

# 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 IV

AUGUST, 1963

NUMBER 8

## THE RULE OF ELDERS

### ITS NATURE AND SCOPE

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (I Tim. 5:17). "Remember them which have the rule over you." (Heb. 13:7). "Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit yourselves, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17).

It is strange to me that some men are always striving to get out of passages what is not in them, and pass by what is in the passages, all in order to prove a position already taken—This has been true of baptism, the Lord's Supper, worship, and the organization and mission of the church. The doctrine has developed that elders are to be obeyed in all directives, whether we believe them to be scriptural or not. A reaction to this idea has developed another doctrine which says that elders do not actually rule at all, but are only guides or examples to the flock. They rule by "example" only.

The play on definition of Greek words to prove a proposition is not as solid as it might appear, because Greek words, like English words, have different meanings, and must be understood in the light of their context. To take the definition of a certain Greek word and build a doctrine around it can prove to be fatal. Certainly we must understand the meaning of words, both Greek and English, to understand the true meaning of any passage in the New Testament. But we cannot pick out one meaning that suits our position and ignore all others.

Elders do have a "rule" in some sense in the church which others do not have. If not, elders have no particular work. That is not really a debatable question. The verses above plainly state that the elders do "rule". But what is meant by this "rule" and what is its nature and scope? That shall be the objective in this article.

There are three ways to know what a given word means in a certain verse: (1) the definition of the word itself, (2) the context of the word that describes its sense, and (3) other passages that restrict or define the word. In connection with the words in translating "rule" with regard to the elders in the church, I will follow this order in learning exactly what the "rule" of elders involves and what it does not include.

In the case of explaining the action of baptism, we first show that the Greek word from which we get "baptize" means "to plunge, dip, submerge", etc. Then we show that the context of the word helps explain its meaning, such as "buried with him

by baptism" (Rom. 6:4). The term "buried" further defines the word. Then we find the circumstances of cases of baptism that show the meaning and limitations of the action. The one to be baptized goes "into the water" with the one who does the baptizing and he "baptizes him", then they "come up out of the water." This is supporting proof of what is involved in the action of baptism. We purpose to do this with regard to the "rule" of elders.

### 1. DEFINITION OF THE WORD "RULE"

Space forbids copying all that authorities say of the Greek words from which we have the translation "rule", so we give a summary of what they say the words mean. I encourage the reader to check these definitions to see that they are accurate.

Two different Greek words are used in six verses in the New Testament to translate the word "rule" as it applies to the elders of the church. These words are **hegeomai** and **proistemi**. **Hegeomai** is found in Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24, and **proestemi** is found in Romans 12:8; I Timothy 5:17 and I Thessalonians 5:12.

**Hegeomai**—"1. to lead, i.e. a. to go before; b. to be a leader; to rule, command; to have authority over . . . with gen. of the pers. over whom one rules, so of the overseers or leaders of Christian churches; Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24 . . . 2. to consider, deem, account, think. . . ." (Thayer). "1. lead, guide . . . of men in any leading position . . . ruler, leader . . . of heads of a Christian church Hb 13: 7, 17, 24 . . . leading men among the brethren Ac 15:22 . . . 2. Think, consider, regard . . ." (Arndt & Gingrich). "To lead, is translated to rule in Heb. 13: 7, 17, 24 (A. V. marg., in the first two, "are the guides" and "guide." (W. E. Vine.)

**Proistemi**—"1. to set or place before; to set over . . . 2. a. to be over, to superintend, preside over, (A.V. rule), I Tim. 5:17. . . b. to be a protector or guardian; to give aid, Ro. xii. 8 . . . c. to care for, give attention to." (Thayer). "1. be at the head (of) rule, direct. . . Of officials and administrators in the church. . . I Th. 5:12 . . . Rom. 12:8 . . . I Ti. 5:17 . . . 2. to be concerned about, care for, give aid . . . I Th. 5:12 . . . Rom 12:8." (Arndt & Gingrich). "Lit. 'to stand before,' hence, to lead, attend to (indicating care and diligence), is translated to rule (Middle Voice), with reference to a local church, in Rom. 12:8; perfect Active in I Tim. 5:17; with reference to a family, I Tim. 3:4 and 12 (Middle Voice) . . ." (W. E. Vine).

By combining all these definitions of the two words, we have: (1) to lead or go before, (2) to rule, command, (3) to have authority over, (4) to think,

to consider, (5) to be guides, (6) to be over, superintend or preside over, and (7) to be a guardian or protector, to give aid to. Whatever is meant by the "rule" of the elders it must be within these definitions. Any dictionary of the English will help us to know what the translations mean.

The elders are to lead the church and rule by directing it into the way of the Lord; they are to exercise the oversight with consideration for the church and supervising their conduct before the Lord, and give aid and protection from danger. They are to superintend the affairs of the church so as to make it what the Lord wants it to be.

## 2. THE CONTEXT OF THE WORD "RULE"

By studying the context we can determine what the nature of the "rule" of elders really is. The nature of their rule certainly is not that of dictators or lawmakers, but it is a rule of supervision.

The qualifications of I Timothy 3:1-7 indicate that the elders are to be mature men in the church. The very word "elder" suggests that they must be men of age and experience. This experience is obviously necessary in order to do the ruling as God would have it.

Among the qualifications is the ruling of his own house. He must know HOW to "rule" his own house in order to know HOW to "take care of the house of God." "Taking care of the house of God" is the function of elders because the passage says so; but what does it mean? His experience in "ruling" (proistamenon) his own house enables him to "rule" well (proestotes) in the church (I Tim. 5:17). The word for "take care of" is **epimelesetai**. W. E. Vine says of **epimeleomai**: "signifies to take care of, involving forethought and provision (epi indicating the direction of the mind toward the object cared for), Luke 10:34, 35, of a bishop's (or overseer's) care of a church—a significant association of ideas." Certainly we are not to expect that the only care of the church by elders is exactly that of the good Samaritan when he took care of the wounded man. The first reason is that the necessity that he know HOW to "rule" his own house will equip him to "take care of the house of God." How does ruling one's own house enable him to be a good Samaritan? It is not the same in nature of caring, but the needs of the man were supplied by the Samaritan and the needs of the church are to be supplied by the bishops. The very fact that his ability to rule his own house enables him to "care" for the house of God shows that the care is in the field of supervising rather than in providing physical needs.

