

SEARCHING *The* SCRIPTURES

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."—John 5:39.



"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."
—Acts 17:11

VOLUME II

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A CASE REVIEWED

Jas. P. Miller

A friend in Central Kentucky sent me last week a copy of the paper published by an orphan home in her part of the state. In this publication the superintendent states the case for not only his institution but as he puts it "the case for all the homes supported by the brotherhood."

He writes a most embarrassing article in which he contends for the superiority of the institution created by man over the home established by God. I have no reason to doubt our brother's sincerity. I really feel that he believes he has improved upon God's plan. He states the case for the institution over the home in three fields that cover every thing but *love*. Let us notice them one by one.

1. "We contend that the homes perform a service more effective than the average private home in developing habits of work and behavior."

Now this covers a broad field and simply says we can teach the children to work and behave better than their parents could have taught them and better than the rest of us are teaching our children. The writer tells of the work done by the children. They look after the farm, feed the hogs, look after the live stock, gather the eggs, clean the floors, etc. The larger girls help prepare the meals, serve the meals, wash the dishes, clean their rooms and the halls, iron the boys clothes, etc. Here is a quotation from the paper. "The children go to bed early and get up early. When the 5:45 a.m. bell rings they 'hit the floor'. Not many times are any of them called to get up. Do you call your children more than one time to get them up?"

Brethren stop and think! There is not an institution on earth where regimentation has its day that could not say the same thing. The identical statements could be made by a concentration camp or the army where there is a time to eat and a time to sleep and a time to "hit the floor". Some rules are fine but regimentation without flexibility is tyranny. It seems a little ironical also that the home that does not do as good a job in teaching its children to work is the home that makes the money to keep up the home that does the better job. Evidently the private home has done a pretty good job for it has (and often through the church much to our sorrow) furnished the institutional home with land, houses, live stock, hogs, trucks and tractors all listed in this one copy of the paper. It seems that the "thing formed is saying to the one that formed it, I am greater than thou"

Suppose for a moment that the private home is not teaching its children to work as it should and suppose that

the church is not preaching the gospel as it should. Would this mean that there is a better place to raise children and a better organization to preach the Gospel. The advocates of the Missionary Society thought so and evidently our institutional brethren think the same thing.

2. "We contend that the homes do a more effective work teaching good, moral behavior than the home."

Just think of this contention for a minute. The institution does a better job teaching morals. Why would this be true? Is it conceivable that a father and mother with the same Bible in their hands and the responsibility to raise their children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" are not as able to teach morals as the house mothers and the superintendent of so called homes? If this were true then the institutional home would be duty bound to hire only those who had been raised in such environment for they would have the better training and thus be better able to teach. Could it be that they take more time with the children than a Christian mother and father? Suppose this were true, we would need better taught parents so they could each their children. Not fewer parents so the children could have the advantage of a superior moral education in an institution. No! This home nor any other institution on earth has no access to one moral truth that is hidden from a private home and from the father and mother in that home who will answer to God for their children.

3. "We contend that the homes are more successful than the average private home in making Christians of the young people."

Here we have the real idea of the institutional brethren. These man-made organizations are to make Christians and thus save the world. This is what is said about "youth camps", "young peoples conferences", "colleges and orphan homes." They need to stop and consider for a moment. If our children have a better chance of becoming a Christian in an institution than at home the greatest favor parents could do would be to put their children there just as soon as possible. Most of us want our children to have the best possible chance in life and above all to be a Christian. If the best chance for this to come true, as is thus affirmed, is in such environment and out of the natural home it is time for the natural home to cease to exist. It is hard to keep our superintendent consistent on this point however for under this contention he makes the following statement. "*This statement is no indictment of the private home. It is the best organization in the world—*" Best for what? If these three contentions are true it is not the best place to teach "habits of work and behavior." The institution is supreme in this field. It is not the

best place to teach "good moral behavior," for here also the institution has it defeated. It is not the best place to "make Christians." Just how then is it the best organization on earth? Is it possible that it is the best organization on earth to just make the money and give to the man-made home so it can do a better job in all of these fields? Once again the Lord's Way is robbed of its effectiveness and the institution given credit for making Christians. Every reader can see the conclusion of this reasoning. The institution is not as good as the church of our Lord. To this all agree. The home is the best organization on earth. By admission, therefore, the conclusion is that the institution is the poorest way to raise a child. To this agrees the writer in the paper in his logic and every student of sociology who has thought on the subject today. As the mayor of Nashville said recently, "We want no orphan homes in our city".

