

# 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

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## IS IT THE WAY?

James P. Miller

We are all familiar with the emphasis that our liberal brethren are putting on multi-congregational action. By this I mean the city-wide meeting in evangelism, the exodus type of "mission work" and the general pooling of congregations and resources in every other field. It seems that they have just about reached the place when they have lost confidence in the ability of a single congregation to do any of the things the church was established to do. To those who are familiar with the history of the church this is not new. It is exactly what happened to the "Christian Church" little more than a century ago. God placed the responsibility for the advancement of his kingdom on the individual (Matt. 5:13-16). This is the great message of the sermon on the mount. Not only does it teach the worth of the individual in the sight of God, but it teaches that through the individual the Father is to be glorified. Through the years brethren shifted much of this responsibility to the church, and while the church is God's preaching agency (I Tim. 3:15), brethren made the church responsible for many things that individual Christians should have done, that the church "be not charged." Someone has said that we reached the point where we could not entertain another family of God's people in our home without making it a church affair and in some cases sending the church the bill so the church could "have the glory."

With the rise of liberalism in the body of Christ with the desire to improve on the "old paths", brings into being an attempt to not only set the universal church to work, but to activate large groups of churches into action. I call this multi-congregational activity for lack of a better name. All of the churches in a city, county or state. This is not only unscriptural, but I am raising the question here of its efficiency. Is it the effective way to do the Lord's work? We should know from the history of the last division that it is not the best way. The Missionary Society was formed on this very plea, that through the society the brethren would be more efficient and effective in their work. They would be able to grow faster and reach more people both at home and abroad. It took the better part of a century for God's people to prove this was not true. We slowly gained momentum until we were able not only to out grow our digressive brethren but to become one of the fastest growing groups in the world.

Let us take as a case in point the great meeting held in Nashville the week of October 7 last year. Tremendous effort of every kind went into this meeting. Ninety-two churches were directly connected with the meeting to say nothing of hundreds more who came to fill the new city auditorium in Nashville. One of the best preachers in the liberal ranks was chosen to do the preaching. The book published about the meeting does not give the cost, but the meeting had to cost thousands of dollars. Almost one hundred thousand people attended. We would believe that another Pentecost was in the making, but alas the net result was 16 **baptized** and 15 restored. This is astonishing when you think of the number that heard the gospel. Here is the quotation and the explanation from the book itself on page 18 of the preface.

"While responses to the Lord's invitation were received each evening — a total of sixteen baptized and fifteen restorations resulted — the basic plan was to preach the gospel and encourage obedience that would be reflected in the work of every congregation in the area, rather than to strive for large numbers of additions at the auditorium. This course has been fully justified by results."

The same writer in the preface on page nine states that "the purpose was to hold a simple gospel meeting". Just think of it; the purpose is, hold a simple gospel meeting, but the basic plan is not to have people obey the gospel when they hear it. Be this as it may, however, the point is this, regardless of how many were baptized later back in the local congregations, this is where the effective action should have taken place in the beginning.

With 92 churches co-operating and 16 baptized, the result was less than one fifth of a person per congregation. In other words, the direct gain to the Kingdom of Christ in new babes was .17 for each congregation and in those restored even less than this. If the hundreds of other congregations from as far away as Alabama and Kentucky were counted, the figure would be far smaller still. The truth of the matter is that this is the story in most, if not all of these efforts. Another recently reported in one of the great papers among the liberals was more successful, but when the figures were broken down the average was about 1.4 souls saved per congregation and less than ninety present for each congregation each night.

Even though I have been in meeting work all of my adult life, I do not know what a long time

average in results for gospel meetings would be. At this writing, I am near the end of a meeting with the South 231 Congregation in Owensboro, where Bobby Witherington preaches. We have had seven to obey the gospel thus far. In the meeting before this one with the North Miami Church and Bobby Thompson there were three baptized and three restored. At this rate of growth, the multi-congregational efforts, even if "the basic plan was not to save souls at the very time the gospel, God's power to save, was preached, the addition should run into the hundreds. If the basic plan was to save souls when the gospel was preached, it should run into several hundred. The very fact that the individual congregations had to do the final work is proof enough that such meetings are not effective. In the paragraph just above, the one quoted on page 18, we find the three-fold purpose of the city wide meeting.

"We had planned, first of all, to hold a successful gospel meeting that would honor God, Christ and his church; next, we had hoped to make it an occasion that would gain respect for the Lord's church whenever the meeting was publicized; and finally, we had hoped to inspire individual congregations to want to do more for the Lord."

How well the first objective was achieved has already been discussed. How much respect on the part of the world it brought the church, I will leave others to judge, but **WHAT A STRANGE WAY TO INSPIRE INDIVIDUAL CONGREGATIONS.** The entire multi-congregational idea is away from the effective work of the local church.

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## Editorial . . .

H. E. PHILLIPS

We are amazed at the boasting and bragging of success by false teachers. I suppose it has always been the practice, but all this braggadocio is nothing but whistling in the dark and singing by the graveyard. The Catholics brag about God's approval of their position by their prosperity in numbers and finances. The Holiness people boast about their righteousness shown in their success in miracles and large folio wings. It seems to me that if a righteous cause is proved by material success and large numbers, the Catholics, Methodists, Mohammedans, etc. would have the edge over false teachers among us. Of course, no false teacher remains in the Lord's church, but some who once stood with the Lord have left his word and his church.

I recently read a report of a Texas preacher who preached in two or three meetings in the state of Florida and reported how the "loyal churches" are prospering in the state and "antism" is dying out. That report was about as reliable as the report of a trip through Russia directed by a Communist. Of course, you would see only what the Communist wanted you to see. But if large, expensive buildings, and vast programs of work be the standards of success, I would like to direct attention to the denominational buildings and programs of work. The difference between these activities and real work in the service of the Lord is that thing called "scriptural obedience." No work, no matter how big, is successful unless it is scriptural in all respects. Liberalism is not making the progress these reports indicate.

While I am on his subject of boasting and bragging, I noticed in a magazine called Revival, published by the fake healer, Leroy Jenkins Evangelistic Association, Inc. of Tampa, Florida, January and February issues, a story called "One of this generation's most outstanding testimonies of conversion."

