceived Eve and Adam. The devil said to the woman, "Ye shall not surely die. " This was a lie in direct conflict with what God said—"Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. " The devil did tell them that part of truth which appealed to them—"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3: 2-5).

Today, the devil, the master of deception, still uses the truth-lie combination scheme to deceive the souls of men. Our Lord, himself, warned, "Take heed that no man lead you astray" (Matt. 24: 5). The apostle Paul warned the early church about false teachers: "Let no man deceive you with empty words" (Eph. 5: 6); "Let no man beguile you in any way" (2 Thess. 2: 3). To the Corinthian church the apostle wrote: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (1 Cor. 11: 13, 14). The apostle John warned: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4: 1). Truly, false teachers who take a part of truth and a part of error, deceive many honest souls.

### **Sin is Deceitful**

Sin is deceitful, but unrighteousness shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul declared, "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6: 9, 10).

Although man may be deceived, he is responsible for his sins. James admonished, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God;. for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed. Then lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death. Be not deceived, my beloved brethren" (James 1: 13-16). Paul, the inspired apostle warned: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6: 7).

The devil would never present sin and its consequences as they really are. Satan would have man believe that a life of sin is the most profitable life to live. What deception! America and the whole world today seem to be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Sin was born through deception. Its deceitfulness is evident everywhere sin may be found. Sin is so base and detestable, so vile in its origin, and so corrupt in its fruits, that man could hardly adopt a more suicidal course than to live a life of sin. Sin does not confine itself to any rank or race of men, or extent of fortune. Sin is wholly destructive. It will wreck the mind, wreck the body, and destroy the soul. Sin will wreck the home and destroy civilization.

### **Sin, Like Fire**

The power of sin is comparable to the incredible effect of fire. Jude declared in his epistle, verse 23, "Some save snatching them out of the fire. " Fire is one of the most familiar yet one of the most destructive forces in the world.

Sin, like fire, may exist in a two-fold state, latent and active. Fire in its active state renders our homes comfortable in winter-time, drives our factories and railroads, yet may destroy, within a few hours time, that which took generations to build. Fire in its latent state may lie dormant in material substance about us. Few elements are in reality immune to the destruction of fire.

### **Sin, Active and Latent**

In its state of activity, sin flames out in unrighteousness and ungodliness. It spreads over the world and blazes up before the public in destruction of character, peace and happiness; it flashes out in schemes of political corruption and fantastic plans of commercial and individual dishonesty. The active work of sin is as visible as the voluminous smoke and leaping flames, ascending hundreds of feet into the air, coming from a burning city under direct attack of a thousand super bombers. Look what's happening in America today! In many of our cities it isn't safe to walk the streets.

In its latent state, sin is comparable to inactive fire. It slumbers in the heart of every man who would not dispel the lust of his heart which, when it hath conceived, beareth sin. The virtue of some people is nothing more than vice sleeping, and all that is needed is contact with certain temptations to awaken it into a vigorous, destructive action. Like latent fire in the forest, sin destroys the roots and fibers of morality.

Like the forest fire, it leaves the trees and saplings of character to topple over into the arms of underbrush of immorality, tangled in embarrassment and disillusionment. This friends, is often the secret of sudden falls and failures.

Occasionally there are those who, without a note of warning, fall in shame and disgrace, to the amazement of the community in which they live. You may even hear such remarks as, "Who ever thought of such a thing, especially of that person, and how sudden. " Yes, it may seem shocking and sudden, but if the truth were really known, maybe it was not so sudden. It is hardly true that one walking in the pathway of duty, in honor and uprightness, will fall prostrate in the mire of sin.

### **Sin Attractive**

Sin has the power of attractiveness. Like a big fire, it always attracts interest and spectators. The child likes to play with fire, but how dangerous! Many have burned to death because of the attractiveness of fire. Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? If you don't want your child burned, see that he doesn't play in the fire of an ungodly environment. Provide for him a wholesome, Christian environment. Multitudes are attracted by the fire of a burning building. Some would risk the danger of their life to see the fire. So it is with sin. The attractive, deceitful power of sin will lure and fascinate the young and the old. It will lead the young from the path of innocence and purity into the fiery pathway of immorality, lewdness and destruction of character. Sin may suggest the appearance of pleasure and happiness, but be not deceived. Within a cup of worldly pleasure there may be the

bitterness of poison! To the Christians, the apostle John wrote in 1 John 2: 15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. "

Friends, have you ever stopped to consider the deceptive efforts of Satan and his agents to make sin as attractive and enticing as possible. Oh, how attractive sin is made to look! Millions and millions of dollars are spent trying to dress up sin and make it look good. Look at the brilliant signs in your city and along your highways. Look at the ads on Television. Look at some of the television programs today that glorify crime, lewdness and sex. Look at the signs along the highways advertising beer and liquor, road-houses and gambling houses. Yes, they propose to invite you into the clutching power of sin by telling you of the so-called pleasures and satisfaction they have to offer, but they fail to tell you of lives of men and women, boys and girls, they have wrecked and ruined. They fail to tell you of the misery and bloodshed they promote.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the saloon, the dance hall, the beer joints may spend millions of dollars advertising their business trying to make it look inviting and even wholesome, but they fail to tell you that the crimes committed by their customers cost our government in dollars and cents each year, more than three times the combined cost of the education of our boys and girls in all our schools and colleges in the nation. Don't forget, fire is attractive, but it always burns! We will pay the price of sin!

### **Sin Destroys**

I have read of a tree, known as the Judas tree, which illustrates the deceptiveness of sin and its attractiveness. The blossoms appear before the leaves, and they are of brilliant crimson. The flaming beauty of the flowers attracts thousands of insects. The wandering bee is attracted to this tree to gather honey, but every bee that lights on the blossoms imbibes of the fatal poison of the blossom, and drops dead to the earth. Beneath this enticing tree, the earth is covered with victims of its fatal attractiveness. This beautiful, yet fatal tree, which attracts only to destroy, is a vivid example of the fascination and deceitfulness of sin. Sin has its attractiveness and allurements, but only to destroy.

