

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 III

JULY, 1962

NUMBER 7

"IT IS COMMONLY REPORTED..."

H. E. Phillips

Reputation is what men strive for; character is what they often sacrifice in the effort to attain a reputation. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "It is commonly reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife ..." (I Cor. 5:1).

Character is what a man is as he and God know him; *reputation* is what men think he is. One's reputation is usually based upon his character, but not always. If one had believed the report of the Jews concerning Christ, his reputation would have been completely opposite to his character. Today many good men and women suffer poor reputations because evil and false reports are made against them. Of course, either side of a proposition may make the charge that they are being falsely accused, but the facts will determine who is misleading.

A report may be true and in proper fashion or it may be false and always out of order. Both churches and individuals often resent reports that are really true because they "hurt the reputation." Remember, reputation is what people think of you, and if they are led to believe you are righteous and true to God, when actually you are the very opposite, not only is it a false report, but you would be playing the hypocrite. Cornelius was a man of good report (Acts 10:22). Among the Jews he had a good reputation. This was also the case with Ananias (Acts 22:12). Elders of the church must have a good report among those not in the church (I Tim. 3:7). One of the qualifications for the seven chosen to serve the widows in Acts 6 was that they be "of honest report." (Acts 6:3).

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "It is commonly reported . . ." It appears that the report of fornication was common knowledge. This phrase "commonly reported" is found in Matthew 28:15 as the result of bribe paid to the soldiers who guarded the tomb of Jesus to say his disciples had stolen the body away. ". . . and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."

The matter "commonly reported" involved fornication among the Corinthians, and it was a true report because Paul identified the man who was guilty. This report would not help the reputation of any church, yet Paul exposed the guilty and rebuked the sin. Besides fornication, the carnal state of division among the Corinthians was reported (I Cor. 11:18), and the report came by the house of Chloe. (I Cor. 1:11).

Today there are a number of things "commonly reported" among "churches of Christ" that will not help the reputation of any church, but these reports are true; and like Corinth,

many of the guilty churches are "puffed up" rather than "mourned" because of these truths.

It is "commonly reported" that unqualified and unscriptural men have maneuvered their way into the eldership of churches, and are "being lords over God's heritage." This is being done by human laws made to govern the churches, thereby dethroning Christ as law maker. It is also known that they divert attention from their unholy deeds by charging those who ask for divine authority for their directives with "making laws where God did not legislate." It is not making a law where God did not legislate to ask for and demand divine authority for those works and institutions bound upon churches by these "lords" over the flocks.

It is "commonly reported" that some churches of Christ are "fellowshipping" various denominations in civic and social projects, and I "partly believe it" because of the reports by some of these churches themselves. Recently a "church of Christ preacher" and a "Methodist Pastor" joined in a community "prayer for peace."

To many of these churches "fellowship" means the people "sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play" (Ex. 32:6). The "fellowship" halls and "church" kitchens are evidences of this concept. The "father-son" fellowship breakfasts sponsored by some churches of Christ, the church financed "youth meetings," and the church operated "summer camps" are on the increase — they are "on the march." These reports are true, and it does nothing for the reputation of churches of Christ to the spiritually minded person.

While many churches of Christ may hesitate to "go all the way" in fellowshipping denominations in religious services, they are more and more adopting the practices of these denominations. Some preachers (and the churches for whom they preach, I suppose) have joined the denominations in "Easter Sunrise Services." I predict that "churches of Christ" who have not yet "fellowshipped" the denominations in Easter services will, within the next ten years, be having their own "Easter Sunrise Services." These churches will then brand those who oppose this unauthorized practice with "making laws that God did not make." Wait and see.

It is "commonly reported" among some churches of Christ that many of the "faithful members" approve and practice "social drinking" of alcohol drinks and modern dancing. We are fast moving toward the point where it is unpopular to preach against dancing and drinking anywhere. A few years ago the Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and most other "protestant" denominations began "sponsoring" dances and allowing all the evils associated with these dances. Catholics had for many years before practiced such things. It will not be too long, if history proves anything, that some "churches of Christ" will also "sponsor" dances like the denominations. This report does nothing for the reputation of these churches.

It is "commonly reported" that some "churches of Christ" are endorsing the liberal doctrine of denying the verbal in-

spiration of the Bible and disregarding its divine authority. I have heard two or three recently speak of the church giving too much emphasis to the Bible and what it says, and too little attention to the important matter of finding a basis for unity among people. The Bible IS the only basis of unity among followers of the Lord.

We must be careful that such reports as are here mentioned are never "commonly reported" regarding us. Of course, some reports that are untrue will be made, but we must be careful that they are not proved.

"THE CROSSROADS OF THE SOUTH"

A. H. Payne, Columbus, Miss.



The Metropolitan Map of Jackson, Mississippi, issued by the Jackson Chamber of Commerce, designates this great southern city and Mississippi's capitol city, as the "Crossroads of the South". With a present population of 150,000, estimates have placed the future growth, attributed to the rapid expansion of industry in the south, at double this number in the next ten years. Jackson is a city of culture and commerce, boasting several institutions of higher learning, among

A. H. Payne which is the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Industry has found in the Jackson area ideal climate, transportation, labor and a never ending supply of water and power which has and will in the future cause ever increasing industrialization and population increase. The "Georgia Stocks" and the "cotton sacks" are making way for the Industrial Revolution of the South.

Among churches of Christ in Jackson and the surrounding area, digression has taken its toll.

Last March 25 a group of 19 Christians assembled for the first service of the new and faithful church of Christ in Jackson. The first meeting was held in a borrowed assembly hall and the mid-week Bible classes were held in a private home. A private school building, located on the corner of Popular and North Jefferson, was then rented and is presently used for all services of the church. Since the beginning, less than two months ago, 9 have joined themselves to this church, making a total of 28. The Lord willing, by June 11, 1962 this number will increase to a total of 30, in that I will be moving with my family from the good East Columbus church, Columbus, Mississippi, to work with this new congregation. A number of people have expressed their interest in this new work and because of this we have every reason to expect an immediate increase in the membership.

The success of any church is largely dependent upon the various abilities of its members, and when it recognizes the supreme authority of the Lord in all it does. We are confident of success based on both counts. Among the present membership (not including myself) there are four men who are fine preachers and three of these have outstanding abilities as song leaders. The other members, both men and women, are informed and devoted to the Lord. With time and continued blessings from the Lord, this church will be one of the finest and fastest growing in the South.

Correspondence, giving names and addresses of parties whom you think would be interested in this church, can be addressed to me, after June 11, at 809 Arbor Vista, Jackson, Mississippi.

Searching The Scriptures

Published Monthly At
Tampa, Florida

Entered as second class matter at U. S. Post Office at Tampa, Florida, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

EDITORS

H. E. PHILLIPS
P. O. Box 17244
Tampa, Florida

JAMES P. MILLER
2523 W. Diana
Tampa, Florida

SUBSCRIPTION:

\$2.00 per year in advance in U. S.
Foreign countries \$2.50 per year in advance.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS AND
CHANGES OF ADDRESSES TO:

P. O. Box 17244
Tampa 12, Florida

Editorial . . .

H. E. PHILLIPS

PROVING WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE

"Let no man deceive you with *vain words*: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) *proving what is acceptable unto the Lord*. 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. 5:6-13).