It is the David Harrell Story—"24 years . . . Church of Christ minister . . . now praying for the sick." Harrell "testifies" in this article that he was baptized at the age of 12 and began preaching at age 17. He preached for 24 years and then "learned" he was wrong when "I went to the tent expecting a show." He states that in passing by the tent of Leroy Jenkins, the "Man with the Miracle Arm", he had the desire to go back and hear this man. This happened in Daytona Beach, Florida. He went to the tent and sat three rows back from the front and listened to Jenkins preach. He claims to have witnessed a number of miraculous healings by this "man of God." He then went back to "my congregation in Port Orange, Fla." and described what he had seen during their mid-week Bible study. Of course, the people there "criticized" his views, but he went back to the tent later and "was baptized with the Holy Ghost." He gave "testimony" of his experiences in a public meeting soon after his "conversion." Harrell said, "I knew the Church of Christ needed to be warned of the error they were in concerning the Holy Ghost. . . . When I went back to the Bible class on that Wednesday night I told them I had some things to discuss with them. They had already heard what I had done." He claims to have made this proposition to the brethren that night: "Well brethren, I will make a bargain with you. I will promise not to speak any more of this Holy Ghost if you will do one thing. You will go and get several ministers together and we will come together and reason this thing out in this church building. We will not have a debate and get angry, but will ask questions and will answer them with God's Word. Tell the ministers to leave their reference books, encyclopedias and concordances at home. We want the Word of God."

He tells of efforts by the brethren at Port Orange to get some minister to discuss the matter with him, but "the first three or four refused to discuss the matter." Then "One minister from the Church of Christ in Orlando agreed to talk with me in private-regarding these matters. He would not agree to open discussion before the church."

My, how this man brags that no minister in that section would discuss the matter with him. Well, let me tell him and you this: I know some ministers who will DEBATE the subject with him PUBLICLY, ANYTIME! I know most of the preachers in Central Florida, and those who are loyal to the Book will debate with him when he is ready. Only liberal brethren do not now believe in debating.

But if he is not accommodated in Orlando, Florida, I know at least two in Tampa willing to meet him or Leroy Jenkins in public discussion. Their initials are: James P. Miller and H. E. Phillips. Try us and see!

## AUTONOMY OF CHURCHES — NO. 2

Oaks Gowen, Bradenton, Fla

I set forth three principles in the last issue of this paper upon which I believe the doctrine of "Church Autonomy" rests, namely: (1) **Nature of Organization.** It is local. (2) **Equality of Churches.** All have

the same head, foundation, structure, and identity. (3) **Cooperation of Churches.** The care Paul took in providing things, (arrangements included,) whereby churches were able to engage concurrently in the same work by choosing their own messengers, shows respect for the independence of each congregation.

**How Churches Cooperate Is a Matter of Proper Inquiry!** Titus was moved by Paul's exhortation to go unto the churches in behalf of the poor saints in Jerusalem, and was "also chosen of the churches to travel with" Paul. (II Cor. 8:16-21.) Paul accepted the **right** of the churches to **inquire** as to Titus' relationship to this work in which many churches were engaged. "Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you." (II Cor. 8:23a.) If, as some contend today, there is no pattern for congregational cooperation, then it was of little moment what Titus' relationship to Paul and the churches was, it would make no difference, and churches would have no right to even inquire concerning such. Not only was it right and proper for them to inquire of Titus' relation to this cooperative work, but they had every right and reason to inquire concerning the position of all the brethren traveling with Paul and Titus. In the last part of the verse under study, Paul said, "or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ." (II Cor. 8:23b.) As messengers of the churches, they were chosen by the churches themselves, and had a right to be agents of the churches which chose them. But, again, if our "no-pattern brethren" be right in their teaching that "there is no pattern", then, I cannot see any grounds for the right of inquiry by churches in this matter in the least, nor can I account for Paul's patient answer to such inquiry.

Individuals May Serve As Messengers of Churches, but Churches Cannot Serve As Messengers. Epaphroditus is said by Paul to be a messenger of the church at Philippi which ministered to Paul's wants by bearing the things sent to him by the brethren at Philippi. "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. . . . But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent **from** you, an odour of a sweet smell a sacrifice well-pleasing to God." (Phil. 2:25; 4:18.) A messenger is one sent by another to another bearing something, either word or deed, for the one to whom he is sent. A messenger is bound by the will of the one sending him; and he is subordinate and subservient unto the one for whom he serves as messenger. An individual might be the messenger of any number of other individuals and churches. Titus and "the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches," (II Cor. 8:18) were "chosen of the churches" as messengers to bear the liberality of the churches in Galatia, Macedonia, and in Corinth unto the poor saints in Jerusalem. (II Cor. 8: 1, 19, 23; I Cor. 16: 1-3.) The apostles, as messengers of Christ, could speak only that which Christ commanded them; they were at all times subservient to the will of Christ.

Since messenger and agency requires subordination to another, churches CANNOT serve as agents and messengers of other churches and institutions without being subordinate and subservient to them. When they do this, they cease to be equal, and their autonomy is surrendered. There is not, and hear me, one single example in the New Testament where one church ever served as a messenger or agent of another church or churches. But without this example you can never establish authority for the "sponsorial church" cooperation. Hence, those who defend such an arrangement among churches deny in practice one of the three principles upon which autonomy rests. (continued next issue)



I am now in a meeting in Cleveland, Ohio and have before me a copy of the May 21st issue of the Firm Foundation in which the editor writes in his editorial, "Why We Like The Middle." To our brother, if language can be depended upon, the middle is to oppose the college in the budget and defend the orphan home. I think our brother has his position rightly defined. This does put him in the middle; he is in favor of one human institution living off of the Lord's money, but definitely opposed to another. Throughout the ages the so-called "middle of the road" has appealed to every man who does not want to take a stand. Jesus was scathing in his denunciation of the Jews who sought the middle. (Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23). It may be true that in the affairs of men the "middle" has its advantages, for whether it is in government, industry or social affairs, men have written the rules and none are perfect. This is not true, however, in the affairs of God. When the instructions come from an all wise God there can be no middle ground. When we talk of the "middle of the road" we are talking of compromise. To illustrate let us ask the following questions:

Where is the "middle" on the question of inspiration?

Where is the "middle" on the question of creation? Where is the "middle" on the question of divinity?

Where is the "middle" on the question of the purpose of baptism? Where is the "middle" on the question of the time for the Lord's Supper?