The relationship of the husband to the wife is described in Ephesians 5: 22, 23; I Corinthians 11: 3; I Timothy 2:12. The husband is the head of the wife, and the wife is to "submit" to the husband. Of course, the elders are not related to the church in the same identical sense that husbands are related to their wives. However, the idea of "ruling" one's own house qualifies the man to "take care of the house of God." We do know that the elders are to "rule" in the church and husbands are to "rule" their own homes well. The church is to "submit" to the elders and the wives are to "submit" to their own husbands. This helps us to understand the nature of the "rule" of the elders.

## 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.

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Foreign countries \$2.50 per year in advance.

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Other qualifications are listed which tell us something of the "rule" of elders. They must be "apt to teach." Their ruling includes teaching and admonishing. It includes exhorting the careless. Unless they know HOW to teach and admonish, it would imply that they cannot "rule" well in the church. They must have ruled their children in such a way as to bring them to Christ.

The elders are to "take the oversight" of the flock (I Pet. 5:2). They are "overseers" (Acts 20:28). Oversight is from **episkipeo**: "To look upon, inspect, oversee, look after, care for." (Thayer). "Lit., to look upon (epi, upon, skipeo, to look at, contemplate), is found in I Pet. 5:2. . ." (W. E. Vine). The English "Bishop" (applied to elders) is from the same word. "Lit. an overseer (epi, over, skipeo, to look or watch), whence Eng. 'bishop' which has precisely the same meaning, is found in Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7; I Pet. 2:25."

By "taking the oversight" and being "overseers" they perform their function of "ruling" in the church. They are superintendents and directors in the affairs of the church. The overseer may be patterns of what righteous men and women should be, but they do not oversee, otherwise the elders do not have a work peculiar to themselves. In "ruling" the elders are to "oversee" supervise, direct, care for, look upon" the members of the flock which is among them. I Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24 all teach that the elders are "over you" in the Lord. Obviously this does not mean to be literally higher than other members of the assembly, but it means to be above them in the matter of "ruling" in the church. When someone is "over", it definitely implies that someone is "under". In their rule the elders are overseers or superintendents in affairs of the church.

The elders are to **feed** and **tend** the flock. (I Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28) This implies more than merely setting an example for them to follow. It carries with it the obligation to do something in protecting and guarding the flock from danger. If danger arises from within, the elders' rule obligates them to do something to protect the flock. It also implies that

the elders must teach and admonish in the way of the Lord. This word is that of tending a flock of sheep. A shepherd has the duty to protect the sheep as well as lead the way and encourage them to follow. I am saying that these words define the nature of the "rule" of elders and will not permit the idea of simply setting an example and hoping the flock will follow.

The elders' rule requires them to exhort and admonish the church (Tit. 1:9; I Thess. 5:12). The law of Christ is the only standard by which men shall live before God, and it is the rule by which the elders admonish and exhort the flock. But exhorting and admonishing is something more than examples which others should follow. By ruling the elders direct in the right way of the Lord and warn against sinful practices.

The elders **watch for the souls** of those under them. (Heb. 13:17). They watch **for** evil and for good, and they direct the church in the way that is right. They do this because they are responsible to God—they must give an account to God. There is no such thing as responsibility without authority to do what is to be accounted for.

They are ensamples (I Pet. 5:3; Heb. 13:7). The fact that elders are to be patterns of what children of God should be, and to point the way by their own lives, does not mean that their rule consists entirely of being examples. How could one "rule" another unless, his life is consistent with that which he is persuading the other to do? How could evil men supervise the activities of a group and expect them to obey and submit?

In I Peter 5:3 the apostle instructs us on how elders are not to rule. They are not to be "lords over God's heritage." They are not lawmakers and do not arrogantly demand of the church that their wishes to be obeyed. This is not the kind of "ruling" permitted by Christ. We shall discuss this matter more fully in the next article in this series. Suffice it to say that elders have a standard—a law—by which they rule, and they are not permitted to go beyond that law.

In I Peter 5:2 the expression, "Feed the flock of God **which is among you**" limits the rule of elders only to the church over which they are overseers. No elder has the least right to meddle in the affairs of another church. No group of elders have the scriptural right to erect any set-up that requires action under their oversight that involves more than the "flock which is among you." Their rule is strictly limited by these words. That makes each church separate, since the Lord made no provisions for organizations above the local church.

### 3. OTHER PASSAGES THAT DEFINE THE RULE OF ELDERS

By the very fact that the church is told to "obey" and "submit" to the "rule" of elders indicates that their rule is that of instruction and guidance in those matters that protect the church from evil and provide opportunities for advancement. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves. . . ." (Heb. 13:17). Obey is from **peitho** (peithesthe) "to be persuaded, to suffer one's self to be persuaded—to obey, yield to, comply with." (A. T. Robertson). One is persuaded and yields or complies with the directions of the elders in their "rule." Of course,

the elders have a standard by which to guide the church, which is the New Testament. Their rule is not of human wisdom, but of the revelation of Christ. But as they direct in scriptural matters the church is to obey them.

Submit is from **hupeiko** (hupeikete) "to yield under, to give up." (A. T. Robertson). This involves the attitude as well as the act. The church is to yield in heart and act to the leadership of the elders. This requires much more than just following an example. The elders direct by teaching and instruction in those matters that are of the authority of Christ and for the salvation of the souls of those under them. All of this is in scriptural language. The church is UNDER and the elder are OVER, and the church is to OBEY and SUBMIT to the rule of the elders. The elders are to RULE and OVERSEE the flock among them. How can this language be used to imply that the church is only to look at the lives of the elders and try to follow them, and the elders have nothing to do but set a good example for the church to follow?

The matter of the elders supervising the distribution of the goods sent for the relief of the saints in Judaea shows something of the nature of their rule. (Acts 11:29,30). Why did the disciples send this money to the elders? Why not send it to the church and let the "business meeting" decide its distribution? The elders' rule, as implied in this language, includes the proper distribution of goods to those destitute saints. The handling of financial affairs should also be under the direction of the elders, but always according to the will of Christ. This does not mean, as some elders seem to understand, that their whole duty consists in keeping track of the check book and in spending money. This was not the case in Acts 11:29,30. The "rule" of elders includes the handling of matters relative to the needs of those under them.

When Paul had same final instructions for the church at Ephesus, as well as for the elders, he called to him the elders and gave them certain instructions in their work. He said, "Take heed therefore into yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers. . ." (Acts 20:28). Whatever they were to do in taking "heed" to themselves, they were to do the same to "all the flock." If taking heed to self means to direct, inspect and control in the right way, it means the same thing with regard to the flock. It would follow that the "rule" of elders includes taking heed to the flock in the same way they would take heed to self.