Some people do not know a scriptural argument in proof of a proposition when they hear one. They do not know the difference between *proof* and an "off-the-issue" emotional appeal. Error grows best in the emotional appeals to prejudiced minds. When one wants to believe a proposition, it is not necessary for him to have proof; he finds ways of approving his position in the clouds and mists of confusion that result from emotional assertions. Paul said the deceiver uses "good words and fair speeches" to bring about "divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine" (Rom. 16:17,18). If the heart wants to believe a certain thing it is all the more convincing.

The Baptists want to believe in the doctrine of salvation by *faith only*. It is not necessary to find a passage that teaches this; all that is needed is to pervert a series of statements from the word of God and make them sound like "salvation by faith only." The Methodists want to believe in sprinkling instead of baptism. A suggestion or two from some unrelated passage is sufficient "proof" for this practice. The Catholics want to believe in the authority of tradition, even above the word of God, and a perversion of some passage is enough to "completely prove" this. The Christian Church wants to believe in instrumental music in the worship. A misapplica-

tion of a few passages in the New Testament coupled with practices under the law of Moses "proves" it.

We say these people do not have Bible authority for these practices, but they contend they have "proved" them from the Bible. The reason why they make such a claim is that they do not recognize a scriptural argument when they hear it. Their prejudiced minds and the "good words and fair speeches" of their promoters make for easy convincing.

A segment of the church today has developed the same attitude toward the authority of God as these "other denominations." Upon the emotional appeal to matters that do not touch the question they are made to believe (because they want to) that the human benevolent institutions are actually divine; that the churches should "cooperate" in supplying the funds for them to operate; that the church can do anything with its resources that the elders decide to do. Never mind about scriptural *proof*, they use the same perversions and vain assertions the "other denominations" use.

In addition to this some of the self-styled champions of the liberal cause completely misinterpret the fact that preachers will not engage them in debate. They appear as the roaring giant of the Philistines, charging right and left. The act is that their deceit, lack of respect for the word of God, and total disregard for personal integrity are the reasons. When one will not debate the *issue*, it is a waste of time and effort to even try. "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone" (Hos. 4:17). "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind . . ." (Matt. 15:13,14).

We stand ready to "give an answer to every man" for our faith, and we shall do so by the authority of the Lord. We shall speak boldly "disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 19:8), with any man of integrity and respect for God's word. But we do not purpose to provide an audience for these to slander and vilify who have no respect for God's word.

COMMENTS TO EDITORS

"My family and I are really enjoying Searching The Scriptures. My impression is that it is improving in every way. You brethren are to be commended for a most excellent job." — B. G. Hope, Bowling Green, Ky.

"Searching The Scriptures is A.O.K!"—Wm. E. Wallace, Poteau, Okla.

"I received my bound volume of Searching The Scriptures (vols. 1-2) and was thrilled with it! It is a beauty; something to be proud of in years to come. . ." — Jimmy Tuten, Jr., Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

"May the Lord bless you and brother Phillips in your efforts to keep the church sound. May we keep ourselves in shape, so that we will be in a position to keep the church in shape, so that the church will be in a position to get the world in shape for the coming of Christ." — P. J. Casebolt, Akron, Ohio.

"I enjoy reading over the bound volume with the satisfaction of knowing that we still have a few faithful among those who have named his name, and have held fast and not become too liberal in dealing with things that God in His new covenant has given to be perfect." — A. E. Baird, De-Land, Fla.

"Please renew my subscription to Searching The Scriptures. I enjoy the paper very much." — David L. Stevenson, Richmond, Calif.



DATE SETTING

Back in 1899 a leader among the Russians created quite a stir with his prediction. He believed that Christ would come at the turn of the century. That was just as 1899 went out and 1900 came in. Of course he taught it would be at the midnight hour, although the scripture nowhere says it will be at midnight. The leadership of this so-called prophesy gave him wide publicity, but his followers were doomed to disappointment. Only the boom of firecrackers and the ringing of bells greeted the new year.

In our own country, before this time, a man named William Miller created a sensation with the prediction that the Lord would return to earth in October, 1843. His followers made white robes, left their crops in the fields, and climbed to the top of houses to meet him in the air. A thunder shower, history tells us, found them in this condition and they discovered to their sorrow that Miller's doctrine was all wet. William Miller looked at his charts again and said he had made a mistake in addition and set the time one year later. Of course his theory did not improve with age and when the Lord failed to come, it was the last of Miller, but not the last of speculation. He made a feeble attempt the following year but his cause was lost.

Among the disciples of Miller, was a woman named Ellen G. White. It is reported that she tried to usher in a second advent in 1843 and in the two following years, when Miller failed, she took up his work. She is credited with predictions for the years 1857, 1863, 1877, and 1896. History, of course, has proven this guess work, vain, and profane babbling. Prophets who have missed their predictions so many times can not be prophets of God.

But perhaps as powerful a figure as we have seen in the field of date-setting was Pastor Russell. Russell claimed an exalted knowledge of prophesy. He said that the Lord must return in person and set up his kingdom on the earth and exercise His great power before the end of 1914. When his prophesy failed, he concocted an unbelievable explanation. He said that Christ was here but that we just could not see Him. Hence he had Christ reigning on the visible earth in invisible form, all proving the folly of speculation.

Time will, and has, refuted all of these speculations and the date setters responsible for them. Christ settled the matter of the time of His coming in Matt. 24:36, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as in the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." And again in Matthew 24:42-44, "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

OUTDATED GOSPEL

In exactly the same manner, in every generation there are those who cry that the gospel is outdated, that the methods and the message need to be changed, and that the way as set forth in the first century will not work in our time. They,

like the date-setters, are always proven wrong and the church that stays in the "old paths," continues to outgrow and out-preach all of the others. It seems strange indeed that in the last two apostasies, the digression of brethren was **brought** about by the success of the primitive order and not its failure. Churches without the society became strong and wealthy enough to form it, and today giant plans of unscriptural cooperation were made possible by the growth and wealth of the churches. The simple statement of fact is that the old plans worked so well that the new plans were made possible. I marvel that brethren are not able to see this truth. Can you imagine a group of small discouraged congregations with no funds and struggling for survival meeting to form a Missionary Society? Can you visualize a brotherhood dying for lack of proper means and methods starting the Herald of Truth? a program that in its very inception ran into \$100,000? The answer is clear: the Lord's way worked so well it made the plans of men possible. Time and the judgment day will give the final answer.

ARBITRARY QUALIFICATIONS

P. J. Casebolt, Akron, Ohio

The qualifications for a Christian are high, as are the requirements for elders, deacons, and evangelists. The Bible enumerates these qualifications and we should be satisfied with nothing less, nor desire anything more. When each is content to do the work that God assigned to him, there is no need for arbitrary qualifications. When we want any servant in the church to do something God has not enjoined, then we have to invent "qualifications" about which the Bible knows nothing. The following quotations are typical examples.

"... the church grows where the leaders are men of character, reputation, zeal and vision." There would be nothing wrong with this statement if the reader were cited to the divine requirements (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1). But, too often brethren want to subtract some of these essential qualifications and substitute some of their own. If men meet the demands of the Holy Spirit set forth in the passages cited, they will automatically be "men of character and reputation." If they tend strictly to their duties as outlined in Acts 20:28 and 1 Pet. 5:1-3, they will of necessity be men of "zeal and vision."

I think some brethren confuse "vision" with "the lust of the eye." Satan took Jesus into a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them (Mt. 4:8). I fear that if some brethren could see this same scene that they would pounce upon it as an opportunity to elevate the church in the eyes of the world, and urge the church to grab these kingdoms before some of the sects got to them. Of course, anyone who launched such a project would be considered a "man of vision," and the sponsoring church would be "on the march." Let us quit confusing vision with "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." (1 Jno. 2:15) Only when we look through the eyes of the Lord can we see things in their proper light.