The answer is clear to every reader: There is no middle in any of these, for God told us what is right and all we need to do is believe it. It seems that all thinking men who believe the Bible to be the word of God can see this. **WHEN A THING COMES FROM GOD THERE IS NO MIDDLE GROUND.**

Our brother should break down his position a little and seek the middle on other matters. Where is the middle on the "college in the budget" question? If there is a middle on the broader question of institutionalism, where is the middle on the things he opposes? Is he willing to go along with the brethren who seek the middle on the "hospital" question and the "recreation" question and all others? Will he sit by and allow the church to become the handmaiden to institutions the God of heaven did not found and of which the word of God knows nothing? Here is his statement:

"The leaders of this far-left wing are better educated and far more cunning than the leaders of the far-right wing. They have to their advantage the ecumenical spirit that is in the air, and the rebellion of the brotherhood against the earlier rightest extreme. Plus this (and it is a very potent factor): they have the unconscious aid of any and all who would advocate that the church be the servant of the various projects and institutions, rather than the gospel preaching, misery-alleviating institution the Lord planned for it to be."

To analyze what our brother says, it is this: there should be no middle when men try to make the church the servants of projects and institutions. He puts it like this:

"Such elements as the college-in-the-budget sentiment will tend to break down the age old concept of letting the church simply be the church, rather than handmaiden to other things, by which we have stood through the years, and which we believe the Bible teaches."

Although the construction here is a little difficult to understand, I am sure that the thing we have stood for through the years is to let the church be the church. Where is the middle of the road on letting the church be the church? The brethren who are making the church the handmaiden of the college are wrong and there is no middle ground on putting the college in the budget. If there is middle ground, would it be to put it in for just a little, or to put it in one time and leave it out the next? Where would the "middle ground" be in this case? Do not the brethren who want the school to live off of the church have a right to take the same attitude toward our brother that he takes against those on the right? If what our brother says is true, and the men on what he calls the left are better educated than those who are on what he calls the right, perhaps they will have better success understanding our brother. In the meantime we will continue to call attention to the fact that when God speaks there can be no middle ground.

## THE LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN THYATIRA

Curtis E. Flatt, Florence, Ala.

Read Revelation 2:18-29. Like others of the seven churches, nothing is known of the church at Thyatira other than this epistle. Lydia, whose conversion at Philippi in Acts 16, was from Thyatira. However, we know not whether she ever had any contact with the church at Thyatira. To this church Jesus sent a letter which is of great profit to us.

## INTRODUCTION

As we have already noticed in previous lessons, Jesus described himself in the introduction to each church with terms that indicate he was especially qualified to say the things which needed to be said. Jesus began by saying: "These things saith the Son of God." Whenever Jesus made reference to the fact that 'he was God's Son, there was usually not an ordinary situation. In a flagrant manner, this church had heaped to herself the wrong kind of teachers. And Jesus said, "These things saith the Son of God." As such, Christ was God's spokesman. (Heb. 1:1,2) As God's Son, he was the way for man to reach heaven (John 14:1-6). When people follow his instructions, they can be assured they will eventually reach God. When people, who follow Jesus, begin to depart from his instructions they somehow forget that God's Son has given the proper directions and that these directions lead to God. Any other instructions lead some other place. May we ever remember! Then Jesus described himself as one "who hath eyes like a flame of fire." There was so much which was amiss with this church and Jesus could see it all. Nothing is hidden from him. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13). Then Jesus said, "and his feet are like fine brass." Strength is his. Ability is his. Power is his. (Matt. 28:18). His feet are like fine brass.

### I KNOW THY WORKS

As in all seven letters, Jesus began by saying, "I know thy works." This statement neither condemns or commends but asserts that he knew all about them — good and bad. And though we have noticed this in previous lessons, it is good to be reminded that Jesus knows just as much about us today as he knew about these churches (John 2:24,25).

### I KNOW THY CHARITY

Jesus said: "I know . . . thy charity." Possession of charity or love is an absolute necessity in order to please God. We need to remember what Jesus told the lawyer in Matthew 22:37-40. "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Without love we just cannot please God. Love was the lacking thing with the church at Ephesus. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4). Love does so much. Love of brethren shows conversion (I John 3:14). Love of the brethren shows true discipleship (John 13:34,35). Love of brethren covers a multitude of sins (I Peter 4:8). Love of brethren shows our love of God (I John 5:1-3). Love of brethren leads brethren to forgive brethren (Col. 3:12-14). Love of brethren leads brethren to bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2). Love of the brethren leads to helping them (I John 3:17).

Love leads us to respect and obey God (Matt. 22:37-40). Yes, love does so much. However, in this day of turmoil in the churches when so many exalt loving each other as the answer to all problems, we ought to remember that love does not give us license to make law where God did not make law. Neither does it give us liberty to go beyond that which is written (I Cor. 4:6; II John 9). Neither does it give us license to teach false doctrine or to pollute the work and organization and mission and purity of the church and then cry that we ought to love each other more when someone condemns our sinful course. This church at Thyatira was known for her love, but she was corrupt as could be in doctrine and thereby condemned.

### I KNOW THY SERVICE

This church had other commendable things said about it. Jesus said further: "I know thy service." This church was diligent in her service or her ministry. This, more than likely, refers to her practice of caring for the physical needs of those to whom she had responsibility. Whatever it includes, the church at Thyatira performed commendably. The church is expected to perform that which she is charged to do. We must keep in mind that such is also included in being a Christian. However, we would do well to remember here that when too much emphasis is placed upon ministering to the material needs of man, invariably the idea of the social gospel develops. Although, many seem not to see it, this is one of the major problems in the church today.

### I KNOW THY FAITH

Jesus said then: "I know thy faith." Even in the face of all that was amiss with the doctrine which produces the faith, some in this church were commended for their faith. This is especially noteworthy for it is most difficult to keep the faith in the midst of false teaching. Yet, some were commended for keeping the faith.

### I KNOW THY PATIENCE

Further, Jesus said: "I know thy patience." The word patience here carries with it the idea of endurance or continuance. Every church is so charged. This is expected of us, too (I Cor. 15:58). Endurance or steadfastness is one of the things which so many lack in our day. It can be developed (II Peter 1: 5-11). Salvation depends upon it.