Sin, like fire, is indifferent as to whom or what is destroyed by its power. Fire takes no holiday in the choice of its destruction. The most beautiful mansion and the most valuable possessions may be found in its path of destruction. Yet acres of a burning forest, or the blazing of the most adored palace, is not as dreadful and disastrous as the burning down of a man. We have seen the weeping and groaning of a sinner conscious of his destiny before him. We have seen the progress of the fire of sin. We have seen self-control give away, self-respect give away. We have seen the love of wife and children give away, and hope, the only anchor of the soul give away. We have seen the body of man wrecked, eaten with disease, as the results of sin, and finally, the collapse of manhood and womanhood, a heap of smouldering ruins—a disgrace to the family, a dishonor to God and a curse to the community.

Sin is comparable to fire because it turns its prey into



its own essence. There is hardly an object in nature, even the hardest of substance, that fire cannot turn into fire. So it is with sin. The power of sin is to make everything like itself—a curse. It is the desire of Satan to burn the God-like characteristics of man into a curse to himself and those about him by the scorching, flaming fire of sin! Sin turns Heaven's choicest blessings into curses and calamities for mankind.

Sin must be resisted, like fire, and be put out, or it will destroy everything in its path. The tendency of fire is to keep spreading and burning. If let alone, no man can determine the limits of its path. It makes progress according to its own laws of destruction, and not according to the wishes of those who are merely looking on. One can hardly afford to set fire to a fence row, or fire the grass on a vacant lot, without watch and care, or the extent of its burning becomes uncontrollable. Likewise, man cannot kindle the fire of sin within his soul and correctly foresee the extent of its burning. It is, therefore, imperative that we heed the instruction of Paul in 1 Thess. 5: 22, "Abstain from all appearance of evil. "

Christ, the Great Physician, has the only cure for the sin-sick soul. Faith and obedience to His word are essential to forgiveness of sins. Concerning forgiveness, Paul wrote: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1: 7). Paul declares that the believer is baptized into Christ where redemption and forgiveness are obtained by virtue of the blood of Christ: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3: 26, 27).

## THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN—No. 2

### Curse of Drunkenness

Ladies and gentlemen, the price for liquor and drunkenness is appalling. America is in a drunken stupor today, second only to France in the "world drunkenness race." More than 3 BILLION gallons of liquor are consumed in our nation each year. That is some 20 gallons for every man, woman and child in the United States. A government sponsored report on "Alcohol Problems—A Report to The Nation," states that 70% of all Americans drink, more than 6 MILLION of whom are alcoholics, almost 1 MILLION of whom are beyond help or reclamation. It is estimated that there are 1 MILLION women who are known alcoholics. Another 25 MILLION people (wives, children and other relatives) are personally affected, experiencing the "woes" of the liquor industry.

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? It is not difficult to ascertain the fact that drinking of intoxicating drinks amounts to a staggering cost in dollars, life, misery and bloodshed beyond—imagination! The cost of automobile accidents caused by drinking drivers is alarming—more than \$5 BILLION annually, and 50 to 60% of all deaths from automobile accidents are caused by drunken drivers. Dr. A. C. Ivy, Professor of Physiology and head of the Clinical Science Department at the University of Illinois, reported: "It causes in one year more persons to be injured and killed than were injured and killed, in our Army and Navy during all four years of World War II!" Dr. Ivy furthermore has stated, "Because

so many people drink and because alcohol produces addiction, alcohol is numerically by far the largest narcotic problem in the U. S. A. and in western civilization. " One author, P. A. Conway, says, "Alcoholism ranks fourth among American public health problems. It is outnumbered in the U. S. only by heart disease, cancer and tuberculosis. "

These statistics, my friends, although staggering as they are, do not picture all the misery, heartaches and bereavements. They do not picture the hardships and sorrows of widows and orphans. They do not picture the thousands upon thousands of broken homes and handicapped children—handicapped mentally, morally, spiritually and physically. They do not picture the diseased, the lame and broken bodies for life. They do not picture a funeral, in which I once participated, where four members, of one family—the father, the mother and two children—were buried at the same time, and one child was left to live in a hospital more than ten years without ever regaining consciousness—all because a drunk driver ran into their car head-on.

### **Finished Product of Brewer's Art**

Ladies and gentlemen, you may hear and read the advertisement: "THE CHOICEST PRODUCT OF THE BREWER'S ART", but I present to you some of the finished choice products of the brewer's art.

Just a few days ago, according to United Press International, April 8, 1970, in Los Angeles, California, a woman tearfully told a jury that her common-law husband beat her five-year old son to death. The mother testified that on the day the child died, the man ordered the child to crawl back and forth between the bathroom and living room as fast as he

could. The common-law husband, she testified, "Gave the youngster a cold shower and jumped up and down on his stomach about 30 seconds before settling down with a COLD BEER to watch a televised football game. " She said the child died, lying on the floor clad only in his swimming trunks. She testified, the UPI reported, that she tried to give the child artificial respiration but the accused murderer told her to "knock it off and give him the dignity of dying. " Think of it, my friends, such inhuman treatment, that of literally stomping to death a five-year old child and then, as the testimony stated, "SETTLING DOWN WITH A COLD BEER TO WATCH A TELEVISED FOOTBALL GAME. " There is a choice-finished product of the brewer's art! Is it not a pity that a scene like this, picturing a real finished product of the brewer's art, could not be shown on television screens immediately following some of the advertisements of the so-called "choicest products of the brewer's art?"

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? I present to you another case of **choice-finished** products of the brewer's art.

In May of 1969 the small town of Zap, North Dakota was wrecked by some 3, 000 young people on a "Beer Bust. " The Associated Press reported that the "National Guardsmen and police cleared 2, 000 to 3, 000 young persons, many of them college students, out of this small town following a night of destruction in the business section. Some businesses along the black, long Main Street were in shambles after beer-drinking young persons milled about through the night as part of their "happening"!