Our brother in presenting his case has written an article that will embarrass his institutional brethren and that reflects the lack of true Bible knowledge so characteristic of those who stand with him. May this review lead him to see that these exaggerated claims for institutional care of children has not, is not and will not be true. Our brother's entire case rests in the wisdom of men without one verse of scripture to show that such institutions should be supported from the treasury of the church. How much better it would be to admit the human function of such organizations and let every man support them individually if he desires. In this way what good they could do would be realized and the church for which our Savior died saved from division and shame.

THE MILLER-VAUGHN DEBATE

Earl Fly, Orlando, Florida

Brother James P. Miller of Tampa, Florida, met Mr. Ray Vaughn of Orlando, Florida, in debate here for four nights, February 27 through March 2, 1961. Mr. Vaughn, who is of the Pentecostal Holiness faith, affirmed his "Jesus only" theory, and that baptism of the Holy Spirit, miracles and speaking in tongues all extend to this present age. Brother Miller denied these propositions and affirmed the opposite.

In spite of the disappointing lack of support from Mr. Vaughn's people, there was very good attendance each night. The audience was attentive, quiet and very orderly throughout the entire debate.

Mr. Vaughn almost completely ignored the many scriptural arguments presented by brother Miller and the refutation of his erroneous arguments. Most of the time he simply preached his "Jesus only" theory, even when he was supposed to affirm his other proposition. He desperately needed some help, but it never came. Mr. Welch, who is reported to be their best debater, was scheduled to moderate for him but he never showed up.

Mr. Vaughn claimed that we should have all things in the church today which were in the early churches, but he ignored the fact that they do not have elders or apostles, which was pointed out by brother Miller. In discussing the "Jesus only" theory, brother Miller presented many Bible passages which used such words as *both, another, we, us, these three, etc.*, which referred to the different persons in the Godhead. Mr. Vaughn ignored them and repeated his pet phrases and already answered arguments. It was obvious that many times he was desperately grasping for something to use up the time. Brother Miller was clearly the master of the situation at all times.

The Christians in this area who love the truth appreciate the good work done by brother Miller in the debate. We trust that much good will result.

Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial . . . H. E. PHILLIPS

An under-cover agent is one who does his work in secret. He does not appear for what he really is and his motives are entirely different from what they appear to be. In some cases in civil affairs under-cover work may be necessary, but in spiritual matters we cannot think of a single case where it is necessary. The Lord said to preach the gospel to every creature. This is not secret work. He also said to let our light shine that men may SEE what we do and glorify God in heaven. Whenever under-cover work is done it certainly is not upon orders from Christ the King and is not to the glory of God.

The church of the Lord is described as the kingdom of light. The light makes manifest. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light" (Eph. 5:11-13). The Ephesians were one time children of darkness, but as Paul writes they were children of light and were told to walk as such—not to hide their lives (Eph. 5:8). The gospel of Christ is light because it is the word of Christ (II Cor. 4:4). As children of light and day Christians should walk in the light or by the word of the Lord (I Thess. 5:5; I John 1:7).