In the next article we shall discuss the matter of ruling in faith or judgment.

### COMMENTS TO EDITORS

"I have enjoyed the paper . . ."Mrs. Turner Fields, Zephyrhills, Fla.

"Searching The Scriptures is a very excellent paper. I am sure that much and lasting good is coming from this effort. I read every line of it, and enjoy every bit of it. Keep up the good work."—Lee Gunter, Largo, Fla.

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"Have received the May issue of your excellent paper. . . The copy received has been enjoyed and was interesting and helpful. It is good to know that its publishers do not fear to earnestly contend for the faith."—Mrs. E. G. Parker, Hendersonville, North Carolina.

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"I have been a subscriber of the magazine since its beginning. I think you are doing an excellent job and hope that you will be able to continue for as long as the paper is needed."—R. L. Morrison, Dickinson, Texas.

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"We have very much enjoyed this paper and will continue to read it. The world needs more people like the ones that make up this paper. It is nice to know there are still brethren that will hold to the truth in spite of all the opposition on the part of liberal brethren. May God bless you in this work."—Mrs. Bill Woods, Yellville, Ark.

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"Began taking Searching The Scriptures in May; and certainly enjoy it very much. I do wish you could include a sermon outline in addition to the

other good articles and material each month." — John A. Thurman, Perry, Fla.

"Thanks so much for sending me the good paper. . . . I enjoy the paper so much. Keep up the good work."—Mr. and Mrs. O. L. Troutman, Conway, Ark.

"Hope all goes well with you. Keep up the good work!"—Rufus R. Clifford, Nashville, Tenn.

"Keep up the good work."—J. P. Halbrook, Jr., Belle Glade, Fla.



I can not help but marvel at the lengths men will go to try to prove something that they intend to have anyway. This was demonstrated over and over again when brethren sought to justify the organ and the missionary Society. They need arguments that were opposed to all for which they had stood for years. They forgot the difference in the old and new Testaments and the great principle of silence in authority. The very path they chose is being trod by our institutional brethren today. No better example of this can be found than the "Total Situation" argument used by some in the west to justify the support of human institutions out of the church treasury.

The fallacy is very clear: FOR ANY TOTAL SITUATION to be scriptural every part of the situation has to be scriptural. If any part of the situation can not be proven by the scripture, then the "total situation" can not be proved by the scripture. The examples used are the worship of the church and the plan of salvation. Each, they say, comprises a total situation and then they proceed to make up one of their own to justify the church supported orphan home. There is one great difference in these situations to start with, and that is the first two are God given and the last one is man inspired. This alone would be enough to show the weakness in the very beginning. Let us look at all of them, however.

THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

- Singing proved by Col. 3:16  
Eph. 5:19 Heb. 2:12
- Prayer proved by Acts 2:42
- Preaching proved by Acts 20:7
- Communion proved by Acts 2:42  
Acts 20:7
- Contribution proved by 1 Cor. 16:1,2

Every one of these elements or acts are scriptural and when they are combined we have a scriptural situation. Suppose, however, we add instrumental music as another element. Although the first five are scriptural, we now have an unscriptural situation because we have an act or element for which we have no scripture. All of our brethren have seen this for years.

## THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Here we have acts of elements that are related, and not only related, but are in a divine order. This situation is scriptural if they are all present in the right sequence. This is only true, however, because each one of them is scriptural and there is a passage or passages to prove them to be right.

Faith	proved by Mark 16:16
Repentance	proved by Acts 2:38
Confession	proved by Acts 8:37
	Rom. 10:10
Baptism	proved by 1 Peter 3:21
	Mark 16:16

Let us suppose again that we add an element or act this is not scriptural. For example add the direct operation of the spirit on the sinner before he is saved as a condition. Now we have a situation that is not scriptural in spite of the fact that four of the elements are scriptural. It becomes an unscriptural situation for two reasons. The required experience or act is not proved by the scriptures, and for the second reason this takes them out of their God given order.

## THE TOTAL SITUATION IN BENEVOLENCE

The brethren who advocate this theory have various numbers of elements from time to time and seem to change the number to suit themselves and the needs of the hour. How would this work in the two examples they give above? Could the number of acts or elements be changed as well here? Of course, the answer is no for they are divine. If the elements in the total situation for which they argue were divine they could not be changed. The very fact that God did not give them is proven by the fact that they are changed. Be this as it may, however, one of the elements is this bold unscriptural statement: **IT IS NOT WRONG TO HAVE A BOARD.** Think of it for a moment. Just a bold, bare, groundless statement that it is not wrong to have a board over an institution that the church of the Lord supports out of its treasury. When they find the scripture for this element we will deal with some of the others. For their situation to be scriptural they must have scripture for this. We will leave it as we placed the others and watch the mails for the scripture.

A Board is right proved by .....

## "REMINISCENCE"

Ward Hogland, Greenville, Texas

This is the second in a series of arguments made on the polemic platform. Back in 1949 a small group of Sabbatarians moved into Poteau, Oklahoma to establish the Church of God, seventh day. They rented a small building and began operation. In their door to door work, members of the church were contacted and a debate was arranged. They selected Burt F. Marrs of Stanberry, Missouri. Mr. Marrs was reputed to be their most able debater. I understand that he died a few years ago.

Mr. Marrs used the old stock argument based on Mark 2:27 "The sabbath was made for man . . ." I am a man, therefore the sabbath is for me and all men. This was answered in the usual way. As far as I know the only way it can be answered. I pointed out that the sabbath was made for man but for a particular MAN, the JEW! I brought up many scriptures showing that the sabbath was given to the Jews only. I emphasized that we must take a scripture in context and also study all other scriptures which deal with the same subject. The late W. Curtis Porter in his debate with Dugger asked, "Who do you think the Jew was, a turkey gobbler?" He was a man and the sabbath was made for him.

Brethren all over the country have been able to see the fallacy in the Sabbatarian argument. However, of late they are making the same blunder on

2 Cor. 9:13. Notice the parallel.

Sabbatarians say: "Sabbath made for man". "Man" in this verse is not restricted. Therefore all men are to keep the sabbath.

Liberals say: "Unto all men". "All" and "men in this verse are not restricted. Therefore all men are to be supported by the church.

First, permit me to say that if the "all" is not restricted the church could support a millionaire. But someone says the context is talking about poor saints. Yes, indeed, that is the point. Let us take it in context. Then again, if "all" is not limited the church could support a man who will not work. Paul said, "If any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thes. 3:10). So what about it? Does "all" mean everybody? Who could believe it?