The AP report stated that the mayor "walked along Main Street saying, 'Animals! Animals!' His reaction con-

trasted from that of last week by some business people who had anticipated an influx of young people with money to spend. "

The report stated: "The Hazen Hospital provided first-aid service through the night for victims of a fist fight. Lucky's Bar, where about 10, 000 cases of beer had been stockpiled, was wrecked by the visitors... A dying bonfire near where much of the trouble started, smoldered in the street with embers filled with empty beer cans. "

Here, ladies and gentlemen, are some 3, 000 choice products of the brewer's art. What a curse to society!

Reports of these cases of torture, murder, rape and crime of about every known kind, which are both living and dead choice-finished products of the brewer's art, could be multiplied thousands of times. These are but a few of the hundreds of thousands of the shameful, hellish products of the drunkard-maker's art!

My friends, why don't the drunkard-makers reveal their real finished products of the brewer's art on television and in their newspaper ads rather than falsely presenting their products as if they produced wealth to the nation, joy and happiness to families and hope for the culture of the world. They dare not present the truth and reveal the real **choice-finished** products of the brewer's art. They dare not tell you of the hundreds of thousands of broken homes to which they have contributed. One judge stated that 78% of all the divorces-granted in his court had as the basis for their problems, alcoholic drinks, liquor, beer and wine.

They dare not tell you of hungry and naked bodies of children whose mothers and fathers are **choice products** of the drunkard makers! They dare not show you the pictures

of wrecks on the highways where thousands of innocent people are murdered every year by drunken drivers, some of the **choice-finished** products of the brewer's art. They dare not tell the truth about murder, robbery and rape committed by many of their best customers. They dare not tell you that many of their best customers are in hospitals for the insane. They won't reveal the fact that many of their best customers, **choice products** of the brewer's art, are found in the police courts and in the penitentiaries of the nation. They won't dare tell the public that many of their best customers, the real finished products of the brewer's art, have gone to the electric chair and the gas chambers during the yesterdays of death penalties. Do not be deceived!

The alcoholic is a most serious problem in America, but those 6 MILLION wretched souls are not the only cause for the misery, sorrow, grief and corruption in our country. The 75 MILLION social drinkers and those sympathizers who say, "I can't see any harm in it, " are they who are most responsible for the drunken stupor in which America finds herself today.

The greatest cost of all is the loss of souls in eternity. The inspired apostle declared that no drunkard "shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6: 10; Gal. 5: 19-21). There is nothing more costly than the loss of one soul in hell! The fruits of drunkenness are 100% bad—nothing good about it!

Remember this: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6: 7). And, "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6: 23).

Many people today will vigorously attempt to defend "social drinking", but may I remind you that so-called "social drinking" may be one of the first steps to becoming

an alcoholic. Not only that, but the "social drinker" is doing harm to his physical body. I should like to quote an article from U. S. News & World Report, September 30, 1968. The article is headed: "Is Social Drinking Dangerous?"

"New studies into the effects of alcohol indicate that even social drinkers may suffer damage to the brain and liver.. The studies were presented by researchers attending the International Congress on Alcohol and Alcoholism. Dr. Melvin H. Knisely, head of the Department of Anatomy at the Medical College of South Carolina, said this: 'When his level of social drinking is such that he feels very happy, a man is beginning to kill a few brain cells. The damage is permanent. ' Dr. Knisely, furthermore, said that alcohol can lead to blockage of blood in some brain cells, which then die. Among signs of brain damage from alcohol, he noted, were increasing forgetfulness and progressive loss of ability to work efficiently. "

### **Train Children To Be Drunkards**

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Did you know that some of the social drinkers now advocate that even small children be trained in social drinking in grade schools! Dr. Morris Chafetz, Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard, and director of the alcoholic clinic of Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, has proposed that children in the early grades at school be given group instruction in social drinking. He says this should begin with very weak drinks such as a little sherry in water in the elementary grades, and continue through college. The amount of alcohol in this "drinking practice" should be gradually increased. He says the children should be taught to drink slowly in small amounts

and with other persons.

The Dr. Chafetz, who is author of two books on drinking: "Alcohol And Society" and "Liquor, Servant of Man", states, "Alcohol is here to stay and people must learn to develop a healthy attitude toward it." Obviously, the drunkard-makers, the liquor and beer industry, are delighted at the doctor's professional advice. I am sure the devil would say "Amen", too. Is it not strange that the devil manages to get professional help in promoting his cause. What a brilliant conclusion—"Alcohol is here to stay and people must develop a healthy attitude toward it!" According to the reasoning of the social drinking doctor, lying, stealing, cursing and murder have been here for centuries and are here to stay; therefore, we should teach people—beginning with children—how to lie and steal, so they may know how to enjoy proper social relationships and escape the penalties of the law. Sex is here to stay, too; therefore, children beginning "in the early grades at school," the doctor would say, should be taught by experiment and practice! On the basis of the same argument, the Harvard psychiatrist would be forced to conclude that dope is here to stay; therefore, children should be given small doses of LSD, or small shots of heroin! Recently in Texas, a child died from a dose of LSD given by its parents. I wonder if the parents might have read the doctor's recommendation on social drinking, that is, begin with the children! It is a known fact that drinking and dope, or narcotics, go hand in hand. Alcohol is a narcotic drug, requiring more and more consumption to satisfy the craving which it creates. That is the reason we have 6 MILLION alcoholics in America today.

Ladies and gentlemen, is pure deception, promoted by the drunkard-makers, that alcohol or dope is essential



to good social relationships. Any normal person can enjoy friendship and association with others without the use of alcohol. In fact, to be a normal human being in any environment one must refrain from alcohol or narcotics. Judgment, emotions, inhibitions and restraint are proper God-given attributes of man. We must have them! Drugs and alcohol paralyze these sensitivities. The more one drinks, the more he regresses toward animal nature. Have you not heard the expression, "drunk as a dog"? Have you not seen a drunk wallowing in his own vomit? The Bible describes the drunk person: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man" (Psalms 107: 27); "As a drunken man staggereth in his vomit" (Psalms 19: 14).