AH under-cover work in religious matters is of the devil and in his kingdom. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3:20, 21). The devil himself is a master at deception—"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Cor. 11:14, 15). Here is the change in appearance for the purpose of deception. As the Devil makes himself appear as an angel of light, so will those in his service appear. It follows that

when we see one flying under false colors—appearing to be what he is not—he is of the Devil and not of God

Under-cover work also requires secret mingling and mixing with those who are to be deceived Paul spoke of "false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (Gal 2:4) These secret agents were *False Brethren*, and their purpose in coming in secretly was to bring true brethren into bondage The devil has his secret agents and they are still working to this same end Peter spoke of "false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (II Peter 2:1) Besides secretly spying out the liberty of Christians, they teach false doctrines secretly

When we see secret agents working among the church we need to cast the gospel searchlight upon them and their work to expose them before all The Bible calls such under-cover work *hypocrisy*, and hypocrisy will be dealt with in the judgment

Brethren, the time has come to expose all forms of hypocrisy in the church It is difficult to get false brethren to debate their cause because of their under-cover work in leading to apostasy Nevertheless we must wage a constant war against all forms of under-cover work and compel the false teachers to show what they really are We shall not be still and let evil workers destroy the church in our generation With drawn swords we shall fight to the last every false teacher and every false brother that the light of the glorious gospel may shine in all the world

Science and Truth

I Tim. 6:20-21

William D. Burgess

Some of the evolutionists have turned to the science of genetics (a branch of biology which deals with heredity and variations) for aid and comfort They have contended that the lower forms of animal life, in some way, changed and were able to produce individuals unlike themselves This is an essential posit on if the theory of evolution is to stand The evolutionist must have some sort of an answer to the question as to how all of the plants and animals come into being In an effort to answer this and related questions they turned to lean upon Lamarckianism or also called the doctrine of acquired characteristics An acquired character as the name implies, is a change produced due to environment use or disuse Acquired characteristics are very evident If an individual goes without shoes the feet will become tough and calloused This is an acquired character This character will not be passed on to the offsprings of the individual since it is not due to a change in the germ cell which carry the inheritance factors but merely brought about by the individual going without shoes A number of years ago Herbert Spencer wrote, "Close contemplation of the facts impress me more strongly than ever with the two alternatives—either there has been inheritance of acquired characters or there has been no evolution " Time and again the geneticists have proven to their own satisfaction that acquired characters certainly will develop but just as certain that they cannot be passed from parents to the offsprings. Try as they will the evolutionists find no comfort here'

Again, the evolutionists have attempted to use another type of change known to the geneticists as the recombination of characters When Gregor Mendel crossed two varieties of plants the characters from these two were expressed in the offsprings These characters were not exactly like either single parent but were re-combined, some characters like one parent and some like the other If we should cross a white disc and a yellow sphere summer squash some of the offsprings would look like one parent and some like the other We could keep this up and have produced white disc, white sphere, yellow disc and yellow sphere individuals Thus we see that the characters for shape and color are passed independently of each other We say that the characters are re-combined The parents can only pass on the characters that they themselves possess After all is said and done there is no comfort here for the advocates of organic evolution New characters must be developed before evolution could occur and in order for this to take place the parents must pass on to the offsprings things which they do not themselves possess Now this is just as easy, simple and logical as it would be for me to give you a gold mine, since I do not possess one

GIVING THE ANSWERS FOR OUR HOPE

Address questions to:
35 West Par Ave.
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I PETER 3.15

Marshall E. Patton

Question: Would not the two qualifications for an apostle in Acts 1:21, 22 rule out Paul?—A P

Answer: From the viewpoint of natural experiences, yes Paul, however, was made an apostle in another way

From the viewpoint of natural experiences there was no way under heaven for any man on earth to be made an apostle without the qualifications of Acts 1:21, 22 "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection " Intimate association with Jesus both before and after his death would enable one to determine beyond all doubt whether or not the one seen after his death was the same as the one known so well before his death Such experience would enable one to testify "first hand" and as an 'eye witness" to the fact of his resurrection While all the apostles were miraculously endowed and guided in their teaching they, nevertheless, testified "first hand" under divine guidance to the fact of His resurrection

Paul's miraculous experience (Acts 9:3-6, 22:6, 8, 26:12-18) did for him what natural experiences had done for others, so that he, too, could testify "first hand" and as an eye witness" to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus

Paul referred to this miraculous experience by which he was made an apostle as an unnatural birth in I Cor 15:8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time " Scholars and the original text sustain the view that the expression born out of due time" means an abortive birth In other words, he was made an apostle in an un-

natural way and time. His qualifications did not come from natural experiences as was so of the other apostles, but by way of a miracle. Nevertheless, he was an apostle (Rom. 1:1; 11:13; I Cor. 1:1; 4:9; 9:1, 2; 15:8, 9; II Cor. 1:1; 11:5; 12:11, 12; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; I Thess. 2:6; I Tim. 1:1; 2:7; II Tim. 1:1, 11; Titus 1:1).