### I KNOW THY WORKS

Jesus concluded the commendation by saying: "I know thy works; and the last to be more than the first." The works here mentioned is a general term which, no doubt, embraces all four of the above mentioned things—charity, service, faith, and patience. This statement further shows that some were growing even in face of so great obstacles. He knew the last to be more than the first. We must grow to please the Lord. Phil. 3:15 Heb. 6-1; 12:1,2; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:18) Some poet said:

"Not enjoyment, and not sorrow Is  
our destined end or way;

But to act that each tomorrow  
Finds us closer than today."

### I HAVE A FEW THINGS AGAINST THEE

"Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." They were permitting a woman who called herself a prophetess to teach false doctrine and to seduce the disciples to commit adultery and beyond that set a bad example in the eating of meats. It was so bad that it was said to be the "depths of Satan." Only the truth is to be preached (Gal. 1:6-9). In addition, she called herself a prophetess which may well indicate that she was in violation of the command for women to keep silent in the churches (I Cor. 14:34). So much was wrong. Then this statement comes: "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not." Christ had been longsuffering. He is still longsuffering. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). But, we must remember that his patience and tolerance had grown thin at Thyatira and his long-suffering qualities will finally give way to wrath if we stand against him time after time.

### PROMISES

Jesus made several promises. First of all, he said: "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." Then he further promised a just recompense of reward. "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: And I will give unto every one of you according to your works." This is some of the strongest language ever spoken to a church. What an impression that ought to make upon us! Then to those who were not offenders, he promised no other burden. They were required, however, to do this: "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come." The next promise was to them who did overcome. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of the Father, And I will give him the morning star." What all is included in this promise may be subject to much discussion. But whatever may be in it, this indicates great blessing for the faithful.

He concludes again with the admonition common to all the epistles: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

### DANGERS CONFRONTING THE CHURCH—No. 2

Thomas G. O'Neal, Jasper, Ala.

One of the dangers confronting the church today is liberalism and modernism. This in many instances is an outgrowth of church support of human

institutions. Brethren favoring church support for human institutions have preached so much in recent years about liberty, freedom in Christ, not being bound by law, not being legalist, etc., until some among the institutional camp are becoming concerned when they see some of their number beginning to associate and fellowship the denominations or travel in that direction.

Modernism and liberalism in its complete forms are seen in the denominations. In fact some in the denominational world do not hesitate to say that they do not believe in the virgin birth, miracles, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some preachers who fill the pulpits in sectarian churches will openly admit that they are not going to be bound by the Word of God because that is too legalistic for them. They are interested in freedom in Christ, which they think means not being governed by the law or authority of Christ.

With so much of the attitude of liberalism and modernism about us one need not be surprised to find it working its way into the church. According to the late brother G. C. Brewer the University of Chicago has "announced that it will not give a doctor's degree from its divinity department to any man who believes in the deity of Christ." (Gospel Advocate, 1948, P. 702.) In the church today we have too many men who are taking their Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago. The Harding of Memphis Graduate School Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 5, Oct. 1962, reports three graduates of their three year program working toward higher education at the University of Chicago. One of them is working on his Ph.D. and at the same time serving a church of Christ as "associate minister." In the Torch, 1950, brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr., said, "Twenty five years ago a fine tooth comb could not curry a modernist out of the church of Christ; but today we can take a hay-rake and bale them up." Modernism is a danger confronting the church.

One of the sources of modernism from within the church is the Gospel Advocate Company literature. The authors of their literature have read and quoted from modernists. The authors of this literature are not full-fledged modernists, but are well headed in that direction. Look at some examples of their modernism.

Gospel Advocate literature declares benevolent institutions started by men are divine in origin.

"Of course, a home must be supplied for both fatherless children and destitute widows; and, it is the obligation of the church to provide support for them in a home. Here is obvious scriptural sanction for the support by the church, of the orphan homes and homes for the aged, among us. Such a home must meet the requirements of the state in which it operates. In supporting such a home, the church is not contributing to a human institution, but a divine one. Those thus provided for are entitled to a home as much so as those who contribute thereto." (Adult Gospel Quarterly, Oct., Nov., Dec, 1961, Page 40.)

". . . Exact Cause . . . Not" Known

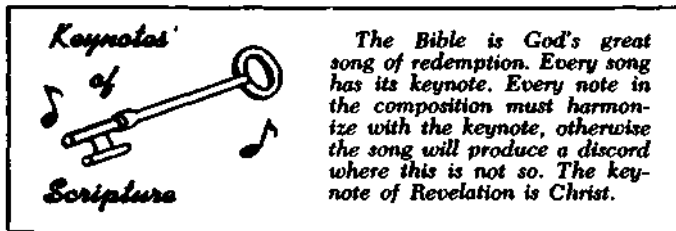
The Gospel Advocate literature teaches that the

"exact cause" of Ananias and Sapphir's death is not known.

"In a heart-searching examination, Peter revealed to public gaze the awful guilt of this wicked couple. The Holy Spirit evidently revealed to the apostle the motives which influenced them." (Adult Gospel Quarterly, July, Aug., Sept., 1954, P. 28.)

"Punishment upon Ananias was sudden and immediate: When he heard the words of Peter, he "fell down and gave up the ghost," i.e., he "breathed out his life." The exact cause of his death does not appear. Whether it came as a shock because of his exposure, or whether by a direct stroke from God, we cannot know . . . Whatever the method by which death was produced, it is certain that it was the intention of the Holy Spirit for us to know that it was a punishment inflicted on Ananias for his deception, dishonesty, and hypocrisy." (Ibid. P. 29.)

Quotations like these could be multiplied from the Gospel Advocate literature. With this attitude in the church, we are well on our way to full-fledged modernism and liberalism in the church. May we all stand against such with the Sword of the Spirit.



## VASHTI AND MODESTY

Fred A. Shewmaker, Sun Valley, Calif.

In an article in the February issue of Searching The Scripture it was assumed that Vashti's modesty compelled her to disobey the King's command. I say assumed because it is not stated as fact in the Scriptures. I realize the assumption is drawn from Esther 1:11: "To shew the people and the princess her beauty: for she was fair to look on." But why should this statement lead to this assumption?

Somehow the idea has possessed us that it is impossible for a woman's beauty to be observed as long as she remains modest. I deny it. It might be said that Ahasuerus intended that the queen appear immodest. My Bible does not say that; is it not another assumption?

In Genesis 12:11-14 Abram said unto Sarai: "I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon." (verse 14). "The Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair." (Gen. 26:7). Isaac feared to call Rebekah his wife "lest, he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon." I dare say that none will affirm that either Sarai or Rebekah dressed in any way immodestly; yet men observed their beauty.