In the following quotation, the parenthetical expressions are mine, but I think they are pretty close to the truth. "... the church grows (breaks records on Sunday morning) where the minister sets a high spiritual tone (doesn't condemn anything but "anti's"), and where he excites the members to do great things for the Lord (support all the "fellowship" dinners, youth camps, etc.). If he is narrow in attitude (demands a "thus saith the Lord"; a "legalist"), small in matters of judgment (won't compromise the truth), and

afraid to 'launch out into the deep,' (stays with the divine pattern) then he will hinder instead of help the church (that institution which furnishes the money for our human projects)."

One of these days brethren will awaken and see that the church has always been stronger when clinging to the simplicity of the gospel, and weaker when it "launched out into the deep" in pursuit of "visions", falsely so called. But, I suppose that "one of these days" will be the Judgment Day for many who are blinded by "the god of this world." (2 Cor. 4:4).

"THE ONE CHILD ELDER"

Charles Boshart, Port Arthur, Texas

The readers of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES are due an explanation for the tardiness of this article's appearance. After I made reply a while back to some things stated by brother Jimmy Tuten in this journal he submitted another article and nothing was heard from me by way of rejoinder. About the time of our exchange I developed a serious throat condition and had to resign my work in Rogers, Arkansas. For the next few months my books, periodicals, etc., were all packed away and I did not have access to them. I am now back in full-time Gospel work and have things unpacked for use and, therefore, have the previous articles available for reference.

I. THE BASIS OF THE PLURAL-ONLY CLAIM.

In my first reply to brother Tuten the point was made that his idea that the term "children" in I Timothy 3:4 and Titus 1:6 demanded more than one child was "based primarily on the claim that the term 'tekna' is susceptible only of a plural application." I further stated, "The issue is: Does the New Testament use this plural form 'tekna' so as to include a singular application?" Three passages (Luke 14:26, Matthew 3:9, I Timothy 5:4) were used to demonstrate the fact that "tekna" is used in the New Testament so as to include a singular application. But, in his second article, brother Tuten says, "The issue restated is: Will 'tekna' as used IN THE CONTEXT on the pages under discussion admit the singular? Because the word is used both ways in the New Testament does not mean nor prove that it can be used both ways in these passages." From these statements it is clear that: 1) Brother Tuten agrees that the word "tekna" will admit a singular application in the passages mentioned above. 2) He denies that "tekna" can have a singular as well as a plural application in I Timothy 3:4 and Titus 1:6. Why? He says because of "the context." "The context must determine its use." Yet, in two articles brother Tuten did not produce factors in "the context" that "determine" that "tekna" can receive a plural application and he says he will write no more on the subject in this paper. I deny that there is a single thing in the context of either I Timothy 3:4 or Titus 1:6 to force the word "tekna" to be plural only in application. More on this later.

II. THE USE OF OTHER PASSAGES.

Brother Tuten still does not "see how the use of other passages" will help our study. Then, let me make this suggestion in addition to the remarks in my other article. Since "other passages" use the plural form "tekna" so as to include a singular application the naked fact of its plurality in I Timothy 3:4 and Titus 1:6 is not sufficient evidence to conclude that it must have *only* a plural application here.

To put it in question form, since the plural form "tekna" is used to include a singular application in 'other passages,' and the mere fact of its plural form in those passages did not mean plural only, why does the mere fact of its plural form in I Timothy 3:4 and Titus 1:5 mean plural only? If it has a plural use *only* here then a basis will have to be sought for it other than the mere fact of the word's plural form.

III. THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCHOLARS.

I find it difficult to believe that our brother was being anything other than facetious when he wrote, "Since brother Boshart accepts the testimony of my scholars and that testimony states that 'tekna' as used in the context of our study will not admit the singular, brother Boshart and I are in agreement. An elder must have a plurality of children." If brother Tuten had read carefully the statement I made I am persuaded that he would not have made this mistake and he would not have misrepresented me. Here is what I said. "The issue is *not* whether or not the translation of 'tekna' should be the English form '*children*.' It should be. Both the Greek term and its English equivalent are plural as to form and the testimony of the scholars to whom brother Tuten referred on this point is accepted." Now, on what "point" was the "testimony" of "the scholars" "accepted"? On the "point" that "both the Greek term and its English equivalent are plural as to form." That was the "point" on which their "testimony" was "accepted" *and no other*. Agreement as to the plural form of the word does not mean agreement as to a plural only use of it. See point I.

IV. THE EVIDENCE FROM THE CONTEXT.

A. *Lack of context evidence for plural only application of the word "children."*

Brother Tuten has set forth the position that the contexts of I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 demand that "children" or "tekna" have only a plural application. As already stated the context factors which allegedly make this demand were not produced. Hence, the plural-only application for which he contends falls for lack of evidence.

B. *Lack of context evidence from the use of the plural "children" with the singular "man."*

Luke 14:26 records Jesus as saying that "If any man cometh unto me and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children (tekna), and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." As stated before, if the plural here does not admit a singular application as well as a plural, then that man who has come to Christ hating his own father, mother, wife, brethren, sisters, and his own life also, but *only one child*, cannot be the Lord's disciple. Brother Tuten accepts the validity of this. See point I. Titus 1:5,6 informs us that if "any man" is appointed an elder he must have, among other things, "children that believe."

In both cases we have the plural "tekna" or "children" used with the singular "man." In his first article brother Tuten said, "Since 'tekna' is specifically plural and is used with the singular 'man' the writer sees no basis for concluding that an elder can have one child." Here is the reasoning:

1) There is no basis for concluding that the plural form "tekna" may have a singular application when used with the singular "man."

2) Titus 1:5 uses the plural form "tekna" with the singular form "man."

3) Therefore, there is no basis for concluding that the plural "tekna" may have a singular application also when

used with the singular "man" in Titus 1:5.

This reasoning excludes the case of a man serving as an elder with one believing child. But, let us try the reasoning on Luke 14:26.

1) There is no basis for concluding that the plural "tekna" may have a singular application also when used with the singular "man."

2) But, Luke 14:26 uses the plural "tekna" with the singular "man."

3) Therefore, there is no basis for concluding that the plural "tekna" may have a singular application also when used with the singular "man" in Luke 14:26.

This reasoning would mean that a man who has come to Christ hating father, mother, brethren, sisters, his own life also, *but only one child* cannot be the Lord's disciple. But, brother Tuten accepts this case of the plural form admitting the singular. See point I. Since it is exactly parallel to the case he made on Titus 1:6 with reference to the plural form "tekna" used with the singular "man" he will either have to give up his argument on Titus 1:6 or accept the conclusion that an elder can have one believing child.

C. *Lack of context evidence from qualifications.*

There is no characteristic or quality named in the context that demands a plurality of believing children. I Timothy 3:4 states that the bishop must "rule well" and the demonstration of this is found in his ruling "his own house" according to I Timothy 5:5. But the man with one believing child has demonstrated his ability to rule well in this respect and, hence, meets this qualification.

V. CONCLUSION

A. There is no evidence from the mere fact of the plural form of the word "children" (tekna) in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 that will force us to conclude that it will not include a singular application.

B. There is no evidence from the fact of the plural "children" joined to the singular "man" in Titus 1:6 which will exclude the singular application.

C. There is no quality or characteristic in I Timothy 3 and/or Titus 1 that demands that an elder have more than one child.