BIBLICAL WORD STUDIES

By E. V. SRYGLEY, JR.

HAMARTANO, "I SIN"-NO. 5

It has been noted that hamartano is used in the LXX both in non-religious and in strictly literal senses. In several passages the verb refers to breaches of civil law. The verb denotes breaches of the civil law on the part of Joseph's fellow-prisoners: "And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt [*hemarten ho archioinochoos ton Basileos*]," (Gen. 40:1). In Isa. 29:21 the verb signifies forced perjury, and in Judges 11:27 it denotes wrongs in international relations.

Most of the usages of *hamartano* in the LXX denote sin against God, either in the sense of the committing of sin, or in the sense of the deed of sin itself. Though the passage employs the noun *hamartiai* ["sins"], Isa. 59:1, 2 is a classic example also of the use of *hamartano* in the sense, "sin against God."

THE WORD OF GOD: POWERFUL AND SUFFICIENT - NO. II

(Read Isaiah 55:6-11) *George*

Lemasters, Barberton, Ohio

I move now to that division of this lesson which shall be of more importance to us as attention is now directed to the power and sufficiency of the word of God in conversion. One has but to read the following passages (Psalm 19:7; Rom. 1:16-17; James 1:21) to understand that the word of God is perfect unto the converting of the soul; that it is God's power unto salvation, and that receiving it in meekness will result in securing the safety of the soul. But we are not required to accept this at face value for we are abundantly supplied with examples in the New Testament. For instance, consider Paul's labors in the city of Corinth. Here, in a city that was so evil that it had become a synonym for the term "wickedness" itself, Paul came to labor in the cause of the master. He came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom but had determined to know nothing save Christ and Him crucified (cf. I Cor. 2:1-5). He contented himself with preaching the fundamental principles of the gospel and the glad story of redemption in Christ (cf. I Cor. 15:1-4). The result of this was that many of the Corinthians heard and were baptized (cf. Acts 18:1-8). That their conversion was genuine and from the heart is sustained by his description of them in I Cor. 6:9-11, where he contrasts their former life in sin with their present state in Christ. The word of God was powerful and sufficient to effect their conversion, and to cause them to turn from idolatry and wickedness and to serve the living God through the will of His Son.

There are now some questions to be answered. First, some are moved to inquire as to why the word is so powerful in this respect. In answer, I suggest that it is because God has designed it to be adapted to the nature of man in such a way that it appeals unto all the factors involved in conversion. Man is possessed of intellect, emotions, and will. The intellect evaluates the testimony and evidence presented in the gospel and either accepts or rejects. Once that testimony is accepted, the emotions are touched by those elements of the gospel designed to arouse them (the promises of God; the story of the cross), and these two factors will induce us to conform our will unto His, the result of which is conversion of the individual.

The second question is that which asks why all are not converted. In answer to this, appeal is made to the old adage which says, "The same sun which softens wax will harden clay". The working of the gospel is much the same way. There are those who are so hardened by the deceitfulness of sin that the gospel has no effect upon them. On the other hand there are others which can be moved by the principles of God's righteousness as revealed in the gospel. Hence, some are converted and others go on their way to perdition. Certainly we understand that the condition of the heart determines the receptiveness to the gospel message. The parable of the sower definitely teaches this (Mat. 13:1-9; 18-23). When, by the preaching of the gospel we can cause men to see their need for the Savior, and instill within them a desire to serve Him, then we can lead them to the Lord. This can be accomplished only by teaching them the word of God. Hence, Paul teaches that not many wise men after the flesh will be called; and that others having no love for the truth will believe lies unto their own damnation (I Cor. 1:26; II Thes. 2:1-12). It is not that God does not want them to obey; neither is it that God will not receive them. Rather, it is simply that the only drawing power that God has will not touch them by reason of the condition of their heart. We, therefore, would do well to consider the example of Ezra, for he had prepared his heart to seek, to do, and to teach the law of God. We would also do well to imitate the example of Samuel as he said, "Speak Lord, thy servant heareth".