To reason that for Vashti to allow her beauty to be observed necessitated immodesty is to indict Sarai for appearing immodest in Egypt where she was observed to be very fair. This reasoning would indict Rebekah for practicing immodesty because Isaac expected the Philistines to observe her fairness.

The Scripture does not tell us that Vashti refused to show her beauty. The Scripture says, "But the queen Vashti refused to COME at the king's command." The Bible does not tell us why she refused to COME. To give a reason for her refusal is to assume something.

Why was she disposed of? Verse 17: "It shall be reported, the king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she CAME not."

What is wrong with that? The women of the kingdom would "despise their husbands." "Thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath."

I say these things with all due respect to any holding the modesty view and especially to brother Sharp, whom I have never met. I agree that modesty should be taught from the pulpits, in our homes, and in our personal edification of each other, but if this is a lesson on modesty, it must be learned by employing assumption. We can not assume a thing and refuse another the same right. Assumptions are splitting the body of Christ and we who are contending for the faith once for all delivered can not afford the luxury of assumption.

There is a lesson in Esther I and the idea is taught throughout the Scriptures. "All the wives shall give to their husbands honour, but to great and small." It should be realized that a husband can only be honored by that which is honorable.

## VASHTI'S MODESTY

A letter is in my possession that comes from bro. Phillips. The author of the letter is bro. Shewmaker. Bro. Shewmaker has offered some constructive criticism and may I here assure the readers, I am grateful for this kind of criticism. It is my humble opinion still the short article on the book of Esther is correct. Brother Shewmaker does not believe that Vashti would have been immodest in appearing before a group of drunken men to show her beauty.

1. Mr. Adam Clarke is not an authority, I assure the reader, and I must allow the reader to know what I printed from his book, and gave him credit, I believe to be the truth. Here are the reasons.

- A. In the Targum, which is a translation or paraphrase of some of the old Testament books from the Hebrew to the Aramaic of Judea, the word shows naked is found. I do not know much about the Hebrew but those who translated the Hebrew to the Aramaic of Judea thought this was a translation or a paraphrase of the language of the book of Esther.
- B. Since receiving the letter I have searched several books in my library and all of them state the same thing. In the Pulpit Commen-

tary, in Vol. 7 this statement, "On the seventh day of the feast, to all in Shushan" (ver. 5) the king having excited himself with drink, took it into his head to send a message to Vashti, requiring her to make her appearance in the banquet of men, since he desired to exhibit her beauty to the assembled guests, as "she was fair to look upon" (Vs 11). His design must have been to present her unveiled to the coarse admiration of a multitude of semi-drunken revellers, in order that they might envy him the possession of so lovely a wife. Such a proceeding was a gross breach of Persian etiquette, and a cruel outrage upon one whom he above all men was bound to protect."

C. Again in the same book by another writer, "Vashti's refusal was morally quite justifiable. Neither a husband's nor a king's authority extends to the wanton requirement of acts that, if done, would disgrace the doer for life. Had Vashti complied, she would have lost the respect not only of the Persian nation, but of the king himself."

2. Now a question or two.

A. Bro. Shewmaker, "What would a drunken or semi-drunken man have in mind in showing the beauty of his wife before a group of drinkers—had been drinking for seven days?"

B. Is not there a great difference in exposing to view a wife fully clothed before a group of men under the influence of whiskey and the case of Sarah and Rebekah to which you refer?

There is no statement that Isaac or Abraham wanted to show their wife.

I do not see any similarity in the argument made regarding Sarah or Rebekah.

There are many more statements from various sources but these will suffice.

**BIBLICAL WORD STUDIES**  
By E. V. SRYCLEY, JR.

**KOINONIA, "FELLOWSHIP," AND COMMUNISM**

No. 2

No serious student of the Bible will deny that the early chapters of Acts present a "community of goods" in the early church. But even a casual study of the nature of this "communism" will reveal that it is parallel in no essential feature to the current Communist conspiracy. In this article, are presented additional contrasts between the community of goods of Acts, and modern Communism.

**ITS LACK OF INEVITABILITY**

According to dialectic materialism (the under-

girding philosophy of Communism) a communistic society is the inevitable result of the inevitable revolution of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie of capitalism. This inevitable revolution will give rise to the ruler-ship of the proletariat which, in turn, will give rise to the "dream world" of Cornable, and irresistible.

It is quite apparent that the community of goods of the early church was not an inevitable situation, as far as the individual was concerned. The very fact that the community of goods was voluntary is proof positive that it lacked inevitability. Ananias and his wife Sapphire, two of those who sold possessions, were told that their goods were strictly theirs to use as they saw fit, Acts 5:4. Furthermore, even after the goods or lands were sold, the disposal of the money was still left to the owners, according to Peter's statement to Ananias, Acts. 5:4.

It is evident, therefore, that the community of goods of the early church was no part of an unseen, philosophical force at work.

**ITS CLASSED SOCIETY**

The "dream world" of Communism is viewed as an utterly classless society with the utter abolition of all private property and enterprise, (though Communist countries today are not absolutely classless.)

The community of goods of the early church was not an absolutely classless society with no private ownership of property. We have already seen that Ananias and Sapphire were not denied private ownership and disposal of property, Acts 5:4. Furthermore, the aim of the community was not abolition of private property so that equality could prevail. On the contrary, the aim of the community was to supply the needy Christians, Acts 2:45; 4:34, 35. This aim was accomplished when the needs were met; it did not demand an absolute equality in ownership of goods.

**GIVING THE ANSWERS FOR OUR HOPE**  
Address questions to:  
35 West Par Ave. I PETER 3:15  
Orlando, Florida  
—Marshall E. Patton—

(Editor's Note: Due to a very busy schedule brother Patton has not been able to prepare the answers to questions for this issue. He has several very good and important questions to be answered. Be patient, your question will be answered in a coming issue. We appreciate these questions and request the continued sending in of them to brother Patton. This fine article by brother Patton will substitute for questions and answers this month.)