Therefore, the contention that a man must have more than one believing child to be an elder has no basis in Scripture and is not bound by Jesus Christ.

Our thanks again to brethren Phillips and Miller for publishing articles on both sides of this issue.

"THE ONE CHILD ELDER"

Jimmy Tuten, Jr., Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

In another section of this periodical there appears an article bearing the same caption as this; written by brother Charles Boshart of Port Arthur, Texas. In this, a rebuttal is offered to my last article which appeared in this publication, April, 1961. In this composition I stated that I did not intend to carry the discussion any further since I did not want to impose upon the generosity of brethren Miller and Phillips. However, after receiving a note from brother Phillips accompanied by brother Boshart's article, suggesting that due to the time factor I might want to review the article in the same issue; I have decided to offer a brief review. Brother Phillips states his desire to "be completely fair to all concerned." I commend this policy for it speaks well of the paper they edit.

RESTATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

This discussion centers around the word 'tekna' translated "children" in I Timothy 3:4 and Titus 1:6. The issue *is not*: "Does the New Testament use this plural form 'tekna' so as to include a singular application." I have not taken the position that 'tekna' is susceptible *only of a plural application!* The term 'tekna' does admit the singular in some passages. To insist that 'tekna' is plural in every reference in which it appears is to do an injustice to God's Word. Since this is true, brother Boshart's reference to other passages is invalid.

The position that I have taken is that context of the passages under discussion (I Tim. 3 and Tit. 1) will not allow a singular application of the term 'tekna' (Children). I remind you that this discussion does not involve the other qualifications. Inspiration declares that the man desiring the office of a bishop *must* have "faithful children." If children is plural in the text as I contend, then all other qualifications are void if a man has only one child.

THE SINGULAR APPLICATION

As stated above, the plural application of 'tekna' in some references does not rule out the singular applications in others. Neither does the admission of the singular *argue for the same application* everywhere the word occurs. Does brother Boshart argue that since 'tekna' is admittedly singular in Matthew 3:9, it must include the singular in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1? I deny this! We must first consult the context in which the term appears and let the circumstances thereof determine its usage. Let me inject an illustration of this from the pen of brother Lloyd Moyer, with whom I am in agreement on the question under discussion:

Thayer lists a number of passages where the word is used. Among them is 2 John 1. 'The elder unto the elect lady (sing.) and her children (pi.). Would it be a scriptural exegesis of this passage to say that this lady had only one child? Brethren who say that because the word *children* denotes or represents the singular in other passages (it, jt) must represent the singular in I Tim. 3 and Tit. 1, would be forced to say that one child would fit the explanation of 2 John 1. The same could be said of verse 4 and 13 of 2 John (*Gospel Guardian*, Vol. 12, p. 771).

Under the paragraph: "The Use of Other Passages," brother Boshart says, "If it has a plural use *only* here then a basis will have to be sought for it other than the mere fact of the word's plural form." I am taking the passage literally, as translated, because I see *no basis* in the context for giving it a singular application. Sufficient evidence has not been offered to show that it should be otherwise.

TESTIMONY FROM SCHOLARS

Under this heading you will note that I am said to be "facetious." Brother Boshart should be a little more careful in forming conclusions such as this on the basis of one statement. I would not like to see the spirit of this discussion destroyed with such indictments. I am not trying to uphold "a position"; I am interested in the *truth* of this matter! I am not interested in *pleasantry* or *jesting* when it comes to such an important discussion. Reference to scholars was made purely for the purpose of sustaining the fact that the context will not allow the singular! No other application can possibly be made of this by those who have read my first two articles. If brother Boshart accepted my testimony, it had to be on this basis! If he did this, he gave up his original position. This was my point. I was not being facetious.

THE EVIDENCE FROM THE CONTEXT

It is argued that there is a lack of contextual evidence for the plural only application of 'tekna' in the passages cited. My conclusions are based upon the plural form 'tekna,' its relation to "if a man" (I Tim. 3:1-2), upon the testimony of scholars who say the singular application is not allowed and upon the over-all context itself. Concerning the latter, a man is to rule his house composed of one wife and children. I have never heard of a man with one child speaking of that child as "children." The experience demanded by the context shows that a plurality of children is involved. I fail to see how a man with one child would have the experience necessary to rule over a group of people in a flock of God. This I believe to be the characteristic underlying the passages.

CONCLUSION

I deny brother Boshart's dogmatic conclusion. In the light of what has been said in all of the articles appearing in this publication, we trust that the reader will weight for himself the facts and form his own conclusion. Though I have never met brother Boshart, I respect him for his convictions and the spirit in which he has written. I think personalities should be left out of all such discussions and the disputants should deal with the issues at hand. Thank you, editors, for allowing us to view our differences through your pages!

DENOMINATIONAL INFLUENCE

Maurice W. Jackson, Jr., Titusville, Fla.

In the early 1800s, Thomas Campbell, one of the great pioneers of the pure gospel of Christ in our good land, coined a slogan which has thrilled the hearts of many people. The slogan is: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." This is just another way of saying what the apostle Peter said in 1 Peter 4:11: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracle's of God." Surely this is a rule that we should not let slip.

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* says concerning the word "oracles" as used in 1 Peter 4:11: "Such men (who speak as the oracles of God — MJ) must keep their own personality in the background, adding nothing of their own to the inspired message as it comes to them." (pp. 2198, 2199). This is precisely the attitude that should characterize all Christians of all ages.

Take for example the word "church" as found in the Bible. It comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which means "the called out." In reference to the church of the New Testament the word "church" *always* designates those who have been "called out of the darkness of sin and into the light of the gospel of Christ"; or "God's *called out* body of people." Never, not once, is the word "church" used in the New Testament to designate a temporal structure of any kind.

The use of the word "church" in reference to the building in which *Christians* assemble is as foreign to the Bible as the Baptist Church is to the New Testament. Such a designation is wholly denominational in its nature, and all who so use the word fall miserably short of "speaking as the oracles of God" in this particular.

God's people of old were so influenced by foreigners that "their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language;" (Neh. 13:24) ... and Nehemiah reprimanded them severely for it. Do we not deserve the same when we speak of the church, and mean the building?

The Lord's church does not own a church — it may own a church-building, church-house, or meeting-house. The Lord's church is not located (except when assembled) on some corner in town — the church-building may be. We cannot build a church with nails, lumber, concrete, etc. — we can build a meeting-house, or a structure in which to assemble. We cannot clean the church with a broom — although the church may need cleaning. In fact, those who use the word "church" to refer to the church-building need some "cleaning-up" themselves ... or stand guilty of violating the command to "speak as the oracles of God."

SPIRITUAL GIFTS-No. 1

D. W. H. Shelton, Tampa, Florida

To many people the Holy Spirit is a mysterious Being that cannot be understood. Everything God wants us to know about His Holy Spirit has been revealed in His Holy Word. Since the Bible is the only instruction He has given to guide us, we *must* know the Bible and be led by it.

Some time ago a friend said to me, "I know that when I was baptized I received the gift of the Holy Spirit, but I don't know how I received him, how he affects me, or what he does for me." Naturally, I attempted to explain but I failed to do so to his satisfaction or mine. I remember that the apostle Peter had said, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (I Peter 3:15).

I began to study the Scriptures which teach of the Holy Spirit and to assemble them in order to be able to give an intelligent understanding of the operation of the Holy Spirit. I came to the conclusion that the theories of men have confused many people on the subject of Spiritual gifts, and only the Word of God can clarify and classify those gifts. This confusion is the result of the attempt *by men* to annul or destroy the New Testament doctrine of baptism in order to the remission of sins. Refusing to believe that baptism is essential to salvation disqualifies any person from understanding the operation of the Holy Spirit, for without baptism one can neither *contact* nor be *subject* to the Holy Spirit.