Why can't brethren use the same sincerity on 2 Cor. 9:13 that they use on Mark 2:27? Brethren should know that "all" is limited by the text! Look at 1 Cor. 6:12 "All things are lawful for me. . . ." Does this mean that Paul could lie, steal, commit adultery etc. No! Then Phil. 4:3 "I can do all things through Christ. . ." Here again "all" and "things" must be limited. The word "all" from the Greek PAS must be taken in context. Thayer says in his lexicon, when terms such as all, every, any etc. are used "They are of the class indicated by the noun." (pg. 491) Thus the pronoun "them" helps us to know the meaning of "all". Without wresting the Scriptures let us observe that Paul gathered this money for poor saints. This is revealed in 1 Cor. 16:1 and Romans 15. If he told them it was for saints (and he did) and spent it on "sinners" then Paul didn't tell the truth and could be classed as a hypocrite. When Paul said "Unto all" he was merely placing a complement on the church at Corinth. Since they had been willing to raise money for the Jews, Paul knew that should the occasion present itself they would certainly be willing to do the same for GENTILE CHRISTIANS!

Gentle friend, the Sabbatarians have as good an argument as the liberals. If one will stand, so will the other. And brother, if you think Paul took money raised by saints, said to be for saints, carried by saints and gave it to sinners you had better start keeping the sabbath because it was made for man and that is what most folks claim to be! Think it over.

## GIVING THE ANSWERS FOR OUR HOPE

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

I PETER 3:15

—Marshall E. Patton—

### GIVING THE ANSWERS FOR OUR HOPE

By Marshall E. Patton

**QUESTION:** We have been told it is wrong to disfellowship liberal congregations. Will you please answer this question. Thank you.—H. K.

**ANSWER:** My first reply to the above is—it depends upon what is meant by the word "disfellowship." Let us consider first the following scriptures and observations after which the question can be more clearly answered.

The Scriptures teach us to "withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." (2 Thess. 3:6-15. Cf. Matt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17,18; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 3:10,11.) The following expressions from the above references make clear a divinely prescribed course of conduct on the part of the faithful toward the "disorderly": "Withdraw yourselves," "let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican," "mark . . . and avoid them," "deliver . . . unto Satan," "not to company with," "with such an one no not to eat," "put away from among yourselves," "from such tum away," and "reject."

Perhaps there is no one word that covers all that is to be withheld from the "disorderly" better than the term "fellowship," hence, our use of the expressions "withdraw from fellowship" and "disfellowship" even though the exact expressions are not found in the Scriptures. However, from a positive point of view the word "fellowship" appears in 1 Jno. 1:7 identifying the communion, acceptance, good will, and harmony existing between the faithful child of God and the Father—and, as a consequence, the same things among all who "walk in the light."

After all brotherly efforts at restoring the guilty individual have failed of their objective church action is demanded: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. 5:4,5) This action demands a change in conduct on the part of both individual Christians and the church. The church should no longer count the guilty person as being within its fellowship. The guilty person no longer enjoys the endorsement, communion, and good will of our congregation. In fact, the congregation should not recognize thereafter the guilty person in any way (in its assemblies or otherwise) that would imply approval. Thus, "fellowship" is withdrawn. The guilty person is "disfellowshipped." We sometimes call this "discipline." The object of the whole process is the saving of the soul and preserving the purity of the church. (1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Thess. 3:14,15) This "discipline" is carried out further by individual

Christians as they follow the course of conduct prescribed in the references already cited for the "disorderly."

It should be noticed, however, that the obligation of the church as such in this matter of discipline is limited to those of its own membership. In other words there is no authority for one church disciplining another church or any member of another church in the sense described above. In this sense one church does not "disfellowship" another church. Individual Christians, however, are obligated to follow the above described course of conduct in relation to any withdrawn from brother regardless of the congregation of which he was a member. Wisdom on the part of an eldership would suggest that those under its oversight be informed and warned of any withdrawn from brother with whom they might have contact—even if he were a member of another congregation. This would enable the members to act toward such a brother according to the Scriptures. This would simply be the elders acting in behalf of the flock of which they are overseers. (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-3; Heb. 13:17) Furthermore, one church ought not to receive into its fellowship one who is the object of such discipline on the part of another church. Each congregation is responsible for and controls its own fellowship. (Acts 9:26-28) Normally one church should respect the disciplinary action of another. However, there might be circumstances demanding exception. If one who is the object of discipline on the part of one church should present himself for membership in another congregation and the latter had doubt concerning the disciplinary action of the former, the latter would have the right and responsibility to examine and act accordingly.

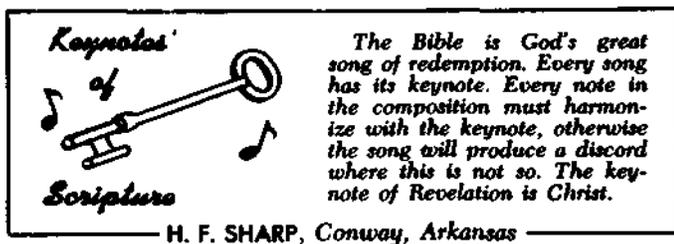
Now, we turn our attention to the attitude and conduct of individuals and churches toward "liberal congregations." By "liberal congregations" I understand our querist to mean those who sympathize with, teach, or practice church support of human institutions, the "sponsoring church" arrangement, or the "social gospel" as it relates to the mission of the church. Such practices are departures from the faith. I realize that the term "liberal" is used in other senses. I use it here, however, in the same sense in which it was and is used to identify our digressive brethren of the Christian Church and their innovations in the work and worship of the church.

The New Testament teaches that the attitude of brethren toward brethren involved in error should be one of forbearance for awhile. During this period all efforts should be exhausted to warn, reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. (Eph. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 4:2) A careful study of the letters to the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 2 and 3) shows that God wills that every church have opportunity to correct whatever evil be within before its "candlestick is removed." (Rev. 2:5) If, however, it persists in error, its doom is sealed—it ceases to be a church of the Lord.

The following scriptures throw light on our attitude and conduct toward false brethren and teachers: 2 Jno. 9-11; Eph. 5:6-11; Rom. 16-17. From these references we learn that we must not "bid him God speed," be a "partner of his evil deeds," or "partake with them." We must 'have no

fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Furthermore, we must 'mark . . . and avoid them."