**THE NEED FOR INDOCTRINATION**

The greatest periods of success in the history of the church have been when the church was



thoroughly indoctrinated. If the church is failing today in the accomplishment of its mission, it may be accounted for upon the grounds of a lack of indoctrination. If the church would be successful, teaching the "disciples" is imperative. (Matt. 28:19-20)

Paul prayed that the Philippians "may approve things that are excellent;" (Phil. 1:10) The meaning is—try or test things that differ and approve only that which is right. Too many Christians today approve things that are sinful. They are unable to discern between good and evil. "For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But stong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. 5:13, 14) Again, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." (I Cor. 3:2) There are things that differ which differences cannot always be seen by babes. They must be admonished and nurtured by those who can digest strong meat. These babes must be thoroughly indoctrinated that they may become skillful in the word of righteousness; that they may easily discern both good and evil, and that they may always approve only that which is right.

Behold the consequences of the lack of indoctrination :

1. Destruction is **inevitable**. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," (Hosea 4:6) Such may practice evil without any sense of guilt. They may call evil good and good evil. Behold the Laodiceans: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miser able, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich: And white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; And anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." (Rev. 3:17, 18)

2. It lowers **our** spirituality. It often causes Christians to imagine that their spiritual growth will largely take care of itself. Such usually be come overconfident. Like Peter, however, they are not as strong as they think. "And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." (Lk. 22:33, 34)

3. It paralyzes the preacher. Allusions which would otherwise be clear fall on uncomprehending ears. The context in which the lesson is set they cannot supply. Hence, the force and appeal of the lesson and the fullness of his message is largely missed. More and more the people are at the preacher's mercy.

On the other hand a thoroughly indoctrinate church will result in a more efficient membership, more conversations, and greater ability to stem the tide of infidelity, digression, and all other forms of opposition. Success will then be in evidence. Victory will be inevitable.

## BENEVOLENCE UNDER THE LAW

Steve Hudgins, Ocala, Fla.

To the Romans Paul wrote, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4). Is it not possible that in our present studies and discussions of benevolence we might profit by a consideration of this subject as practiced aforetime—under the law?

The Israelite had no reason to think that two or three percent nor even ten percent of his income or increase was sufficient for the supporting of the teaching of God's word and the supplying of all benevolent needs. The tithes commanded of the Israelite was for the support of the priests and Levites and there is no indication that any part of it went for benevolence, temple construction nor any other work (Num. 18:21-28; Neh. 12:44; Ezra 1:3, 4). In addition to the tithes the Israelite was also to give the firstlings of his beasts (Lev. 27:26, 27), the first fruits of his trees (Lev. 19:23-25), and offer burnt, meat, peace, sin, trespass and free will offerings (Lev. 1-7).

Because no part of the tithes was allotted to the needy let us not think for a moment that God overlooked the needs of the poor and made no provision for them. He provided well for the poor—Israelites and strangers, fatherless and widows. Individuals were to provide these needs and this in addition to their supporting the teaching of the word. The Israelite was instructed to save the corners of his field, the gleanings of his harvest and his vineyard for the poor and the stranger, the fatherless and widow (Lev. 19:9,10; Deut. 24:19-22). The land was to rest the seventh year and that which grew of itself was for the poor Israelites—what they left was for the beasts. The poor also were to have the fruit of the vineyard and the olive yard (Lev. 25:3-5; Ex. 23:10, 11).

In addition to this the Israelite was to lend generously to his poor brethren and the needy of his land (Deut. 15:7-11). He was not permitted to charge his brother interest (Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:35-38) and was to release his brother and neighbor from any debt due him the seventh year (Deut. 15:1, 2). Every third year a tithes was to be laid up in his gates for the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless and the widow (Deut. 14:28, 29; 26:12). [Josephus said this was a third tithes (Book IV chapter 8:22).] As a matter of hospitality a man was allowed to eat his fill of his neighbor's vineyard and pluck the ears of his standing corn (Deut. 23:24, 25).

We can thus see that much emphasis was placed on the individual and much was required of him under the law (evidently all benevolence). The faithful Israelite did not suffer for his liberality because God promised to bless those who kept these commands (Deut. 14:29; 15:10). In view of this and the plainness of such scriptures as I Tim. 5:4, 8, 16; Js. 1:27; Gal. 6:10 does not God still emphasize individual action in helping those in need? Surely He is able and will bless His faithful children today who respect His word, support His cause and meet their own responsibilities (II Cor. 9:6-8).

# The News Letter Reports

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

Ross Saunders, Lebanon, Ky. — We have just finished a fine gospel meeting with brother Barney Keith of Florence, Alabama, doing the preaching (April 29-May 5). This was the best attended meeting conducted here in many years, and the preaching was simple, clear and sound. We are encouraged in every way by the meeting and the future looks very promising. The Lord willing, I am to begin a meeting in Campbellsville, Ky., May 12 -19. Brother Dorris Radar is the good preacher there.

E. L. Flannery, Gainesville, Fla. — We had the highest attendance recently at Northeast. Three were baptized, and one placed membership, and eight placed membership during the last four weeks. Hoyt Houchen is to be in a meeting at Melrose, Fla., June 9-15 and at Northeast here in Gainesville June 16 - 23.

Jimmy Tuten, Jr., St. Louis, Mo. — Things are running smoothly and forward at Spring and Blaine. We are in a good meeting at the present with brother C. D. Plum. Thus far, we have baptized five and the meeting is just a little more than half over.

James E. Gunn, Gardendale, Ala.—Our work here is still doing very nicely. We set new records in attendance at all of our services yesterday (April 14). Our contribution has increased and last month was the highest in the history of the congregation.

Irven Lee, Jasper, Ala.—I am to begin work with the new North Jasper church in Jasper, Alabama, on June 2. I am to preach in a gospel meeting in the new church building there beginning June 23. My new address will be: Route 3, Box 302-B, Jasper, Alabama.

John A. Thurman, Perry, Fla.—Cecil B. Douthitt of High Springs, Fla., was the speaker in a gospel meeting at Perry recently. We meet at 714 North Calhoun St. in Perry, Fla.

Kenneth Scarborough of Crystal River, Fla., was recently in a gospel meeting in Brooksville, Fla. Larry E. King reported that his lessons were basic and forceful with the power of the gospel . . . Ed Grantham of Tampa was with Paul Brock at Lakeshore in Jacksonville, Fla., May 5-11 . . . E. L. Flannery was with Ed Nowlin at Glenwood Hills in Atlanta, Ga., last month . . . Harold Dowdy of Jacksonville was with Marshall E. Patton and the Par Avenue church in Orlando which closed May 19 . . . Clinton Hamilton is with Frank James and the Wendell Avenue church in Louisville, Ky., June 2-9 . . . Bill Cavender will be at Orange Highway church in Port Arthur, Texas, June 24-30 where John Iversen preaches . . . Leslie Diestelkamp was in a meeting at Beaver Dam, Ky., May 20-28 . . . Earl Robertson was in Leitchfield, Ky., May 27 - June 2 . . . Grover Stevens was at Loveland Heights in Loveland, Ohio, June 2-9. Loveland Heights is a suburb of Cincinnati.