In the Bowery in New York City, I have seen drunks, both men and women, lying on the sidewalk, like dead animals, and people walked around them or stepped over them. What a disgrace to humanity, and yet, we are told that one time many of these people were respectable citizens—some business and professional people. No doubt, many of them were at one time just "social drinkers. "

The Bible teaches that we should have no fellowship with the evil works of Satan. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5: 11). To the early Christians the apostle wrote: "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5: 22). To the Etonians he wrote: "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Romans 12: 9). Surely, there can be no doubt that alcohol and drunkenness are not only evil, but are a blighting mildew and contagious poison to our society. Alcohol is a poison which is injurious to health, both mind and body. Untold misery, human suffering and degradation are

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its fruits. Crime, poverty, grief and murder thrive from its use. The textbooks of the schools of our country used to teach boys and girls about the effect of alcohol on the human body and mind. But now, in this "new morality" age, some of the social drinkers and drunkard-makers want the children even in grade school, to begin "practice drinking." Even some churches and a few weak-kneed, spineless, jellyfish-backed preachers advocate and practice social drinking. Such is a sham for religion, a disgrace to the name of our Lord and a detriment to society. Such churches and preachers should take their signs down and advertise themselves as social clubs and nightclubs.

The Bible tells us to "be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12: 21). The wise man of God a long time ago said, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20: 1).

The apostle warned: "But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would... Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5: 16, 17; 19-21).

## DEATH, THE GATEWAY TO HEAVEN OR HELL—No.

Greetings, my friends, do you plan to go to heaven?

To reach heaven should be the most desired attainment mortal man could ever contemplate. There is only one exit from this life to heaven, and that is by way of death. In Job 14: 10 it is said: "But man dieth and wasteth away, yea, man giveth up the ghost and where is he?" Do you contemplate that momentous event in your life?

Death is the graduation exercise for the child of God. The new life in eternity is begun only after death. Death is the transport whereby the child of God is delivered from this world of sin and sorrow to the perfect, eternal home of the soul. It is the triumphant climax of his journey on earth. For the Christian, the day of death is greater than the day of birth. A greater and richer life is to be experienced by the faithful child of God after death.

Death is inevitable. Paul, the apostle, declared in Heb. 9: 27, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. " My friends, we may have some appointments we may never fill, but you may be sure that this is one appointment that must be kept.

Death is universal. The very seeds of death may be observed in nature everywhere about us. A rosebud may blossom into an adored flower, whose fragrance may perfume the air we breathe and decorate the scenery with incomparable beauty, but it, too, will fade away in death. Time and time again sweet, innocent children, who are as lovable rosebuds to sweeten and enrich the home, have been called by death before the blossom of youth had burst into the sunlight of human experiences of manhood or womanhood.

### **Fade as a Leaf**

In nature we have seen the death of autumn when the trees, after having shown forth their green and fruitage, display their fading foliage in incomparable scenes of beauty, even in death. What breathless beauty! Death is like a picture with all the colors of the rainbow, rich in assorted colors, graceful in shape, revealing the life of nature and the beauty of death.

Leaves fade away gradually. Normally the whole foliage of a tree does not pass away at once. Some fade and die in the springtime, while characterized by the brightest and luxurious beauty, some die in the summertime, while green and full of sap; while others fade away and fall in the autumn. How appropriate was the declaration of the prophet of God in Isa. 64: 6: "We all do fade as a leaf. "

Many infants are plucked by the tender and loving hands of the Heavenly Father, while they are yet lovely buds, before they have blossomed into the spring of youth, or the summertime of manhood or womanhood. Others fade away in the springtime of life, while the brightest and most beautiful, in the days of youth, before evil days have blotted and scarred their lives. Yet, others pass away in the summertime of life, like the leaves of the trees in the forest, while they are mature, green and full of sap, perhaps rendering the most useful service to God and to humanity. We mourn their departure, but can greatly appreciate and enjoy the fruits of their labors. Then, there are those who fade and fall in the autumn. They have lived and experienced the budding from the mother branch, the springtime of youth, the summertime of manhood or womanhood, and now, the last days, autumn.

Oh, the beauty of an aged, noble Christian, whose life has been spent in service to God and man, now wrapping

itself in benedictions around the destinies of men. Yes, we do all fade as a leaf, as announced by the prophet!

Leaves fall away silently. One by one they discolor and drop off, but no one can definitely trace the progress of their life and death from the beginning to the end. So it is with man. No sooner has man begun to live than he begins to die. Perhaps most of us think of death as being far off. But it isn't that far away. One begins to die the moment he begins to live. Life on this earth is a succession of dying, every day and every hour, just as the life of a flower. But death, as we think of it, is just one step away; even a fraction of a second and one may step from this world into the ages of eternity.

The leaves of a tree fade differently. The autumn foliage is varied. In the summertime all the leaves have their uniform greenness, but time brings out the individual characteristics and true colors. Likewise, at death the true character of each person is apparent before God. As death finds us, so will the judgment. After death cometh the judgment—it is the divine injunction of Almighty God! Precious in the Lord's sight is the death of His saints, the Bible says.

The leaves of a tree fade and fall purposely. No leaf falls from a tree, unless cut off, without making due preparation for departure. Take a look at the trees of the forest in autumn. In one way, it is a sad season of decay, yet, beautiful and glorious! Perhaps, to your surprise, you will find as much life as you will find death. The elements of the future are already provided for. The leaves are fading away, but they have been making preparation. How important it is for man to prepare for this momentous event of his being. Preparation for death is a preparation for life in eternity! In reality, for man to prepare to die is to prepare to live!