In the light of the above one must conclude that after all efforts to turn a "liberal congregation" from its error have failed and that congregation persists in its evil, it should no longer be regarded as a church of the Lord—its candlestick has been removed! Both individuals and churches should act accordingly. This simply means that after the period of "forbearance" a faithful church should no longer announce the activities of a "liberal congregation," encourage, or in any way imply good will and endorsement. In this sense "liberal congregations" are to be "disfellowshipped" in their church activities. Individuals within the "liberal congregation" will have to be dealt with by individuals on an individual basis. Both individuals and churches should treat such "liberal congregations" as they would any other religious group in error.



## ISAIAH

The book of Isaiah is the book of church prophecy. There is so much about the church as well as many prophecies of the Christ.

The prophet gives a terrible picture of the gross sins of Israel in the first chapter. Think of a God who planted a great nation, nourished and brought them into a good land where his children rebelled against him and then he still is concerned about their welfare and desirous of their good. The picture is drawn comparing them to the dumb ox and ass, beasts of burden. Even here the beasts are more grateful and have knowledge that is lacking in God's people. See. Isa. 1:3 "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. See the condition of Israel further stated in 1:4-6 "A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

Isaiah 2 tells of the establishment of the church and the wonderful completion of the promise of God to save those who love Him and do His will. We have the virgin birth of Christ foretold. Isaiah 53 is a beautiful picture of the suffering Christ and the alienation of God from His Son in His death on the cross. What love is manifested in the beautiful picture of injustice, suffering and ignominies of calvary in Isa. 53.

See the most wonderful divine prediction of the church in Isa. 66:6-8.

1. "A voice of noise from the city"—descent of the Holy Spirit.

2. "A voice from the temple"—Preaching of the apostles.

3. "A voice of the Lord rendereth recompense to his enemies"—Terms of salvation to those who had put Jesus to death.

4. "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child."—Birth of the church without pain, See Eph. 2 "And hath made of the twain one new man thus making peace "

5. "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." — Spiritual nation of Israel (the church) brought into existence without bloodshed of a great many people. Yes Isaiah is truly the book that tells wonderful things of the Christ and His Kingdom the Church.

## DANGERS CONFRONTING THE CHURCH NO. 4

Thomas G. O'Neal, Jasper, Ala.

One of the dangers that the bride of Christ faces today is the danger of sectarianism. In the New Testament the original word is translated both sect and heresies. To be guilty of such is a grave sin because those guilty cannot be saved (Gal. 5:19-21). We need, therefore, to identify such so as not to be guilty in order that we may be saved.

Vine defines the word as, "a choosing, is translated "sect" throughout the Acts, except in 24:14, A. V., "heresy" (R. V., "sect"); it properly denotes predilection either for a particular truth, or for a perversion of one, generally with the expectation of personal advantage; hence, a division and the formation of a party or sect in contrast to the uniting power of "the truth," held in toto; a sect is a division developed and brought to an issue; the order "divisions, heresies" (marg. "parties") is "the works of the flesh" in Gal. 5:19-21 is suggestive of this."

This danger may take various forms. A sect may be erected about some man in a given area. All must agree with him, bow to his ever command, move when he says to move, stop when he says to stop, and act when he says act. If any dares to cross the traditional path, the wrath of the man and all those who blindly follow is incurred. He is the determination of truth. To learn the truth, one must get it from the preacher's lips. This is building a sect around one man in a given area.

We can erect a sect about a group of brethren. In a given area a group of brethren can so act that a sect is built about them. People become their disciples and not the Lord's disciples. The group holds the keys to truth. If one will be loyal to Christ, he must fall in line with the thinking of the group. If one is not among the select few, he is not considered faithful to the Lord nor is he in fellowship with the brethren in the area, because he disagrees with what the group thinks.

Sects may be built about schools. Brethren certainly have the right to operate schools just as they have the right to operate any other business. But at the same time that they may operate their business, they have no Scriptural right to make or to allow their school to be the determination for truth in the area, in the state, or within the nation. In some areas, if one doesn't approve of the practice of certain schools, he is not considered to be a faithful child of God. This is sectarianism within the Lord's church. No school has the right to dictate the truth that is to be believed by brethren and should the time ever come to any congregation that she must line up with the policies of a particular school in order to be considered faithful to the Lord, someone needs to put the school in its place.

We may become guilty of building up a sect about a paper such as this. We can get to the place that we think in terms of only those who write for this paper as being faithful and worthy of fellowship or those who read and subscribe to it as being worthy of our confidence. It is my convictions that it is the attitude of those brethren writing for this paper of wanting their articles compared with the SCRIPTURES, Acts 17:11, and if what is said in a particular article is the truth, accept it not because it was said in this paper, but **because you found it in the Book of God**. May the time never come that people will accept what they read from the pen of anyone in this paper, just because they read it here.

Sectarianism may result in the church today because of hero or emperor worship. People can become so in love with some paper, preacher, school or group of brethren, that they do not have the ability to see the error that they teach and this is dangerous. In Acts 12:21-23, Herod was worshipped as "god"; but he was just a man. Herod allowed men to worship him. This none should allow today (Acts 15:25-26): Many have those been who have had a good feeling in times past for some preacher, paper, or school, and are not able to stop following them as they turn aside from following the Lord.

As we condemn sectarianism in the church, this does not mean that men should not be respected for the work they have done. Peter wrote an epistle and in it addressed Paul as "our beloved brother Paul. . . ." (2 Pet. 3:15). Men may be respected for their labors, but are not to be followed above or beyond that which is written (1 Cor. 4:6).

Paul condemned sects within the church at Corinth. Corinth was divided (1 Cor. 1:10). Some in Corinth were following Paul, some Apollos, some Cephas, and some Christ (1 Cor. 1:12). Paul condemned them for such by saying they were carnal and walked as men. He raised the questions, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:13).

Men, papers, and schools are not the standards by which one is determined loyal. Truth, the word of God, is the determination of whether one is faithful to Christ. To have God and Christ, one must abide in the DOCTRINE OF CHRIST (2 Jno. 9). One's soundness and faithfulness is determined by how he stands upon the word of God and abides in the doctrine of Christ and not by what he thinks of any man, school, or paper.

## IS THERE A BAPTISMAL FORMULA?

Jimmy Tuten, Jr., St. Louis, Mo.