James P. Needham, regular preacher at the Expressway congregation in Louisville, Ky., was the

speaker in a series of meetings in the new building, located at 6th Street and Watterson Expressway, May 26-June 2 . . . Robert Welch will be at Eastland June 19 - 28 in a gospel meeting . . . Connie Adams will be in a series of meetings at West End church in Franklin, Tenn., June 23 - 30. He will be in a meeting at Frostproof, Fla., July 22-30.

David Claypool of Nashville, Tenn., was in a meeting at El Bethel, near Shelbyville, Tenn., May 27-June 2. He was in a meeting in North Birmingham, Ala., early in May . . . B. G. Hope of the 12th church in Bowling Green, Ky., recently had meetings at Danville, Ky., and Harrodsburg, Ky. . . . Robert Jackson was in a meeting at Central church in Charlotte, Tenn., in mid May. Olin Kern is the preacher there . . . Roy E. Cogdill was with A. C. Grider at 7th Street in Meridian, Miss., June 2-9 . . . David Tant of Decatur, Ga., was in a gospel meeting at Vernon, Fla., in mid May . . . Cecil B. Douthitt of High Springs, Fla., was with the Trila-coochee church and Alton Elliott in a meeting May 5-13 . . .

Bobby K. Thompson of North Miami church was the speaker in a meeting at Belmont Heights church in Tampa, May 13-21. J. T. Smith preaches at Belmont . . . Ward Hogland was with the Franklin Drive church in Texarkana, Ark., June 3-9.

Ross Saunders, Lebanon, Ky. — The work at Lebanon continues well with attendance increasing. Two were baptized into Christ in the month of May. I just completed a week's meeting in Campbellsville, Kentucky, where brother Doris Radar is the preacher. We baptized one along with other evidences of good being accomplished. Brother Radar is doing a good job in this difficult area and the strength of some of the brethren indicates that good teaching has been done on current problems facing the church.

James R. Cope, Tampa, Fla. — We would be interested in corresponding with some faithful brother or sister qualified to teach math, physics or chemistry on junior college level. Contact James R. Cope, Florida College, Temple Terrace, Fla.

Kenneth E. Thomas, Jennings, Fla. — I began working with the Oak Grove church in September and thus far we have been blessed with six baptisms. I will be in a meeting at Valdosta, Ga., with the little Miami congregation, June 21-28. They are having a struggle with liberal brethren, but this small group is holding fast the one faith.

Earl Fly, Orlando, Fla. — James R. Cope preached in the April meeting at Holden Heights with fine attendance and interest, resulting in eight baptisms. Since the meeting four more have been baptized. I have fully recovered from my successful surgery and have resumed full time work. The faithful churches in Orlando at Pine Hills, Par Avenue, Holden Heights and Azelea Park are all growing, and a fine spirit of fellowship and cooperation exists between them.

William C. **Sexton**, Lowell, Ind. — The church in Lowell, Ind., had a good meeting, April 29 - May 5. Brother Lewis Willis did the preaching. The interest was good. We broke the record in attendance Friday night of the meeting. I moved here to work full time with the church on November 17, 1962. During the meeting the preaching was scriptural, plain, and forcefully preached in love. We believe much was done. I will be in a meeting with the church that meets at 1350 River St. in Kankakee, Ill., May 27 - June 2. **John Eldrige** is the preacher there.

Leslie E. Sloan, Jasper, Ga. — The work here looks brighter. An elderly lady returned to the church two weeks ago who had been ensnared into the Holiness group after she was baptized a few years ago. I attended a meeting in a Community Club last night conducted by the Holiness and was permitted to speak. The same group intends to meet at the same place each Friday night. I think that it is a real opportunity to teach them. Of course, some of them are so prejudiced that they will not listen, but some seem to be open-minded.

**Edsel Mikel**, Bell, Fla. — skepticism has been reported to me concerning my 1962 labors in the gospel at Williston, Florida, especially over disciplinary action there. I gave place in the way of subjection to such like, no, not for one hour, but stand prepared to defend my every effort there on God's word foursquare. If any desires further information, contact me. I have written records and witnesses.

**James P. Miller**, Tampa, Fla. — There is a sound and aggressive church of the Lord in Owensboro, Kentucky. This congregation was formed when the Southside and the old Central churches resolved their differences and banded together in one sound group. Bobby **Witherington** is the preacher for this congregation, known as the South 231 church of Christ. In a May meeting in which I did the preaching with this church, nine were baptized and two restored. I believe we will be hearing greater things from this new strong and sound congregation. Thomas Hickey who was the preacher for the Central congregation worked to bring the two groups together as did brother Witherington.

I flew from Owensboro to Cleveland, Ohio, to assist the Lorain Avenue church in a short meeting. E. A. Dicus is the preacher for the Lorain congregation and a successful executive in the business world. In many ways brother Dicus is an unusual man. He is a graduate engineer, vice president of a successful company, and yet a sound God fearing preacher of the gospel. Through the years he has preached on the West side of Cleveland with telling effect. The cause of truth runs strong in the Cleveland - Akron area. Paul Kelsey preaches for the church in Berea on the west side of greater Cleveland. Jack Ashworth is the preacher at Euclid, Ohio. **David Koltenbaugh** works at Barberton, **Gene Guy** at Baird Street in Akron, **Cecil Willis** at Brown Street, **Thomas Hickey** at Southeast, **Guy Roberson** at Thayer Street, **Paul Casebolt** at Kenmore, **Owen Calvert** at Bedford. A new congregation has been started at Brunswick, Ohio.

Jack L. **Holt** will be in a meeting at Belmont in Indianapolis, Ind., June 16-23. **Earl Robertson** is now at Belmont.

**James P. Miller**, Tampa, Fla. — I am to be in a meeting with the Calmont Avenue church in Fort Worth, Texas, July 7-14. This church meets at 3600 Calmont Avenue. **Robert L. Love** is the preacher. July 21-28 I am to be with the Silver Street church in New Albany, Indiana which meets at Silver Street and Locust. **John Gerard** is the preacher and has been with this church for several years.