### **Universal and Certain**

The decree of death is irrevocable. No one can outlive

the liability of death. If so, why then should Methuselah have died? Strength of body avails not. If so, why the death of Samson? Wisdom and knowledge cannot prevent death. If so, why the death of Solomon? Great men of war cannot conquer death. If so, why are not men like Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Cyrus, and other would-be conquerors still with us today?

Death is an event likely to occur in any family any moment. Death claims all places, conditions, and circumstances his own. Death revels on the battlefields of war, wrecks on the highways, among diseased bodies, and in the midst of pleasure. My friends, hear me! Are you listening? Death enters all abodes: the mansion, the hut, the garden, the shop, the street, and even the pulpit and the pew. I have known of death to call the preacher while standing in the pulpit.

Death is the gateway to an unchangeable destiny! The body, originally created from the dust of the earth, which today still contains the same 16 elements of the earth, goes back to the dust of the ground, but the soul back to an account with God who gave it. At death the soul departs the body and takes its flight on unseen wings of God's transport to the unknown realms of hades, there to await the resurrection morning.

### **Death and Hades**

Ladies and gentlemen, all people who die go into hades, or, according to the English word used, "hell". When Jesus died, He went into hades. Obviously, Christ did not go into hell, the place of torment, but He did go into hell-"hades", the place of the departed. In Acts 2: 31, Peter quoted David, Psalms 16: 10, declaring of Christ's death and resurrection: "His soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. " Between His death and resurrection, Christ went into

hades. Jesus went into hades, the "unseen" realm of departed spirits. In the American Standard Version of the New Testament, the word "hades" is used instead of the English word "hell", as used in the King James version. Hades does not mean the grave. The grave is not an unseen place. The spirit does not go into the grave when it departs the body. "The body without the spirit is dead" (James 2: 26), but the spirit never dies. The body dies and may be placed in the visible grave, but the spirit goes into hades—either paradise or tartarus of hades. It must be scripturally concluded that paradise is a division of hades, since Jesus went into hades between His death and resurrection, while at the same time He went into paradise (Luke 23: 43).

There are two other words in the original Greek language which have been translated as the one English word, "hell", namely, "tartarus" and "gehenna". Though translated into the one English word "hell", they have different meanings. The Greek word, "tartarus", could refer only to that division of hades where the sinners and ungodly are reserved unto the day of judgment. Peter warned, "God spared not angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (tartarus) and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Peter 2: 4).

### **Gulf in Hades, a Reality**

In Luke, chapter 16, there is a descriptive picture of hades, including both "paradise", where Christ went, and "tartarus", where the unsaved go. The narrative of Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich man is not a fabrication, or the figment of man's imagination. This is something that happened! "A certain rich man... and a certain beggar named Lazarus. The beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried. And in hades he lifted up his eyes... "

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The rich man and Lazarus both died and both went into hades. The rich man was in a place of torment, evidently "tartarus", while the beggar was in a place of comfort and happiness, evidently "paradise". It should be observed that the rich man went to a **place** of torment, not a state of torment. Hades is a **place**. There was a great "gulf" fixed between them — so "fixed" that there could be no crossing of the gulf. The great gulf is the dividing line in hades between "paradise" and "tartarus. " When death comes, my friends, the gulf is "fixed. " That great gulf in hades is so fixed that eternity-bound souls can never again cross from the wrong side to the right side; neither can the saved in paradise cross that great, fixed gulf, even to comfort a precious loved one who might be in the wrong side in tartarus, in anguish and in torment. It will be too late then!

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? In Hades, in eternity, there will be no crossing of the gulf. Today, while yet living, is the only time to prepare for eternity! When the soul has departed from the body and gone into hades, there can be no changing of destiny. Then it is fixed for all time and eternity!

### **All Souls Reserved in Hades**

When Jesus died, His body was placed in the grave and His soul went into paradise of hades. He did not go to heaven during that period of time. According to John 20: 17, Jesus declared, after His resurrection from the dead, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto the Father; but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father and my God and your God. " Jesus had died, gone into paradise of hades, but He had not yet gone into heaven to be with His Father.

The account of Christ's ascension into heaven, after His death and resurrection, may be read in Mark 16: 19, 20; Luke



24: 50, 51.

In the great inspiration sermon proclaimed by Peter on Pentecost, he affirmed that "David is not ascended into heaven" (Acts 2: 34). He reasoned that if David had ascended, it could only have been by resurrection, but since his body had not been resurrected and his sepulchre was still undisturbed, David had not yet ascended into heaven!

But someone inquires, "Does not the spirit return to God who gave it when a person dies?" Yes, Solomon declared, "And the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12: 7).

From the Scriptures already considered, we learn that, although the spirit does return to God who gave it, the soul is reserved in hades, the righteous being reserved in paradise while the wicked are reserved in tartarus (2 Peter 2: 4; Luke 23: 43; Luke 16: 19-31).

### **Conscious After Death**

Surely, there can be no doubt that the soul of man is conscious after death. Actually, death is only separation. The word separation could be used instead of the word "death." Death is a sleep. For the body to sleep does not mean that the soul is asleep. There is rest in slumber. What better word could be used to describe this mortal body which, by reason of time and use, needs rest. When this mortal clay reposes in superlative slumber, when every nerve, every muscle and every fiber of its physical being is completely relaxed by reason of the fact that the soul has moved out and life no longer exists in the house of clay, the soul of man is still very much alive and will continue to be conscious throughout eternity.

Many statements of the Bible would be meaningless if it were a fact that the soul is insensible after death. Jesus said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die" (John

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11: 25). Our Lord declared that Moses and Elijah had not yet ascended into heaven, yet they conversed with Christ (John 3: 13; Matthew 7: 1-8).

God said, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Jacob. " Christ explained God's declaration to man, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22: 32).

The soul of man, given by God, is not dependent upon a mortal house of clay for its existence. Paul said, "whether we wake or sleep, we would live together with him" (1 Thess. 5: 10). The soul of man lives forever!