It is interesting to observe that many have not been able to fathom the commission that Christ gave to his disciples (Matt. 28:18-20). Even though the utterance is brief, there is still much misunderstanding over such expressions as, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The thought behind this expression is very common in the New Testament, and if all of the instances of its occurrence were considered and viewed properly, much of the general misunderstanding would be cleared up.

It is not the purpose of this article to deal with the meaning of "in the name," even though it does deserve a careful study. My concern involves the matter of whether or not this constitutes a formula to be uttered each time one is baptized. Do the Scriptures teach that there is a formula of any kind that must be used by the administrator of baptism?

### THE PROBLEM

I have before me some mimeographed articles and a tract in which the author labors to show that there is a formula for baptism, and that the formula is stated in Acts 2:38. He maintains that any deviation from baptizing "in the name of Jesus Christ," is to conform to a sectarian point of view. According to this material, it is unscriptural to say, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). One dare not use such expressions as "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48), or "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16). It is my humble opinion that the author of this material is himself sectarian in that he seeks to bind where the Lord has not bound.

In addition to this, there is the problem of practice becoming authoritative. Since some formal statement has been made by the person doing the baptizing over the years, brethren have come to think of the act of baptizing as a little ceremony in which something **must** be said. By tradition, a formula has come into being, and if a preacher deviates from the so-called formula, or says nothing at all, he is looked upon with disdain. His soundness is sometimes questioned. Since there are those who insist that there is a baptismal formula, and there are others who have simply accepted the idea that such exists, the need for some comment on, the question is necessary. Occasionally the peace and unity of brethren in some areas are threatened over the question.

### WHAT DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACH?

As we observe each instance in which the expression, "in the name of" occurs in connection with baptism, we notice that there is a lack of uniformity in the statements (CF. Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 1 Cor. 1:13). It seems obvious that the difference in the wording of the expressions show that no formula is intended. Each passage shows either what WAS DONE, or what IS TO BE DONE. The passages do not involve the matter of HAVING SAID, or something TO BE

SAID. Those who insist that there is a formal statement that must be said by the person doing the baptizing, are faced with the difficult task of determining which, if any, of the above statements constitutes the formula. Furthermore, the various forms of the word BAPTIZO do not infer the need for such a formula. Since nothing is said concerning a formula in the New Testament when Baptizing, the matter of saying something before, during, or after the baptism is of little consequence.

The efficacy of baptism depends upon the action, the design and the proper subject (Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16; Col. 2:12). The salvation of the individual being baptized does not in any way depend upon what is SAID by the one doing the baptizing. Just because something is to be done "in the name of the Lord Jesus," does not mean that a formula must be repeated using the Lord's name. This can be demonstrated from a number of examples found in the New Testament. One or two will be sufficient to illustrate my point. In Matthew 18:5, the Lord said, "and whoso shall receive one such little child **in my name** receiveth me." Is it necessary to utter a formula stating each time we fulfill the obligation imposed upon us by this passage, that it is in the name of Jesus? Or take the matter of assembling in the name of the Lord (Matt. 18:20). Is it an unscriptural gathering if we do not state formally that it is in the name of the Lord? The apostle Paul commanded that we "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17). Must I repeat some formal statement each time I do a kind deed? If I can omit a formula in these passages, why can I not do the same with reference to baptism?

*Continued Next Issue*

## WORSHIP

**D. W. H. Shelton, Tampa, Florida**

In the story of the Bible we have the gradual unfolding of God's eternal purpose to all mankind, and the lesson for us today is that we should not be disobedient to the law that He has given to us. It is faithful obedience that Jehovah wants, and with anything short of that He will not be pleased. We do not find in all the Old Testament the law that is to determine man's standing before God and to regulate the worship in His church. We do learn from the Old Testament that man is incurably religious. Every race in every age and clime has sought to reach upward to some higher power. This inclination to worship is so universal that it must be regarded as an integral part of man's nature. Man was created in the image and likeness of God, therefore we are created for the purpose and with the desire to worship.

When we come to the study of the worship and the laws governing it, we learn that Jehovah has given three systems of religion.

1—The family religion in the Patriarchal dispensation, in which God made known His laws and mode of worship to the Fathers (or heads of families), and they directed the worship according to

His will throughout that entire period. This lasted for twenty-five hundred years.

2—The National religion which was given to the Israelites only, and was never binding on any other nation or people. (Deut. 5:1-3). We read in Acts 14: 16, 17 that God in times past suffered nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

When God gave the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai it was to the Israelites only, because they were the chosen people of God for the next fifteen hundred years. Their worship was also directed by God and it was different from that of the Patriarchs.

3—The universal or world wide religion which we have today. It is for all people, regardless of race, creed, color, or social standing. The laws which made possible and regulated the worship of the Patriarch was not the revelation that determined the worship of the Israelites under the law of Moses. Just so, the revelation that is to make possible and regulate the worship today is not the same as it was in the days of either the Patriarchs nor the Israelites. Thus we can see the necessity of keeping distinctly in mind the law that Jehovah has given to mankind in each of these religious systems, in order that our worship at all times may be pleasing to Him whom we worship.

Since the worship of the Patriarch is not the same as that of the Israelites and the worship of Christians is different from either of them, then we must go to that part of the Bible that is directed to us to determine our standing before God and to regulate our worship in the church today. This can not be found in the Old Testament, for there we find God's instructions to the people who lived back there.

It is only in the New Testament that we find God's message to us. Here He reveals the worship that He demands today. This is why we ask the world to accept the New Testament, as it is the only rule of faith and practice.

Again, when we study the worship we learn that God has given certain specific items which we must observe. These items consist of singing, praying, reading (or learning), teaching, exhorting (preaching publicly), communion and giving. Let us notice briefly, and separately, each of these items.

1—We are commanded to sing songs of praise and thanksgiving to His holy name. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Eph. 5:19-21). "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." (Heb. 13:15). We must sing with the spirit and with the understanding also. (1 Cor. 14: 15). Some of the historians who lived near the close of the third century tell us that no mechanical instrument was used in the worship up to that time.

(Please Turn to Page 12)

# The News Letter Reports

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



MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

A. H. Payne, Jackson, Miss.

Having just returned from a week of preaching in Memphis, Tennessee and learning firsthand of the work of that great city, these facts of interest are submitted.

There are four loyal churches in the Memphis area. To the extreme north in Frazier, the church meets on James Road. They number about 50 and have purchased suitable property for a new meeting house which is to be built soon. Then, in the central part of the city, a church meets on Peabody Street. This church also numbers about 50 and has secured a large residence in which to meet. (James P. Needham was with these brethren in a meeting June 19-26.) In the extreme eastern section of the city a church meets on Highway 71. These brethren began only a few months ago and Horace Owens preaches for them. In the southern part of Memphis, a church meets at 3474 Winchester. This is the Oakville church and the one with which I recently worked and about which I offer these additional items of interest.