With these things in mind then, is it any wonder that we despair at times when some even amongst the brethren want preachers to "water down" the preaching of the gospel in order to make it appealing unto those with whom it possesses no appeal in its purity? We manifest a supreme lack of wisdom when we will withhold from preaching the whole counsel of God in order to make the gospel popular with those to whom it is not popular in the form in which it fell from the lips of inspired men. That word is designed to call those who want to serve the Lord and to exclude those who do not. To labor under any other principle will thwart the purpose of God. A failure on our part to realize this and to thus "sugar coat" the gospel will not result in genuine confessions but rather in half converted members. It will bring within the membership of the church a soil which will become fertile ground in which the seeds of digression will germinate into the fruits of departure. Let us, therefore, cease to rely upon the elements of the social gospel and our display of material wealth in order to draw people to the Lord and return once again to the preaching of that word which is both powerful and sufficient to accomplish God's purposes in the affairs of men.

BENEVOLENCE AND THE CHURCH

By Harris J. Dark

PART II

HOW FUNDS SHOULD BE COLLECTED

Next we turn to how congregations did their chanty work for saints outside of then own number I Corinthians 16:1-3 says

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, [and I want you to notice it was for the saints It was not for sinners, but for the saints], as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come And when I come, whom soever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem "

This is in a letter to the church at Corinth, but it concerns a contribution to the poor saints who were in Jerusalem Here we are told specifically how the money was to be collected It was to be collected by each laying by in store upon the first day of the week as God had prospered him Note also that the congregation at Corinth was to select its own messenger to take its contribution to Jerusalem In those days it could not be sent by bank draft or by a check drawn on the account of the church, or by postal delivery because there were no such things The money had to be earned, literally, from one place to another. So Paul, directed by the Holy Spirit, says

whomsoever you shall approve, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem "

So we are told how they were to get the money together for this purpose

PROVOKING TO LIBERALITY

This same incident is referred to at several places in the Bible This is Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth This matter was still in process of being earned out when he wrote them the second letter So he devoted chapters 8 and 9 of the second letter to a discussion of this same subject instructing and exhorting them to give liberally. I want to read you several verses now from these two chapters

' Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit [that is, we want you to know] of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of then joy and then deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality For to then power, I bear record, yea, and beyond then power they were willing of themselves, praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints "

What are you doing, Paul? He's using the example of liberality on the part of the Macedonians to stir up the Corinthians to cause them to give more So he said

'And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave then own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God Inasmuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and

utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love "

So here he tells us what he's doing—using the Macedonians to inspire the Corinthians And he wasn't compelling them to give He said, "I speak not by way of commandment " He didn't want them to give grudgingly, he was leaving it up to them, but giving them some mighty good reasons for being liberal in their contribution, he continued

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich "

Not only did he use the example of the Macedonians to inspire the Corinthians to liberality, but above all he used the example of Jesus Christ himself who gave all, even his life And he said

'And herein I give my advice, for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago Now therefore perform the doing of it, that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened, but by an equality that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want, that there may be equality "

I always understood that to mean, until somebody tried to help me understand it otherwise, that Paul was simply saying, "You help the folk at Jerusalem now in their time of need It may be the tables will be turned, and there will come a time when you will need help from them "

"As it is written, he that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel through out all the churches, and not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace [and we learn from I Corinthians 16 how that was done—each church choosing its own messengers] which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us, providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love [for the proof of love is good work, you know] and of our boasting on your behalf For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you, for I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia "

Not only was he commending the Macedonians to inspire the Corinthians, but he had already commended the Corinthians to the Macedonians to inspire them So he said

I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago, and your zeal hath provoked very many "

So it's not a sin to let others know what you give, if you do it for the purpose of inspiring them

"Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf,

Paul seems to be a little bit afraid that after he had commended the Corinthians so much, that when the time came, they would let him down and prove that his boasting had been in vain, so he's exhorting them not to let that happen

"Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting "

You kinda stick your neck out, you know, when you brag on people, because they may not come through and do like you thought they were going to

"Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness "

Remember that all of this is concerning that same contribution mentioned in I Corinthians 16 1-2

"But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver."

And then he goes on throughout the remainder of this chapter further exhorting them to give liberally

Paul makes two other references to this particular matter As far as I know, they don't really throw any additional light on what we ought to do or how we ought to do it, but for the sake of completeness I'll call attention to them One of them is in his speech before Felix You'll find it in Acts, chapter 24 and verse 17, where he merely says that, "Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation and offerings " That was after these churches in Macedonia had gotten the money together and Paul, along with others had taken it unto Jerusalem

He also mentions the same thing in the 15th chapter of the book of Romans was spoken before he went to Jerusalem That one in Acts was spoken after he had already taken the money But anyhow 111 read this one

"But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints " (vv 25-32)

SENDING TO THE ELDERS

There's one more case, and then we'll be through This one is found in the 11th chapter of the book of Acts The gospel had just recently begun to be preached unto the

Gentiles Some of those who had fled from Jerusalem because of persecution had gone as far as Antioch And when the church at Jerusalem (the ones that remained there)

learned about what was going on, they sent Barnabas Barnabas went on up to Tarsus and found Saul and brought him back to Antioch, and they met with the church there for a whole year And the latter part of that chapter says

"And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth [or drouth, we would call it, or famine] throughout all the world, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea, which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul "

Note that they did not send it to the Board of Directors They did not send it unto the Superintendent, but they sent it unto the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul Now friends, from I Corinthians 16 1 2, we find out how the church got the money together to help poor people in another area From this we learn to whom the money was delivered It was delivered unto the elders In Acts chapter 6, we saw how, in that case, it was distributed by the deacons unto those that were in need

Beloved, this is what the Bible says about the charity work of a local congregation You see we have a pattern, both for work at home and for work abroad Now, of course, this pattern consists of examples in large measure. I can see only one way to deny that this constitutes a precedent for us to follow, and that is to say that these examples are not authoritative And yet we believe a binding pattern may be in the form of an example You know we do We've been declaring, and I think properly, all through these years, that the day for the observance of the Lord's supper is firmly established by apostolic example If the example of Acts 20:7 is a pattern for us to follow, why are not these examples, which I have lead to you tonight, a pattern for us to follow?

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Now notice some of the important features of this pattern I want you to note that the congregation, through its deacons, decided who would receive benefit and how much benefit and for how long That's an important point, for the Bible teaches that there are some who ought not be helped The widow who is not a widow indeed should not be helped as the one who is a widow indeed Paul says in II Thessalonians 3 10 that one who will not work should not be fed So, who should be helped and how much and how long is a question that must be decided

The responsibility of deciding that question depends or rests upon the congregation To shift to some outside agency the responsibility of making decisions as to what shall be done with the congregation's funds is to shift a responsibility which these examples place upon the local congregation itself. Now you ponder that thought. It has many ramifications, I'll let you make the application yourself. But I'm calling your attention to the fact that, through its own deacons the Jerusalem church decided who would be helped. They didn't send the money to somebody else and say you just do with it whatever you think best. They decided themselves who would be helped, and for how long, and for how much

SAFETY FIRST

Let's think now about the effect of following this Bible plan. Did you know that, if we follow these Bible examples, we are perfectly safe? Even if it were true that we're not expected to follow the examples of the New Testament churches and are free to do as we please, we could please to follow the pattern they set before us. In doing so we know we're safe. We preach "safety first" on other things; why not on this? Especially when it has already been demonstrated that this plan is sufficient to get the job done.