There are only 3 forms of Spiritual gifts revealed in the New Testament, the common gift, the laying on of apostles' hands, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let us study these gifts briefly and separately, in that order. First, by the common gift we mean the gift common to, and received by, all who are baptized into the name of Christ for the remission of their sins as promised by Peter on Pentecost. (Acts 2:38). In Acts 5:29-32 we find the apostles preaching, teaching, working together and speaking of the things which were transpiring daily, making the statement, "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Again, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. 4:6). These Scriptures set forth the gift that is received by men upon their obedience, at the time they become sons of God and because of that very fact; this gift of the Spirit is coexistent with sonship at the instant of becoming sons of God in Christ, that instant arrives at baptism, "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).

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not

made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be *clothed* upon with our house which is from heaven." (2 Cor. 5:1, 2).

These verses show that we are clothed now in the flesh but when we receive the Holy Spirit we are clothed with Christ. At which time one begins thinking about, looking forward to, and living in hope of the *full* clothing — eternal salvation.

On the day of Pentecost the faith or law of pardon was once delivered to the saints. (Jude v. 3). What Peter preached there that day was according to the testimony of God, the law of pardon for the Jew and Gentile.

Turning to Acts 2, we find the apostles in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit coming upon them, Peter standing up with the eleven and preaching that first recorded gospel sermon. Among other things he told those Jews they had killed Christ; they believed, but they knew they were not saved; we know, too, that they confessed. Verse 37 tells us that they were pricked in their hearts and cried out to Peter and the other apostles saying, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Notice, Peter did not tell them they had to hear the gospel, believe it and confess. He knew they had done that. He only told them to do what they had not done. In vs. 38, 39 he said, "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. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This included the Gentiles.

This law explicitly stated that all baptized believers should receive the common gift of the Holy Spirit. This gift is not only common or universal to all Christians, but is unavoidable to ever convert to God. Those who «re baptized into the name of Christ for the remission of sins cannot escape the gift of the Spirit, for Peter said *all* who do so *shall* receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, (Acts 2:38).

From Pentecost until now all who have been baptized into the name of Christ for the remission of sins have received the common gift of the Spirit. But let me add just here — from the death of the last apostle until now no one has ever received any other gift of the Spirit. In fact from Pentecost till now no one has ever performed a miracle except the apostles and those Christians upon whom an apostle had laid his hands.

This gift received at baptism is never attended by any miraculous power, but is the natural effect of entering into the fellowship, or the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19).

This gift is one cementing or combining one with the Deity or Godhead as an essential outgrowth of one's Spiritual birth, not a display of miracle working power at all. In Rom. 8:9 Paul said, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." But remember, one can be a member of the church and still not be living in the Spirit; *one* can put the Spirit out of his life and live wholly in the flesh.

This common gift is described in Ephe. 1:12-14. In v. 12, Paul is speaking of himself and the other apostles, and he may be speaking of the Jewish Christians. Here he says, "That *we* should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ. . ." The apostles trusted Christ before we did, and some of the Jews trusted him before the Gentiles. In the next two verses he is speaking of Christians in general and may be speaking to Gentiles in particular, since he is writing here to a Gentile congregation. Here he says, "In whom also *ye* trusted, after that *ye* heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that *ye*

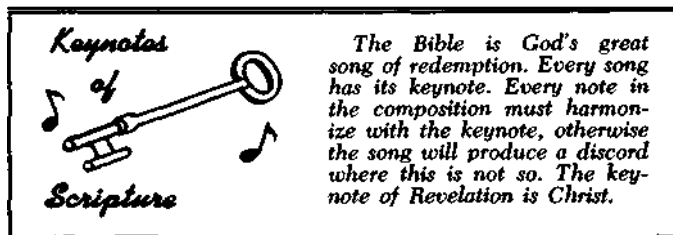
believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory."

These verses show that the gift of the Spirit is part payment in advance of the ideal or full clothing with Christ in person — eternal life. In 2 Cor. 5:1-7 the earnest is seen as a partial or temporary clothing till we reach the eternal or perfect state. This gift received at baptism, then, is the down payment on our eternal salvation, for it pays for all the sins we have committed up to that time. Physical life and Spiritual life work on the same principle. To illustrate — suppose we buy furniture on the installment plan, we make a down payment, but if we fail to keep up the payments we not only lose the down payment, we lose the furniture.

When we become a Christian we make the down payment on our eternal life, but we must keep up the payments, we must live a true Christian to the end of this life or we will not only lose credit for all the good we may have done here, but in the end lose our souls.

The gift we have been studying so far is the gift common to and received by all Scripturally baptized persons. We now turn to the second gift — the laying on of the apostle hands ----- this gift is wholly distinct from the first gift and does not affect it at all. The first gift always, immediately, followed baptism and never at any time imparted miracle working power that could not be seen. Jesus explained this very beautifully (John 3:8). He said "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This verse tells us that although we see people baptized who are born of the water and of the Spirit, who receive the common gift of the Spirit, we see them go down into the water and come up out of the water but we never see the Spirit. The baptism of Christ is the only baptism on record where the Spirit could be seen, and *was* seen by men, and then he was disguised in the form of a dove. No one has ever seen the Holy Spirit in his true form for he is invisible.

(Continued Next Issue)



H. F. SHARP, Conway, Arkansas -----

BOOK OF JOSHUA

As we continue our study of the Bible, God's Song of Redemption, we now notice the book of Joshua. To be sure that the notes of the song of Redemption harmonize and do not discord, we note the name of Joshua in the Hebrew is the same as Jesus in the Greek language.

In the 7th chapter of the Acts of Apostles Stephen refers to, "as the time drew near," and shows clearly that it refers to the children of Israel possessing the Land of Canaan. This is his (Stephen's) reference to the promise as he spake by the Holy Spirit. Clearly then it seems that we can think of the book of Joshua as the book of possession. As we note a statement in the book of 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." Here is a truth that completely stops the advance of the premillennialist who tell us that the Land has not been possessed and in the future there will be a possession of the land of Palestine by the Jewish people in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham regarding his seed and the land promise. Joshua, however, settles in the minds of those who love the Bible, and believe it, that such will not occur, because God has kept his promise and Joshua so declares.

In Hebrew 4 we find the rest for which the people in the Land of Egypt, as slaves desired, and for which they sighed, was not given to them by Joshua and Jesus will provide that for all the faithful as we possess the beautiful promised land of the redeemed when Christ comes to claim His own and take them to live with him throughout all eternity.

Other great lessons from the book of Joshua give the fall of Jericho and sing beautifully of how we by faith receive God's promises after that faith in us acts in harmony with God's law concerning us. It is not by faith alone that the walls of Jericho fell but by faith as their faith caused them to march around the walls one time each day for six days and on the seventh day marched around 7 times, being led by the priests as they blew on the ram's horns and the people shouted with a mighty shout — Then the gift of God came to them. It was a conditional gift and they received it by faith. Heaven is a gift, conditioned on our being faithful to Him and His laws till the grim reaper comes and we can be taken by angels to live in that city foursquare.

We are told also of the extra ordinary person called "Captain of the Lord's Hosts" who came and fought for them. The Lord will fight our battles with us but we must honor Him in obedience.