### **Soul of Man Never Dies**

In the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, of Luke 16: 19-31, is evidence, beyond doubt, of the consciousness of the soul after death. The Bible speaks of those in the hades world as those who hear, talk, feel, think and speak. Lazarus and the rich man both died; yet both men were conscious after death. They talked, even conversing about things in this life on earth. They remembered!

In the record of the transfiguration, Luke 9: 28-30, it is revealed that living souls of men, dead for ages, talked with Jesus and living souls of men alive on earth: "And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias. "

Could dead men talk without being conscious? Moses and Elias had been dead some fifteen hundred years, and not been resurrected, but they appeared with identity on the Mount of Transfiguration and talked with Jesus. The three apostles were witnesses. It was on this occasion that a "voice out of the clouds" was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear him" (Luke 9: 35).

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The example of the prophet Elijah's raising the widow's son leaves no doubt about the fact that man has a living soul. The record is found in 1 Kings 17: 17-23:

"And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord My God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. "

When Elijah presented the boy to his mother he said, "See, thy son liveth" (verse 23). The boy had died. His soul left the body. His soul returned to the body. The mother rejoiced and honored God because her "son liveth. "

Our Lord Jesus Christ made a firm declaration of hope when He said, "and fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell" (Matt. 10: 28).

The soul of man never dies!

### **Conscious in Death**

**In** hades, over in tartarus, the rich man was very conscious. While in that terrible place, being reserved unto the day of judgment (2 Peter 2: 4), he was in anguish and in torment. The word "torment" is used five times in this divine account. He was painfully aware of his lost state in that place of torment. He remembered! Yes, he remembered the beggar whom he did not treat as kindly as a dog; not even so much as to give him the crumbs from his richly-laden table! Now he begs for the slightest means of comfort from the hands of him who once laid at his gate in poverty and distress, but now is richly comforted in Abraham's bosom over in paradise. Yes, in anguish, he remembered his brothers whom he left in the world.

It must be evident that the dead are conscious, because when our Lord shall come again "all that are in their graves

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shall hear his voice" (John 5: 28). The dead shall HEAR his voice!

The dead shall become active: "And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5: 29).

### **Torment for Wicked**

Hear it, my friends! Are you listening? The souls of men in hell will be just as conscious as souls in heaven. The state of the soul, after death, whether in paradise or tartarus, does not alter the fact that man is conscious after death. After the resurrection, whether in heaven or hell for eternity, the soul of man will never die. The incorrigibly wicked must endure the conscious, painful suffering of eternal damnation in hell.

In Rev. 14: 9-11, it is revealed that the lost in hell " shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night... "

The inspired apostle Paul affirmed that the lost will consciously suffer everlasting punishment:

"When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. 1: 7-10).

The soul of man never dies!

### **Happiness of Paradise**

But there is another side of that "fixed gulf" that is paradise of hades, where Christ went and where the beggar was "comforted" in Abraham's bosom. Those in paradise, all

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the saints of God, all the saved of earth, are comforted and enjoying peace sublime, no doubt, conscious of the fact that they are saved. There is no evidence that those in paradise of hades could be conscious of one unpleasant thought or unhappy experience. Surely there is not one unpleasant memory in paradise. Loved ones, friends and kindred spirits in paradise are comforted and completely removed from any memory or thought that would mar their happiness. The word "paradise" itself signifies "pleasure" or "delight". All of God's people in paradise are happily awaiting the resurrection morning when they shall enter heaven, the eternal home of the saved.

The richness of beauty, the joy, and supreme happiness of heaven surely is beyond the description of mortal tongue! Death is that gateway to heaven for the redeemed.

## **DEATH, THE GATEWAY TO HEAVEN OR HELL - No. 2**

### **Resurrection of Immortal Body**

Ladies and gentlemen, we continue the discussion of the subject, "Death, the Gateway to Heaven or Hell. " Skeptics disbelieve in a resurrection of the body, declaring that bodies that are corrupted in the grave, cremated, destroyed, or devoured by beasts could not possibly be restored and resurrected. But this unbelief must be resolved in faith. God's word declared that nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1: 37). The resurrection of a new, immortal body is no more an impossibility than that of the creation and birth of our mortal bodies.

The apostle John declared that "we shall be like Him. " Hear the apostle! "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3: 2). There can be no doubt about the following conclusions:

1. The resurrected body will be an immortal, incorruptible body. "It is sown (buried) in corruption, it is raised in incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15: 42). "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15: 53).
2. The resurrected body will be a perfect body, "raised in glory. " "It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory" (1 Corinthians 15: 43). A body of "dishonour" sown in death could be a body deformed, disfigured, bent, wrinkled, decayed, and, by reason of time, have lost its beauty and attractiveness. A body may become wretched by some calamities of

life, but it will be raised a glorious body!

3. The new body will be raised in power. "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power" (1 Corinthians 15: 43). What better example of "weakness" could there be than that of a "dead body"? It is helpless. It is lifeless. It may have one time, by reason of great riches, enjoyed many comforts, but now the dead body has not the strength to raise one finger in protest of being buried in the cold bosom of earthly clay.
4. The new, resurrected body will be a "spiritual" body. Although "flesh and blood" will not inherit the kingdom of God, the "spiritual body" does not mean a body with no kind of identity. One of the great and most reassuring thoughts that brightens hope is the fact that the resurrected bodies of the saints of God will be like that of the resurrected, glorified body of Christ. The apostle wrote:  
"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Philippians 3: 20, 21). "We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3: 2).

### **Resurrection and Judgment**

Skeptics and infidels have denied the possibility of a general resurrection of all the good and the bad, declaring there would not be standing room for all who have lived and died on earth, if all were resurrected at the same time. But, someone has calculated that if every person who ever lived, from Adam to the latest born infant, were each given a square yard on which to stand, all the living and the dead, all together, could stand in an area less than half that of the state of Texas. I don't know about that, but the promise of

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the resurrection of the dead is as certain as the promise of the Lord's second coming. Hear the apostle! Are you listening?