Furthermore, my beloved friends, following this pattern will never divide God's church. Conforming to the Bible examples will promote unity, and if everybody will do so, there won't be any division over this matter. Departure from such patterns caused division 100 years ago, and that division is represented in this block by the building down on the corner and by this one here. It was departure from such patterns as this that brought about that division. If brethren persist in another departure from such patterns, there will be another division. The Bible teaches that division is sinful. Unity—the Lord prayed for it, and we're commanded to attain unto it, to achieve it, and to keep it if we possibly can. Departure from Bible patterns has always caused or resulted in division, and it will always do so.

If you and I follow this pattern and do so diligently, fervently, humbly, meekly, patiently, in kindness instructing others who oppose themselves, then we will not be to blame for any division that may result.

Somebody may say, "Well, Brother Dark, what are you going to do when folks accuse you of not believing in helping the poor?" I'm just going to keep on doing what they say I don't believe in. "Well, what are you going to do when they call you some ugly names?" I'm going to pray that they may see the error of their way and turn away from it and do my best not to retaliate. I know we're standing on solid ground when we stay within the bounds of this Bible pattern. That's what I'm contending for, and I think I speak the sentiments of the elders of this congregation when I say that that's what we want to do.

I recommend to you tonight these things which I have read to you from God's word. I don't have any uneasiness or misgivings about them or their effect. I know they are right because I have read them to you as they are in your Bible. If you find fault with them, you won't be finding any fault with me. You'll be finding fault with the Bible, and I know that you don't want to do that.

There's one note of warning that I give to myself and to us—having the right pattern will not save us unless we work at the job. Just refraining from going out after an unscriptural pattern will not save us. If we don't do something according to the pattern that we propose to follow, we cannot be saved. "Faith without works is dead." Having the right plan to do nothing won't help any, will it? So, while we are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, let us be sure that we are busy in the work required of the saints. After all, the best argument against any departure is an effective, active, and successful program of work in harmony with the scriptures.

With some religionists of today custom and tradition have greater weight than the plain word of God. Assail baptism, a thing positively commanded, and they applaud, assail their unscriptural teachings and practices, and they become greatly offended. Some churches of Christ have had troubles over customs and traditions.

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Only a few copies of the bound volume of *Southeastern News Letter* are left. This volume contains every issue of *Southeastern News Letter*—March, 1958 to December, 1959—which is a news record of churches, elders and preachers generally in the Southeast. The price is \$1.00. We will send one copy free to all who send us three (3) subscriptions to SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. If you just want a copy of the *News Letter* send us your name and \$1.00 now. There are not many left.

There is very little satisfaction in beating an enemy by evil means, but there is great and lasting satisfaction in overcoming your enemy with good.