In conclusion, in Joshua, the Keynote may well be possession and surely it is in harmony with the Great Song of Redemption revealed by the Holy Spirit through the Apostles, the Son of God has spoken to us.

SALVATION - REPENTANCE No. 5

Thomas G. O'Neal, Jasper, Ala.

Someone has described repentance as the hardest command of God for one to obey. Yet many New Testament writers demanded repentance, (Mt. 3:1-2; Mk. 1:14-15; Acts 20:21; 2 Pet. 3:8-9). Repentance is a subject that is not preached on nearly enough today and is less practiced!

After one has heard the gospel of Christ, believed it with all of his heart, he then needs to repent of his sins in order to be forgiven by God. Peter told believers to "repent and be baptized" or "repent and be converted" "for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38, 3:19).

People mistake many things for true repentance! What is repentance? Negatively, repentance is not conviction of sin because when Agrippa was convicted of his sins and realized he needed to be just a Christian, he had not repented. (Acts 26:27-29). Repentance is not fear, for we read in Acts 24:24-27 of Felix who trembled at Paul's preaching, but had not repented. Again, a change of life does not necessarily represent repentance. John, the baptist, called upon the

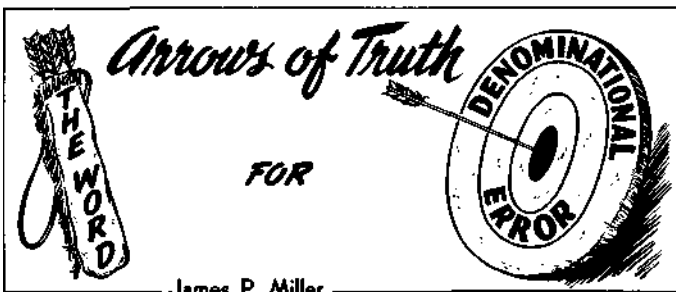
Pharisees and Sadducees, who came to his baptism, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. (Mt. 3:7-8).

Repentance is a change of mind produced by the goodness of God. (Rom. 2:4), and godly sorrow, (2 Cor. 7:10), resulting in a change or reformation in one's life. (Mt. 21:28-29). Jesus talked about the son that said he would not go work in his father's vineyard, but later he repented and went. His mind was changed from not being willing to work to a willingness to work and his life was reformed and he turned to working in his father's vineyard. Until an alien sinner has made up his mind to stop sinning and proves it by a new or reformed life, true repentance has not taken place! This also is true with the Child of God who has sinned.

Repentance has its characteristics. True repentance is sincere and honest. We cannot repent with mental reservation. Our deeds are open and before the Lord. (Heb. 4:12-13). Some who act like they are repenting remind one of a boy on the farm trying to catch his horse in the pasture, when he is holding out in front of him an ear of corn and at the same time holding a bridle behind his back. Many want to hold to the Lord where others can observe, but at the same time want to continue in sins that "to man's eyes are hidden." Repentance that is not sincere is not true repentance, but just a form. Also repentance will as far as possible make restitution. Jesus tells of Zacchaeus in Lk. 19:1-10, who if he had taken anything falsely, that he restored it fourfold. Many have never learned that true repentance requires restitution. If a man has been a horse thief in his life and wants to obey the gospel, it is not enough for him to stop stealing other horses, but he must restore those horses that he has stolen that are in his barn. If he has not the convictions of heart to return the stolen horses, he has not truly repented!

Many probably would follow the Lord Jesus Christ, were it not necessary for them to repent. But sin has such a clutch on them that they are not willing to pay the price and shake themselves free from the shackles of sin and follow Christ. The sinner will not quit his bottle, his adultery, his stealing, lying, etc., to turn to the Lord. How sad it is to see one burdened with sin and will not throw off the burden of sin and follow Him who did no sin.

The Bible teaches *all*, saint or sinner, must repent of their sins or perish. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Lk. 13:3, 5). Paul calls upon the men of Athens to repent in view of the coming judgment. God has a day appointed to judge the world by Christ, thus men need to be prepared to meet Christ when he sits upon the judgment throne. (Acts 17:30-31).



IMPOSSIBLE APOSTASY

The doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy is simply stated as "falling from grace." Those who hold to this position in religion believe that a child of God once saved can never be lost. Regardless of what he does or does not do, his destiny

is fixed when he believes. This is an aftermath of the teaching of John Calvin and the doctrine of predestination. As has often been stated, Calvin taught three basic principles. First, if you were not among the "elect" you could not be saved. Second, if you were one of the "elect" you could never be lost. Third, all of this was fixed before the foundation of the world. It seems strange that those who deny two-thirds of this teaching would hold to the principle of security for the believer.

In the two letters to Timothy, the great apostle Paul calls Timothy's attention to six things that can happen to one's faith. Since those who teach that the redeemed are in no danger, regardless of any action on their part, also teach that salvation is by "faith only." It is easy to see that if one is saved by "faith only" and he loses or destroys the very thing that saves, he would be lost in the judgment. This is emphasized by the use of the word ONLY. If faith is the only thing that has to do with man's part in salvation and he loses or destroys that, then he has lost the ONLY thing that saves.

Using the King James as the text, let us study these seven dangers to our faith.

1. The first term used in connection with the destruction of our faith is found in I Tim. 1:19, "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck ..." It would be hard to find a more powerful term than SHIPWRECK. The idea here is the complete loss of faith just as a ship is completely lost at sea, never to be of use again.

2. In I Tim. 4:1, we have the word DEPART used in connection with our faith. It reads like this, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." Here we have the idea of the child of God walking off and leaving the faith. The faith is one place and he moves to another. In this case, the faith once in his heart is no longer there. He has departed from the faith.

3. Perhaps one of the most graphic terms used in connection with faith is the simple term DENY. Paul puts tremendous emphasis on this by saying in I Tim. 5:8 that the man who does not provide for his own has DENIED the faith and is worse than an infidel. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Here the faith is denied by what a man fails to do.

4. It is possible to ERR from the faith or as some versions put it, to be "led astray." We find this statement in I Tim. 6:21, "Which some professing have erred concerning the faith." It is interesting to note that although the New English Translation takes great liberty with the original, it translated the passage, "... for many who lay claim to it have shot far wide of the faith." In I Tim. 6:10, "for the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have ERRED from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." It is this passage that finds the Revised Version reading, "led astray from the faith."

5. Every reader knows what happens when something is OVERTHROWN. It means it is lost or destroyed. This strong language is used by the apostle in connection with the faith of some Christians. In II Tim. 2:18, in speaking of false brethren who had already lost their faith, "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

6. Young widows brought damnation upon themselves in I Tim. 5:11 when they CAST OFF their first faith, "But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; having damnation,

because they have cast off their first faith."