"But I would not have you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4: 13-16).

All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, both the good and the bad, and all shall be resurrected -the saved resurrected unto eternal life, the lost unto eternal damnation. Beloved, eternal damnation will last as long for the lost as eternal life will last for the saved!

The body of your loved one put in the grave will not be the body resurrected. The body resurrected will excel, beyond our fullest comprehension, the bodies we now have: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be. "

On the day of judgment, on the morning of the resurrection, the Righteous Judge will sentence the guilty, the unforgiven at death, who were reserved in tartarus, unto eternal punishment in gehenna (hell); while He will reward the faithful, who were reserved in paradise, with an eternal inheritance in heaven.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it:



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and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20: 12-15).

This great and notable day will be the day of final reward for the faithful, who rested and were comforted in Paradise in the Hadean world before the resurrection. Do not forget, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that each man may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5: 10).

The pleasant, Christian experiences today can only be a foretaste of the glory and everlasting joy in eternity. The inspired apostle Paul declared, "If in this life only we hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Corinthians 15: 19). Even the degree of sufferings of this life, experienced by Job and other great men of God, are incomparable to the degree of glory which shall be experienced by the saints of God in eternity.

Yes, it was the great apostle Paul who said, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8: 18).

As the apostle anticipated his departure from this world, he concluded, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me in that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Timothy 4: 7, 8).

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### **Judgment Now and Then**

Ladies and gentlemen, on the resurrection morning the souls of all men will appear in the august presence of Almighty God for the judgment, when the sentence and rewards of the destinies of all men will be announced. I am not unmindful of the fact. that many people have been led to believe that the judgment on the resurrection day will be the day when God will hold a court of inquiry to determine whether a man is lost or saved, but this is not true.

In view of the Scriptures already discussed, if this theory were true and man goes immediately to Heaven or Hell at death, then we would be forced to the conclusion that the lost will be brought from the hadean world of anguish and torment before the Judge who will simply send them back to the same place of torment, while the righteous will come forth to appear before the judgment bar of God to be judged and sent back to their same place of abode, heaven. May I ask, would God be a just God, should he send a person to torment at death, where he is punished for centuries without having been judged? Such injustice would be the case, should it be true that the sinner goes into hades and is punished there in gehenna (hell) until the resurrection day, then is brought forth to be judged. That would be punishment without judgment! Judgment is going on now. The day of judgment, after the resurrection, will not be a day of inquiry for God to determine whether one is to be eternally saved or eternally lost. When one dies, his destiny is fixed! The record has been kept and God knows whether one is the Lord's, or Satan's, when we depart from this world.

### **God Knows**

The apostle declared, "The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Timothy 2: 19). And, "But if any man love God, the same is known of God" (1 Corinthians 8: 3).

Peter declared, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Peter 3: 12).

Christ declared, "He that believeth not is condemned already" (John 3: 18). Surely, we could not say that God condemns a person before he is judged. The fact that an unbeliever is "condemned already" is evidence that, in a way, he is already judged — judged and condemned. Yet, an unbeliever might become a believer and be saved, thus, pardoned and forgiven, with the reward of eternal life at the judgment. Also, a believer might again become an unbeliever and be condemned with the sentence of everlasting punishment pronounced at the judgment.

### **The Duration**

Hear it, my friends! Are you listening? The duration of punishment for the wicked and ungodly will last just as long as heaven will last for the saved. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25: 46).

Eternal life is rewarded the believer at "the end." Paul said, "But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification and the end eternal life" (Romans 6: 22).

"When is the end?" one may ask. Hear the apostle: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits; then they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end" (1 Corinthians 15: 21-24).

Question: Paul, when comes the end? After the resurrection and at His coming, declared the apostle! What shall be the reward for the faithful, Paul? "Eternal life, " beyond doubt!

Our Lord promised eternal life in the world to come: "Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10: 29, 30). "In the world to come", Jesus declared! God's children must be faithful in order to receive eternal life in the world to come!

### **Heaven**

My friends, heaven is a place which has been the center of faith and an anchor of the soul for millions. There is no place on earth that offers such a Utopia as heaven. Such a place must be prepared. To reach heaven, men and women, through the ages, have devoted their lives to this one all-important attainment. Hundreds of thousands have endured persecutions and many thousands have sacrificed their lives to go to heaven. Others have lived lives, rich in experience, as children of God, while journeying to a home of greater riches.

### **Heaven, The Holy City**

From the divine description of Revelation, the 21st chapter, we learn that heaven is like a city. Perhaps you have a mental picture of many great cities of this world which you would like to visit some day, but no earthly city can be compared to the heavenly city. Heaven is a place worthy of all costs to reach. All the great cities and attractions of all the world; all the places of beauty, peace, joy, happiness and riches of the entire world combined are incomparable to the majestic beauty and perfect peace of heaven.

I have seen the beauty and attractions of the cities of New York, London, Tokyo, Brussels, Venice, Amsterdam and Rome. The Alps in Switzerland, the Taj Mahal in India, the

plains of the Jordan and the hills of Galilee and Jerusalem are inspirational memories I shall always cherish, but the thought of going to that eternal city of celestial beauty, "whose builder and maker is God" quickens one's spirit with earnest expectation of joys yet unknown.

This beautiful city foursquare, whose builder and maker is the divine architect, has been the objective theme of great poets and the inspiration of the tongues of master orators. Yet, if all the majestic beauty, couched in the superlative expressions of the poets, and all the inspiration revealed by the tongues of orators were combined into one masterful description of heaven, such human attempts to present a picture of this eternal city of God would fade into less than nothingness, when compared to the actual joy and beauty of this celestial city. Heaven is a place where you must go; else, the millions of ages of eternity will never fade the regrets.