The Oakville church has two elders, Allen Grobe and Ralph Haynes, and six deacons. Mason Harris, who for several years preached in Norway, is preaching for this church. The membership numbers about 160 and the Bible study attendance will average about 200. Classes for all ages are held at the meeting house on Lord's Day mornings and evenings and on Wednesday evenings. Each Monday evening a Personal Work group meets for assignments in pre-arranged classes in the homes of the people in the area. There are 16 qualified teachers at work in this group. These brethren are at work!

The Oakville church meets in the modern and spacious building shown in the accompanying picture. The auditorium, which comfortably seats 450, is surrounded by 14 well-equipped classrooms. Their average weekly contribution of \$390.00 is used in a scriptural local work plus partial support of two preachers in other places.

During my meeting 6 were baptized and 3 identified. A letter from one of the deacons tells of a young couple being identified the first Lord's Day after the meeting.

Prospects for future growth appear to be unlimited. Thousands of the world's lost who live in that immediate area are being challenged by a working church with the pure and powerful gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. How can they fail?

## A GOOD MEETING

John H. Gerrard, New Albany, Ind.

Bro. James P. Miller is engaged in what may well be described as a good meeting. The preaching of the gospel has been great. In every lesson he has convinced his listeners with the fact that he knows revealed truth as few know it and presents it with power. Bro. Miller is an exceptional speaker. He does an outstanding job whether before a small group such as a ladies class or before hundreds of people. It is clearly evident that he loves the truth and is determined that others love it also.

Brother Miller has engaged in several meetings with the Silver Street church. From all reports this has been the best from the stand point of attendance and interest. The congregation has attended better than in any other meeting. And it has been consistent from first to last. More non-members have attended and have returned again and again. This speaks volumes for the work that has been done in the preaching of the gospel. It was my privilege to labor with brother Miller in a meeting here in New Albany the first year I worked with this congregation. As I close my work with this good church it is again in a meeting with brother Miller. Yes, it has been a good meeting in many ways and to brother Miller goes our thanks for a work well done.

Robert Jackson was in a meeting at Locust Street in Mt. Pleasant, Tenn. where Delton Porter preaches, during the month of June. . . . Paul Andrews of Tampa, Fla. was in a meeting at DeLand, Fla. in June. . . . Marshall E. Patton of Orlando, Fla. was in a meeting at Dover, Fla. the last of June. Paul Brock of Jacksonville, Fla. closed a meeting at New Haven, Tenn. July 21. . . . Quentin McCay was in a good meeting in July with the First Street church in Lawrenceburg, Tenn. Weldon Warnock is the local preacher. . . . In July Weldon Warnock was in a meeting in Giles County, Tenn.

Jere E. Frost of Birmingham, Ala. was with Jesse M. Kelley and the Newbern, Tenn. church July 7-14. . . . Earl Robertson of Fairview in Birmingham, Ala. was in a meeting in Simpsonville, Ky., July 16-24. . . . Rhymer H. Knight of Tampa, Fla. was with the Dundee church in a gospel meeting July 21-31.

Connie Adams, Orlando, Fla.—Due to the liberal views of the church in New Smyrna, Fla., a group left the old congregation to establish a church that will be sound in faith and practice. They are temporarily meeting in the Chamber of Commerce Building. Max Gregory preached last Sunday and Roy Gillian will speak July 14. I am scheduled for a meeting in Frostproof, Fla., July 22-28.

Charles E. Beatty will be in a gospel meeting at Lone Wolf, Okla., August 12-18. . . . James P. Miller was in a meeting at Westvue, Murfreesboro, Tenn. August 4-9. Dave Bradford is the local preacher. . . . Earl Fly of Holden Heights in Orlando, Fla. was in a meeting at Tigrett and Madina, Tenn., July 21-August 11. . . . William See of Little Rock, Ark. will

move to work with the Shelbyville Mills, Term, church about August 1. **Eugene Crawley** has been with this church and is moving to Russellville, Ala. to work with the Washington Avenue church.

Two were baptized in June at Temple Crest in Tampa, Fla., where **Rhymer Knight** labors. . . **Alton Elliott** of Trilby, Fla. recently closed a meeting with the Castle Heights church in Tampa, Fla. . . **Billy W. Moore** was with **J. R. Snell** and the Fulton Street church in Butler, Mo. in July 8-14. . . . **Bob Bunting** of Birmingham, Ala. was with the Marietta church in Jacksonville, Fla., beginning June 30. **Harold Dowdy** is the local preacher. . . . **John Iverson** of Port Arthur, Texas was in a meeting with **David Tant** in Decatur, Ga., July 10-17.

Reavis Petty, Morehead City, N. C. — I was in a meeting at Rock church in Dickson County, Tenn., June 30-July 7. Two were baptized. **Ralph Autry** is the regular preacher. I was also in a meeting at McArthur Heights near Jasper, Ala., July 8-14. **Thomas G. O'Neal** is the local preacher. Three were baptized and three placed membership recently at Morehead City, N. C. where I regularly preach. **Yater Tant** was in a meeting with this church June 2-9.

**DEBATE IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA** **Connie W. Adams**, Orlando, Fla.—My meeting with West End in Franklin, Tenn. resulted in 4 baptisms and 2 restorations. **Martin Lemon** is doing a good work there.

I am to meet **O. G. Lodge** of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn. branch) in debate in our building at Pine Hills September 16, 17, 19, 20. September 16 and 17 he will affirm salvation before baptism and September 19 and 20 I will affirm that the Pine Hills church of Christ is scriptural in origin, doctrine and practice. Mr. Lodge is an experienced debater. There are several Churches of God in this area with a substantial following. . . . I am presently in a good meeting with the church in Frostproof with one baptized so far. **Vernon Love** is the preacher there.

**Lee Gunter**, Largo, Fla.—I will be with the church of Christ at Rockdale, Ala., 15 miles east of Huntsville, Ala., beginning August 4th and continuing through August 11th. All in this area are invited to this meeting.



**NEW CHURCH IN LOUISVILLE, KY.**

The above picture is the new meeting house of the Expressway church in Louisville, Ky. The building officially opened May 26, 1963 with a gospel meeting. **James P. Needham**, the regular preacher at Expressway, did the preaching. Large crowds attended and many visitors from the community were present.