**Carroll W. Puckett**, Montgomery, Ala. — The Gay Meadows church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama, is presently engaged in erecting a new church building. The building will be completed around the middle of June, 1963. The church building is located in a new growing section of Montgomery. The church has never had a permanent place to meet and thus this will contribute to identifying this church as being permanent in Montgomery. This congregation is carrying on a good program of work in preaching the gospel to this community as well as other places although small in membership. When you are through Montgomery you have an invitation to meet and worship with this church.

There will be a public discussion in Montgomery, Alabama, June 17-20, 1963, between Carroll W. Puckett and George H. Watts. The following propositions will be discussed.

#### PROPOSITION No. 1

It is scriptural for a local church when it comes to its place of meeting, to conduct simultaneous classes wherein the Bible is taught and some of these classes being taught by women.

Affirms: Carroll W. Puckett  
Denies: George H. Watts

#### PROPOSITION No. 2

When the church comes together for the purpose of teaching, the only way revealed in the New Testament is for all to remain in one group and the teaching be done by men only, one speaking at a time to the assembly.

Affirms: George H. Watts  
Denies: Carroll W. Puckett

Each proposition will be discussed two nights each. There will be two 30 minute speeches by each debater each night. The discussion will begin at 7:30 p.m. The first two nights will be conducted in the church building of the Westview Gardens Church of Christ and the last two nights will be conducted in the building of the Gay Meadows Church Of Christ.

#### COMMENTS TO EDITORS

"Keep up the good work because the truth that is being presented in the paper will do good wherever the paper is circulated. Your editorial about Pat Boone was extra."—Thomas G. O'Neal, Jasper, Ala.

"I think that you are doing a fine job editing the paper, and your articles are of the finest quality. Much good should be done through Searching The Scriptures."—Earl Fly, Orlando, Fla.

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"I recently came across a copy of Searching The Scriptures through another brother in Christ, Horace Royals, and I wish to begin receiving my personal copy."—Kenneth E. Thomas, Jennings, Fla.

"The last issue of Searching The Scriptures still maintained the high standard of teaching and pointed truth which has been characteristic of it all the way. You and brother Miller are doing a fine job. Keep up the good work and may God bless your efforts for good and to His glory. I certainly am glad to have a part in sending such a fine publication to some of my friends.—Leslie E. Sloan, Jasper, Georgia.

"I am attaching my check to pay for one year's subscription to your paper which I saw advertised in the January issue of **The Sower**, edited by brother Eugene Britnell. In this issue he had copied an article from your paper and suggested that brethren subscribe to your publication . . . I know that I will enjoy your paper if the article copied from one of the issues is the type article which you carry."—J. G. Savage, Lewisville, Texas.

"Just want you to know I have put off writing you too long already—Draw great courage from your paper—Look forward to a day when you can print it weekly—Glad to help in small way by sending to others in past. My heart goes out to God's faithful servants—We will surely plow old mule again, if need be, ere we succumb to the foaming wave of man-made religion."—Edsel Mikell, Bell, Fla.

"You are doing a fine job with Searching The Scriptures in exposing error and presenting the truth in its purity and simplicity. I hope the time will soon come when you can enlarge the paper and bring the readers more Bible Truth which is so needful."—D. B. Whittle, Palmetto, Fla.

"I am thankful for the work you and brother Miller are doing. The wife and I look forward to the time when we will be in position to do even more for the paper."—Rufus R. Clifford, Nashville, Tenn.

"I am enjoying Searching The Scriptures very much. It is very fine and contains many wonderful articles." Arnold Hardin, Houston, Texas.

"I continue to enjoy Searching The Scriptures; keep up the good work,"—Jimmy Tuten, Jr., St. Louis, Mo.

"Searching The Scriptures is 'on the ball'. I look forward to receiving it each month. Continue the good work."—Ross Saunders, Lebanon, Ky.

## Science and Truth

I Tim. 6:20-21

William D. Burgess

Charles Darwin was born on February 12, 1809. His father was a successful, well-to-do physician who had married into a rather, wealthy family.

Charles insured his financial status by marrying his first cousin, from his mothers' side of the family. Though Darwin was considered a normal boy, his father and his teachers considered him a little below normal in intelligence. His father wanted him to follow in his footsteps and become a physician. He was sent to Edinburgh for this purpose but soon dropped this course of study. His father then suggested he go to Cambridge to study for the clergy. In due course he received his degree without distinction and without very much effort on his part: His energies were expended in other activities and it is not surprising that his father hoped that the cloak of respectability of a clergyman might keep his son from becoming a wealthy ne'er-do-well.

Due to his friendship with the botanist Henslow, he was recommended for a position of naturalist on the ship Beagle that was to make a charting trip around the world. The trip lasted for five years. His activities on this trip started the chain of thoughts that ultimately lead to his theory of evolution. When he returned to England in 1836 he began to organize his collections made while on the Beagle and write up the results of his travels. He borrowed heavily from many of the scientists who preceded him, brought their works together and in 1859 put forth his book, "Origin of Species." In his book Darwin treated two subjects: the theory of evolution,, and a theory of the mechanism of evolution—that is, natural selection. Though Darwin is often credited with this theory of natural selection, it was actually set forth earlier by Alfred Russell Wallace. As proof, so Darwin claimed, of natural selection two observations were noted: (1) though reproductive potential was tremendous, species population size was relatively constant in any given area, and (2) fluctuations occur from year to year but ordinarily there is no continuous increase. From these he concluded: (1) not all of the progeny produced by any generation reached maturity; (2) many died during the early stages of life, and (3) that variations were of such a universal nature that no two individuals were exactly alike. Thus he declares that this would mean that only the best specimens would survive and in turn would pass on their characteristics to their progeny. This he concluded, would change the characteristics of a species and evolution would occur. You can see in his explanation and conclusion the theory of acquired characteristics which Cuvier had demonstrated to be false as well as impossible. Here the entire theory of evolution as set forth by Charles Darwin is based upon a theory that has been shown to be false and is even rejected today by those who contend for the theory of evolution. Men of all ages, even today, are not too concerned with truth, if it stands in the way of their desires. The thinking seems to just refuse to believe the truth and it will either go away or change to make their errors truth!