What a beautiful city is heaven, prepared by our Lord and our God; the city foursquare, with walls of jasper and foundations "garnished with all manner of precious stones. "

A great multitude will be there: "A great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands" (Revelation 7: 9). Then the mighty chorus of the angelic hosts will sing a new song before the throne of God. On that day the multitude will cry with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb" (Rev. 7: 10).

John describes the heavenly city saying, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22: 1, 2). The hunger of the

saints shall be satisfied by the fruit of the tree of life, which is eternal.

### **No Sorrow or Death**

Today, family circles are being broken and loved ones mourn the departure of those they love. In heaven there will be no broken homes and saddened hearts. Yes, we constantly wipe away tears and try to comfort one another because of disappointments, sickness, sorrow and death. But in heaven there will be an eternal day of joy and happiness, where death will never invade its portals. Many have been crying today, even now. Many hearts are heavy. Rivers of tears have flowed through the centuries, dredging deeply into the sea of human experiences. The burdens of life are heavy. But, in heaven there will be no crying; no sorrows, no burdens. Just take your burden to the Lord. Believe in Him; obey His word and walk with Him in the path of truth and righteousness. He will lead you to heaven, if you will follow Him. Remember our Lord's exhortation: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11: 28-30).

The selected, immortal residents of heaven may walk with our Lord down the street of "pure gold, as it were transparent glass. " The redeemed inhabitants may drink of the "pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" never to thirst again, to live forever in the beautiful city of our God, to bask in the sunlight of His eternal love throughout all eternity.

### **Victory in Death**

The Christian looks forward to death. He lives for it, prepares for it, and believes in it! The dying room of a child

of God is the ante-chamber of heaven. Death is the beginning of life eternal. Only the body is dead. At death the soul of a child of God takes its flight on angel wings and is wafted to the eternal paradise of God, there to live in peace, joy, happiness and contentment with the blood-redeemed host of all ages.

Beloved, it is an inspiration to stand in the presence of a child of God, in the moment of death, who has no fear of death, but has lived in anxiety and expectation of going to heaven. Some years ago I asked a saint of God, who had lived more than one hundred years with her family on earth, "Do you have any fear of death? What are your thoughts about heaven?" Looking at me with a smile of confidence and anticipation, she replied: "I love all my family. They love me. We have had a long, happy life together; but, I am just waiting to go home. "

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?... But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15: 55-57).

Ladies and gentlemen, hear me! Are you listening? Surely you must want to go to heaven to live throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity, with the redeemed of all ages, in the city of our God. We plead with eternity-bound souls, who daily live on the borders of the grave and the margin of eternity, "prepare to meet thy God" that heaven may be your home!

... "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them" (Rev. 14: 13).

**HOWARD-KENNEDY TV EXCHANGE AND TELEGRAM CHALLENGE**

Monday, September 12, 1960, V. E. Howard, by invitation, questioned the late President John F. Kennedy on the Houston Ministers TV live telecast, inquiring if Mr. Kennedy accepted or rejected the Catholic doctrine of Mental Reservation, which was quoted by Howard, as indicated in telegram. Quoting from original tape, Kennedy replied: "I have not read the Catholic encyclopedia. I don't know all the quotations you are giving me. I don't agree with all statements—the quotations of Pope John. If you will read it again I will tell you whether I support that or not."

Howard: "Pope John XXIII recently stated, according to St. Louis Review, Dec. 12, 1958, 'Catholics must unite their strength toward a common aim, and the Catholic hierarchy has the right and duty of guiding them.' Do you subscribe to that?"

Kennedy: "Well now—but I don't—I couldn't describe—guiding them into what area?"  
 Two priests in the audience attempted to interrupt the exchange between Howard and Kennedy by standing and shouting "Cut him off! Cut him off, stop him..." when Kennedy fumbled for words to answer the questions.

The entire exchange between Kennedy and Howard was edited from the TV tape shown on National TV networks during the presidential campaign.

The following telegram was sent to Mr. Kennedy:

**Quality of Service**  
 This is a fast message unless its desired character is indicated by the proper symbol.

**WESTERN UNION**  
**TELEGRAM**  
 W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

**SYMBOLS**  
 DL = Day Letter  
 NL = Night Letter  
 I T = International Letter Telegram

1201 (1-60)

The time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is LOCAL TIME at point of destination.

UR7 NLPD= VERNON TEXAS SEPT 17= (1960)  
 SENATOR JOHN F KENNEDY=  
 CARE MEET THE PRESS NBC= DEL CHGS INCURRED PD= NYK=  
 BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE MILBY STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST,  
 HOUSTON TEX, I CHALLENGE YOU TO AFFIRM OR DENY THE  
 DOCTRINE OF MENTAL RESERVATION, WHICH I QUOTED TO YOU  
 ON THE HOUSTON TV PROGRAM AS FOLLOWS;" HOWEVER WE ARE  
 ALSO UNDER OBLIGATION TO KEEP SECRETS FAITHFULLY, AND  
 SOMETIMES THE EASIEST WAY OF FULFILLING THAT DUTY IS TO  
 SAY WHAT IS FALSE, OR TELL A LIE" ( CATHOLIC ENCY X 195"  
 WHEN MENTAL RESERVATION IS PERMISSIBLE, IT IS LAWFUL TO  
 CORROBORATE ONE'S UTTERENCES BY AN OATH, IF THERE BY  
 AN ADEQUATE CAUSE " ( ARTICLE ON PERJURY CATHOLIC ENCY XI  
 696). WE BELIEVE YOUR HOUSTON TV ANSWER " I HAVE NOT  
 READ THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA" WAS A SUBTERFUGE. YOU  
 ARE HEREBY CHALLENGED TO AFFIRM OR DENY THIS AUTHORATIVE  
**CATHOLIC DOCTRINE.**  
 RESPECTFULLY YOURS V E HOWARD MINISTER  
 CHURCH OF CHRIST GREENVILLE TEX= (632 )