The News Letter Reports

"... THEY REHEARSED ALL THAT GOD HAD DONE WITH THEM..."—Acts 14:27

BROOKS WEBB is the new preacher for the Hickory Heights congregation in Lewisburg, Tenn. He publishes a bulletin called *Hi-Lites* that contains much valuable information. WEBB formerly preached in Indianapolis, Ind. . . . LINDY McDANIEL, star of the St. Louis Cardinals, is not only a faithful Christian but a contributor to some of the papers published by the brethren. McDANIEL has been called the best relief pitcher in baseball today. . . . FRANK JAMERSON preaches for the church in Richmond, Virginia. JAMERSON is a former student of Florida Christian College and is doing a good work in this historic southern city. . . . Plans are in the making for another debate between Roy Cogdill and Guy Wood at Newbern, Tenn. Watch *SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES* for future announcement. . . . HUGH CLARK of Lubbock, Texas will return to the Holden Heights congregation in Orlando, Florida for a second meeting soon. CLARK conducted a very successful effort with this congregation a few years ago . . . IRVIN HIMMEL continues to publish the paper *APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE* with offices at 900 Smithshire, St. Louis, Mo. This is a 16 page monthly well written and well edited. The price is \$2.00 a year or \$1.50 in clubs. . . . NAT COOPER now working in Coleraine, North Ireland will be coming to the states soon. Nat is a native of Ireland and went back several years ago to work in his own country. While at Florida Christian College he married a Florida girl. . . . JIMMY TUTEN, JR. preaches for the Northwest congregation in Ft. Lauderdale. When in that city worship with them. . . . JOSEPH COX will preach for a new congregation in Louisville. This is in the Fairdale section. . . . ROY COGDILL closed the lecture program at Florida Christian College March 10 with a great sermon on Victorious Faith. . . . BILL REEVES who works with the Spanish congregation in Miami, Florida baptized three in February. REEVES is thought by many to be the ablest preacher of the Spanish language in the brotherhood. . . . B. G. HOPE fell on the ice and suffered a broken arm. HOPE has his share of misfortune but seems to have the ability to bounce back and still do a great work. He will hold a scheduled meeting in Bradenton, Florida when he recovers completely. . . . HARRY PICKUP, SR., working in a meeting with the Pine Hills congregation where JERRY BELCHICK is the local preacher. This is a new congregation and is making fine progress. . . . RICHARD DEWHIRST, evangelist for the Bedford, Ohio group reports steady progress in a hard field. Morning audiences reach 150 and the collection is sometimes in excess of \$300.00. JAMES P. MILLER preached in a meeting with the downtown congregation in Lawrenceburg, Tenn., March 19-26. E. L. FLANNERY works with this old and respected church.

JAMES P. MILLER, Tampa, Florida-Brother BYRON CONLEY of Bartow, Florida will do the preaching in a meeting with the Seminole congregation in Tampa, April 16-23. Brother Conley is one of the best loved preachers in the state of Florida and has baptized more people as the result of his preaching than any of his contemporaries. The time for all the evening services including Sundays will be at 7:45. Different song leaders in the Tampa area will conduct the singing each night. All are invited to attend this meeting. The Seminole meeting house is located at Rome Avenue and Wishart Boulevard in Tampa's north side.

GOSPEL MEETING-A. HUGH CLARK of Lubbock, Texas will preach in a gospel meeting at Holden Heights congregation in Orlando, Florida, April 2-9. Earl Fly has recently moved to labor with the Holden Heights church from Belmont Heights, Tampa, Florida. Marshall Patton, now with Par Avenue church in Orlando, was formerly with the Holden Heights congregation. A 77 year old lady was recently baptized at Holden Heights. This church is growing spiritually and in numbers; peace and harmony prevail among the members.

Gene E. Watson of Lynn Grove, Kentucky has some good used books to sell at a reasonable price. If interested, write to him in Lynn Grove.

MILLER-VAUGHN DEBATE

The discussion between James P. Miller and Ray Vaughn of The United Pentecostal Church was held in the Howard Junior High School auditorium in Orlando, Fla., February 27, 28 and March 1, 2.

The crowds ran from 400 to 600 people for the four nights of the debate. This was the second debate in this same building for Miller who met Morris Butler Book on the music question in 1954. The question is often asked: do these discussions do a great deal of good? The answer has to be yes if they are conducted in the right manner. Debating is not only an opportunity to refute error, but it is a wonderful opportunity to preach the truth. The United Pentecostal Church teaches that Jesus is the only person in the Godhead and that baptism can only be administered in the "name of Jesus". They also contend that. Baptism in the Holy Spirit and miracles continue until this present time. A full report of the debate will appear in the columns of *SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES*. Watch for it.

DENNIS REED of Birmingham, Alabama will be in Rockingham, North Carolina in a gospel meeting April 3-12, and in a meeting at New Bern, North Carolina April 24-30. Brother Reed recently moved to the Birmingham area from Palatka, Florida.

THE SELF WRITTEN EPITAPH

by Benjamin Franklin's Biographer
(Submitted by Joe Farley, Tampa, Fla.)

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Like the cover of an old book,
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Lies here food for worms for it
will (as he believes) appear
once more

In a new and more beautiful
Edition, corrected and amended