In reviewing these seven passages that tell of the six things that can happen to our faith, we find six unanswerable arguments that a child of God can fall from the grace and favor of God and be lost in Hell. It seems almost impossible that one could believe he is saved by faith only without also believing that if he lost that which saved him he would then be lost. Check them again as the aged Paul writes to the young Timothy to remind him that the Christian can make SHIPWRECK, DEPART, DENY, LED ASTRAY, ERR, OVERTHROW, and CAST OFF his faith. It is little wonder that the men who believe this remnant of Calvinism are no longer willing to defend it. Let the reader beware lest these things happen to his own faith. The Hebrew writer in Heb. 3:12 expresses it this way, "Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

GIVING THE **ANSWERS** FOR OUR HOPE

Address questions to:
35 West Par Ave.
Orlando, Florida

I PETER 3:15

— Marshall E. Patton —

"UNWARRANTED OPINIONS, THINGS LAWFUL, THINGS COMMANDED"-A REVIEW

Because of the wide circulation given brother D. Ellis Walker's tract, UNWARRANTED OPINIONS, THINGS LAWFUL, THINGS COMMANDED, brother H. E. Phillips has ask me to review the same in this column. While I am always happy to expose error and exalt truth, I am somewhat hesitant to comply with this request. Brother Walker has his tract so copyrighted that I am almost afraid to read any part of it out loud for fear of violating the law. His copyright says that no part of it may be reproduced in any way whatsoever unless written permission is obtained from him. Since he has consistently and continually refused others who seek to review his teaching this permission, I shall press him no further in the matter, but shall proceed to review his tract just as honestly and objectively as I can under these circumstances. Of course, since he hides behind the law with a copyright that allows no part of his tract to be reproduced in any way whatsoever, he can always cry "misrepresentation." However, honest souls who read his tract and this review can properly evaluate such charges.

In this review I propose to show:

1. That while he affirms a worthy purpose in behalf of his tract in the first paragraph thereof, he fails miserably to accomplish his objective.

2. That while it is true, as he says, a failure to clearly understand and distinguish between unwarranted opinions, things lawful, and things commanded results in confusion and disobedience, his efforts results in more confusion and disobedience than nearly anybody's, and, therefore, he is about the last person on earth to try to enlighten anyone on such matters.

3. That unwarranted opinions are to be found in areas other than that identified by him, and that a failure to recognize this accounts for much of his confusion and error.

4. That he is wrong in trying to justify human judgment

in the area of specific commands. This, too, accounts for some of his inconsistencies and erroneous conclusions.

5. That he makes arbitrary rules concerning what he calls "things lawful" and species within a genus. He even contradicts himself on these matters.

6. That much of the time he dodges the real issue and engages a straw man in debate.

7. That he either does not know what the issue is on some matters or else deliberately misrepresents honest brethren.

8. That the whole tract shows gross ignorance of the things under study, clarifies little if anything, and adds confusion to confusion.

UNWARRANTED OPINIONS

Brother Walker's definition (page three) of unwarranted opinion limits such to the *how* of doing God's will when there is no revelation. His definition assumes the thing under consideration to be the will of God, hence, authorized in some way. But *how* this something is to be done is not revealed. This puts the *how* within an authorized genus or a generic command. Such opinions are not unwarranted! His definition identifies warranted opinions, yet he offers it as a definition of unwarranted opinions. On page eight he agrees that such opinions (species within a genus) are warranted because we have the privilege of determining such. Yet, on pages nine and ten he argues that such are not matters of opinion at all, but are matters of revelation — as much so as specific commands. Such is the confusion of brother Walker's tract throughout. Such confusion exist not only because of a lack of knowledge but also because brother Walker fails to express clearly what he really means. He is, therefore, a poor teacher to try to enlighten anyone on these matters. However, after putting together both his definition and his illustration, and after much honest, objective study of what he tries to say what he really means comes to light.

Brother Walker's illustration (2 Kings 5:11) shows that what he really means by an unwarranted opinion is far more limited than his definition. His illustration identifies prejudice (pre-judging) as a basis consideration in an unwarranted opinion. Hence, brother Walker's unwarranted opinion is one formed before hearing the will of God on the matter under consideration. Therefore, when one forms an opinion on a matter before going to the prophets of God through whom God's will is revealed, he is guilty of forming an unwarranted opinion. Thus, according to brother Walker's illustration, his unwarranted opinions are prejudicial opinions. We agree that such are unwarranted but deny that unwarranted opinions are limited to such.

Sometimes opinions are formed, taught, and acted upon that are contrary to that which *has been revealed*. Such are also separate and apart from divine revelation — in the sense of being *different*. For example, God has revealed his will on the kind of music to use in worship (Eph. 5:19), the time to observe the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7), and the act to be performed in baptism (Col. 2:12), yet, in spite of this revelation some form, teach, and act upon opinions contrary to this revelation: These, too, are unwarranted!

According to Webster unwarranted opinions are unjustifiable opinions. Such opinions may also be found in that area designated by him as "things lawful." According to brother Walker on page three of his tract, whether or not "things lawful" may be done depends upon circumstances and their effect upon others. As proof he gives Rom. 14:15,21; 1 Cor. 8; 10:32,33. Furthermore, he says that such are governed by expediency and cites 1 Cor. 6:12; 1 Cor. 10:23. Thus,

(Please Turn to Page 12)

The News Letter Reports

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

E. L. **Flannery** began work with the Northeast church in Gainesville, Florida, July 1. He did a very successful work with the Downtown church in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, during the past two years. The Northeast congregation in Gainesville is doctrinally sound and faithful in the work of the Lord. With brother Flannery moving to Gainesville to labor with this church, we believe it will be one of the most promising works in north Florida. If you know of anyone who plans to attend the University of Florida, tell them of this good church. **Herschel Patton** of Timberland Drive church in Lufkin, Texas will move to labor with the Downtown church in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, in August.

DEBATE IN WINTER HAVEN

Thomas G. Butler of the Lake Weir church in Lakeland met R. O. **Varnum** in a discussion in the building of the Havendale church of Christ in Winter Haven, June 25-28. On Monday night Butler affirmed that instrumental music in worship is forbidden in worship. On Tuesday night Varnum affirmed that water baptism is to be administered in the name of Jesus only. On Wednesday night Butler affirmed that there are three separate persons in the Godhead. On Thursday night Varnum affirmed that the ministry of the church has the same supernatural powers today that it had in the days of the apostles. Brother Butler ably handled the truth throughout the discussion.

GOSPEL MEETINGS

J. P. Miller preached at College View church in Florence, Ala. June 24 to July 1. **Curtis Flatt** is the preacher with this church . . . **Weldon Warnock** was the speaker in a gospel meeting at Mooresville Pike, Columbia, Tenn., June 24 to July 1 . . . Jimmy Thomas was at First Street in Lawrenceburg, Tenn., June 24 to July 1.

Bill Cavender of Longview Texas, was in a meeting at Almanville, Tennessee church, June 18-27 . . . **Delton Porter** was in a meeting at South Hall church in Franklin, Tenn., June 17-24 . . . **Brooks Webb** was in a gospel meeting at West Main St. church in Woodbury, Tenn., June 24-July 1 . . . Yater Tant of Ft. Smith, Ark, was in a gospel meeting with the church in Decatur, Ga., July 1-8. His son, David Tant, is soon to begin work with this church. W. C. **Hinton** has been the preacher in Decatur, but is to leave soon for work in Japan.

Cecil Willis was the speaker in a meeting at N. Griffith Blvd., Gary, Ind., July 17-27 . . . J. F. **Dancer** was in a meeting at West Gary, Ind., June 10-17 . . . **Franklin T. Puckett** of Dyersburg, Tenn., was in a gospel meeting at West End in Franklin, Tenn., June 10-17 . . . The Holden Heights church in Orlando, Fla. is sending their preacher, **Earl Fly**, to Spring Creek, Tenn., July 1-8 for a meeting . . . **Harris J. Dark** was in a meeting at Shelbyville Mills church in Shelbyville, Tenn., June 10-17 . . . **Herschel Patton** was in a meeting at Washington St. church in Russellville, Ala., July 17-24 . . . E. L. **Flannery** will be in a gospel meeting at Eastside church in Athens, Ala., Aug. 19-26 . . . **Earl Fly** was the speaker in a meeting at Azelea Park church in Orlando, Fla., May 27-June 3.