## IN LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

### Cecil B. Douthitt

Twelve years of work with the Haldeman Avenue Church in Louisville, Kentucky, ended in 1948. We now have moved back to Louisville for another period of service with this fine old church.

Since leaving here fifteen years ago I have served as "regular preacher" for churches in Brownwood, Texas; Fort Smith, Arkansas; and High Springs, Florida.

This invitation to come back to Louisville is the greatest honor I have ever received from any church in all my 49 years of preaching ministry. An invitation to come back 15 years after ending 12 years of service; How could any church bestow a greater honor upon any preacher? I do not feel worthy of such honor, but I am deeply and sincerely grateful for such a generous expression of confidence. My chief desire now is to do everything within my power for the furtherance of the cause of Christ in this area, and I shall try hard to make my efforts such that these brethren will never regret their letting me come back among them.

The true church of our Lord is much stronger in the Louisville area than when I left there in 1948. About five or six faithful congregations were all that could be counted then. Now there are seventeen. There were more pre-millennial churches in this area fifteen years ago than those sometimes called anti premillennial. Although five or six churches have been carried away in the tide of liberalism, digression and institutionalism within the last ten years, yet the seventeen true churches outnumber the liberals and the premillennialists combined.

Our address in Louisville is 712 Victoria Drive, Louisville 7, Kentucky. I wish all the preachers who have been sending me their bulletins would make this change of address on their mailing lists.

My Grandson, **Cecil G. Douthitt**, and his wife are still operating our publishing business in Fort Smith, Arkansas. All orders and other communications pertaining to "Douthitt's twelve books for all Bible classes and home study should be addressed to Douthitt Publisher, P. O. Box 752, Fort Smith, Ark.

**Rufus R. Clifford**, Nashville, Tenn.—The Eastland Church paid out of debt this year on property costing \$228,000. The notes were burned during a meeting with **Harris J. Dark** in June.

In recent months four have been baptized, seven restored, and thirty-seven have placed membership.

The church is gradually expanding the program of gospel preaching. Help is being given to preachers in Norway, Africa, Australia, and India. Support is being provided for preachers in Concord, N. C., Morehead City, N. C., Sumter, S. C., Needmore near Haleyville, Ala., and several other places are being considered by the elders.

The church is enjoying peace and the prospects for continued growth and a greater work are bright and encouraging.

**Roland A. Warren** has moved to Northside in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. from Dunedin, Fla. in March of this year.

**John A. Thurman**, Perry, Fla.—During the week of July 29—August 2 the Peny church conducted a

very successful Vacation Bible School with a high of 103 and an average of 94 each night. There were seven classes—two for adults and five for pre-school through Senior High. Sister Irene Sewell Foy of Nashville, Ten. taught a special ladies Bible class; 40 were enrolled in that class. Several women not members of the church attended the classes.

### RELIGIOUS DISCUSSION

"The Scriptures teach that water baptism, to the penitent believer, is for (in order to obtain) the remission of sins." Affirms: **Thomas G. O'Neal**, McArthur Heights church of Christ; Denies: **Jack Frost**, Holiness preacher of the Church of God, August 26, 27, 1963.

"The Scriptures teach that the sinner is saved today without water baptism." Affirms: **Jack Frost**; Denies: **Thomas G. O'Neal**. August 29, 30, 1963.

The debate will be in the meeting house of the McArthur Heights church of Christ, Jasper, Ala.

### GERRARD LEAVES NEW ALBANY, IND.

After almost four years of labor with the Silver Street church in New Albany, Indiana, my family and I are moving to Kokomo, Indiana. Our so-journ here has been pleasant and profitable. The Silver Street church is one of the best congregations of the Lord's people in the land. We learned to love and appreciate the good people of the church and made many friends in the community. We rejoice that as we leave, the work is on the up-swing. For several months there has been an increase in both attendance and contributions. For this we thank God.

We pray God's richest blessings on the church in New Albany and that this good church will remain free from the liberal influences of the day. Silver Street stands solid and sound in the old paths, and we yearn for her continued faithfulness. Our new address will be: 1228 South Webster, Kokomo, Ind.

L. L. Applegate, Cottdale, Fla. — This is to inform you that we have rented a small place in Vernon, Fla. for worship following a meeting by brother **David Tant** of Decatur, Ga. We now have opportunity to buy a large 6 room house with two large shaded lots on the main street of town. If we can secure \$300. as down payment, we will be able to meet the payments of \$35.00 per month. Any individual donation will be greatly appreciated. We are not institutional and have a mind to work. ....E. Paul Price, San Saba, Texas—The latter part of August I will bring to close a very pleasant work with the Westside church in San Saba. Plans have been made to begin work with the Franklin and Juniper church in Borger, Texas not later than September 1st.

The elders here would be happy to hear from any sound preacher interested in the work. You may contact Ray Wilder or James Clark, and Westside church of Christ, San Saba, Texas. Vernon Ripley

is to begin a meeting here August 5 and continue through the 11th.

### WORSHIP

The only instrument mentioned in the New Testament in connection with worship in the church is our hearts and our lips.

2—We are commanded to pray without ceasing. "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5: 17, 18). James expressed it this way, "And the prayer of faith, shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5: 15, 16).

Prayer is the only medium by which we can approach the throne of God's grace. Acceptable prayer causes God to act in our behalf, therefore prayer is powerful, for it takes hold of the power of God.

3—We must read in order to learn. Paul said to Timothy: "Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery; Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." (1 Tim. 4: 13-15).

Every Christian should be a teacher and if we will apply our time and talent to the study and understanding of the gospel, we will be able teachers. Paul criticized the Hebrew Christians for lack of knowledge. Hear him: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." (Heb. 5:12). The gospel must be preached. (Mark 16: 15, 16, Rom. 1: 16, and 1 Cor. 1: 21).

4—Christians are commanded to come together on the first day of every week to partake of the Lord's Supper. The historians we mentioned before tell us that for the first three hundred years after the church was established they came together the first day of the week to break bread. (Acts 2: 42, 20:7, and Heb. 10:25).

5—We must give of our means in order to support the church in the work that God has ordained for it to do. Any business, in order to succeed, must have a substantial financial backing. The church is the greatest business on earth; it is God's business. Every member is commanded to give as he or she has been prospered and as they have purposed in their heart. (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2, 2 Cor. 9: 7.) "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel shall live of the gospel." (1 Cor. 9: 14). (This verse is self explanatory.)