Everett Mann was in a good meeting at Frostproof June 10-17. Two were baptized and one restored. The attendance was very good throughout this meeting. Walt Weaver has been preaching in Frostproof. Several years ago brother Mann

preached for this congregation regularly . . . **Hugh Davis** of Lake Wales, Fla., preached in a good meeting with the Temple Crest church in Tampa, June 24-July 1. **Rhymer Knight** is the local man with Temple Crest. . . **Bobby F. Owen** of Tampa, Fla., was in a gospel meeting in Brandon, June 10-17 . . . **Curtis E. Flatt** was the speaker in a gospel meeting at Nebraska Avenue church in Tampa, Fla., July 8-15. **C. L. Overturf, Sr.**, is the local preacher.

ON TO PERFECTION

Warren Rainwater, Plainfield, Ind.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." (Phil. 3:13, 15).

Man is ever engaged in activity either acceptable to God or offensive to him. Our lives are lived, for the most part, with self as the most important cog in the wheel of time. Generally we are more concerned with making a living which will allow us to maintain a position within our social realm than pleasing God. Nevertheless, there are those who are disposed to arrange their affairs to please the giver of spirits. This man is a Christian. This man sees the need to go on to perfection in this life.

God, desiring to give us the very best, has seen to it in his plan to equip us with certain endowments so that our lives can be lived with satisfaction while here we dwell. These aspects of life are noticed in the Bible in one form or another. Shakespeare divided life into seven stages, we are told. Others have used their imagination and called these stages the tender teens, teachable twenties, tireless thirties, fiery forties, forcible fifties, serious sixties, sacred seventies, and aching eighties. I would not attempt such a division but believe we must recognize at least three categories of life as we go on to perfection. These categories are past, present, and future. Also, these three are ruled by memory, reason, and hope.

Memory serves us as we conquer the past and use it for our own edification in the present. By its use, we are able to sort out those things in our experience and profit in the present as we apply what we have learned from the past. Memory will not let us soon forget the mistakes of yesteryear and will serve to dampen our enthusiasm for like adventure today. If properly used, we can profit by our use of memory. However, we should not allow bad memories to keep us from pressing on to perfection. This can be done by forgetting those things which are behind and marching onward under the banner of Christ to a full life in the gospel. Too many fall because of past mistakes. They view the scene with remorse and give up the fight. Paul no doubt could still remember his acts as he attacked the church and tried to stop its progress but he didn't stop working to overcome the mistakes of the past.

Reason is the controlling factor in man's mind for the present. By its use we are able to understand the demands

Return Postage Guaranteed

Phillips Publications

P. O. Box 17244

TAMPA 12, FLORIDA

of the present and are able to determine our duties to God. Reason is used in studying the word of God. Christianity is a reasoned life. We weigh the blessings against the wages of sin and if we use good judgment, we are able to see the advantages of being a Christian. Paul reasoned about righteousness and the life to come. The man who reasons will be a servant of God. The one who is faulty in his reason will serve the dictates of self ego. Yet, reason has its enemies in this world. Ignorance, prejudice, and fleshly desire tend to offset our abilities to render good judgment. These can be overcome, nevertheless, by study, attitude, and self-control. Good reason will always dictate a course pleasing to God.

The other area of life is the future. This is where the hope of man exists. Hope to the Christian is the anchor of the soul. The ship is held steadfast in the storm by the anchor. It doesn't keep the storm from coming but it allows the ship to ride out the waves. Hope does not keep away the cares of life but it helps us to overcome them and put our trust in the future in God's hands. We might say that hope embraces desire, expectation, and patience. With these we are able to ride out the waves of life while we march on to perfection. Therefore, let us be more Christ-like day by day. Let us use the past to help in the present as we prepare for the future with God and the angels. Our use of the present will determine the future.

Giving the Answers for Our Hope

(Continued from Page 10)

even according to brother Walker "things lawful" are governed by divine rules. Therefore, when human opinions on "things lawful" are in harmony with the divine rules governing such they are warranted. However, should one ignore these rules and insist upon doing something just because it is within the area of "things lawful," such would be unwarranted. Brother Walker should recognize such as unwarranted opinions as well as those identified by him as such.

Then again, unwarranted opinions are also possible in determining the use of species within a divinely authorized genus. Brother Walker refers to such as related things in a generic command. Such matters are governed by the same divine rules which he applies to what he calls "things lawful" — brother Walker to the contrary notwithstanding! His ipse dixit on applying the same rules to what he calls "things lawful" and to species within a genus will not suffice for honest souls. I challenge him to deny that species within a divinely authorized genus are lawful. If lawful, then they are to be governed by the rules that apply to such — his arbitrary ruling to the contrary notwithstanding.

THINGS LAWFUL

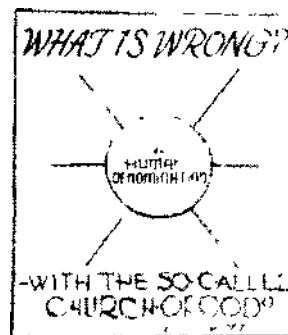
Brother Walker teaches on page four of his tract that it is wrong to apply the rules of Rom. 14:15,21; 1 Cor. 8; 10:32,33 to related things within a generic command. In an effort to sustain this point he appeals to the Greek. He shows that "lawful" in 1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23 is translated from *exesti* and means that which is permitted. He then shows that "lawfully" in 2 Tim. 2:5 is translated from *nomimos* and

means "adhering to the rules." Concerning the former he says Paul would not be brought under the power of any (1 Cor. 6:12), and then he affirms that Paul never made such statement concerning a command of God. The context shows that his "command of God" refers to a generic command and related things within it. (See section on THINGS LAWFUL in his tract, especially last paragraph, page four.) Thus, he concludes that it is wrong to apply the rules governing "things lawful" to related things in a generic command. His conclusion and ruling are both wrong and arbitrary.

The Greek "*exesti*" identifies things within law or that which is permitted, hence, lawful. (1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23) Yet, even according to brother Walker, one's acceptability in the use of things lawful depends upon "adhering to the rules." In other words, he must do "things lawful" (*exesti*) "lawfully" (*nomimos*). *The same thing is true concerning related things within a genus.* Since related things within a genus are "lawful," then Paul's rules governing such do apply. Both brother Walker's "things lawful" and species within a genus depend upon circumstances for acceptability, (Rom. 14:15,21; 1 Cor. 8; 10:32,33) Hence, both must be used "lawfully" (*nomimos*). Paul would not be brought under the power of related things within a genus any more than he would other things "lawful." Thus, brother Walker is wrong on this point.

Brother Walker classifies church support of human institutions, ecumenical elderships, and other matters of current issue as related things within a generic command. He is wrong about this! But if it were so, he is wrong again when he refuses to use such lawfully (*nomimos*), and even forbids the application of divine rules to such! For this reason he and others like him run roughshod over the conscience of sincere brethren. They are wrong in their position, wrong in their doctrine, and wrong in their practice. (MORE TO FOLLOW)

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE SO-CALLED CHURCH OF GOD?



This is a book of debate notes used by Brother Miller in his debates with Thomas O. Dennis and Billy Sunday Myers of the "Church of God" in the spring and fall of 1956. These debates were held in Charleston, South Carolina and Lancaster, South Carolina.

The book is well worth the price of \$1.50. Those who are interested in knowing the false positions of the "Church of God" will greatly benefit by reading this work. Order your copy today.

Price \$1.50