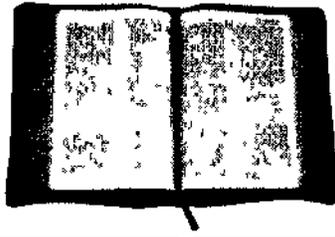


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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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THE LANGUAGE OF ASHDOD AND THE WIVES OF AMMON

Jas. P. Miller

"In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon and of Moab; and their children spoke half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews language, but according to the language of each people" (Nehemiah 13:23,24).

This is a much used passage by all who long for God's people to use a pure speech. It is worthy of all of the usage it has had through the years. In the early days of the restoration the pioneers had to go back to the Bible not only for doctrine and worship, but for an entire scriptural vocabulary and the expression, "call Bible things by Bible names," became one of the watchwords. Those who read the literature of the present day know that the language of Ashdod is with us again. We have made the same mistake as Israel of old and have married the sectarian ideas of promotion and institutionalism around us and they call for a vocabulary unknown to the Bible for they themselves are foreign to the word of God. As strange as it may seem you cannot promote an unscriptural idea or project in scriptural language. The speech of the Bible will only lend itself to the things taught in the Bible.

KEYS TO THE CHURCH

A few days ago a young man in the second year at one of the liberal colleges among us returned a key to the brethren at Seminole. Why such a youth would have had a key to the building was not known by the elders, but regardless of this, he took it upon himself to put a question mark after the name of the church on the envelope. In other words he did not believe it was a true church of Christ and wanted the brethren to know that he had passed judgment as one qualified to make such a decision. On the inside he simply said, "I found this key to the church—." Just think of the language of Ashdod. He is capable of judging the congregation, but does not know the difference between the church and the building, and said he had the key to the church. "Shades of the apostle Peter;" Jesus gave him the keys, but this young man has succeeded him. He is not to blame alone, however, for one of the biggest promotions among us written by men who know how to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in New York have made the same mistake over and over

in the tons of advertising and begging they do through the mails. Someone raises the question; "What difference does it make, we all know what they are talking about?" It makes this difference, we speak as we think and men who think of the blood bought church of the Lord in terms of brick and wood have no conception of its true nature.

IN CHARGE OF A CHURCH

In conversation a good while ago with some brethren who were condemning me for my stand on the current issues, the name of a preacher came into the discussion and one of the brethren volunteered the information that the said brother was "in charge of a church in a given city." Just think of it; he has solved all the problems of how churches could pool their income under sponsoring congregations, how they could do world-wide work, how they could build and maintain any kind of institution from the treasury of the church, but thought that this brother was in charge of the church where he preaches. (I hasten to add before the mail starts coming in that it may be true but it is not scriptural). It is the language of Ashdod because brethren are thinking as the wives of Ashdod, Ammon and Moab have taught them to think. The speech is bad enough but the way they feel that makes the words and expressions possible is deplorable.

ELDER OR PREACHER

I was born and spent the early part of my life in Calloway County, Kentucky. The Seventh Day Adventists were strong in that section and as all who know them know they call their preachers "elder." It is a title with them and all of their preachers wear it as far as I know. When brethren needed something to call the preacher and were not content to call him simply by his name they used the word Elder and made it a title. One of the elders of one of the congregations in that county who has exerted all the influence he can in keeping preachers out of that section, although some of them have proven through the years their soundness and faithfulness wrote me several years ago to tell me that he had solved all of the complicated issues of the day and knew exactly what the Bible taught on them and addressed the envelope "Bro. James P. Miller." He had the key to some of the hardest problems of this century but thought that "brother" was a title and started it with a capital "B" and placed it on the outside of an envelope. I understand that the Roman Catholics have an order of monks who wear the title "Brother" but in the word of God it is a rela-

tionship, nothing more, yet here is a man who sets himself up to even judge among his brethren who does not even know how to address an envelope to one of them. The language of Ashdod and the wives of Ammon.

HOLDING DOWN A CHURCH

A good brother informed me not too long ago that his kinsman was sorry to learn I had left the faith and then told me, "He is holding down a church" in a certain city. Worried about my faithfulness while he is "holding down a church." I expect that is exactly what he is doing, "holding it down." He would not be willing for the brethren where he preaches to hear both sides of any question, but tries his best to make up his own mind and then uses all the power he has to "hold down" anything else that might differ from his ideas. Too many preachers today are doing exactly this very thing. The pulpits where they preach are closed, not because the rank and file of the brethren want it that way, but because the preacher is "holding them down."

Let us go back to our original premise. You cannot promote and contend for unscriptural things in scriptural language. The nature of the doctrine or project determines the nature of the terms used to promote it and if the brethren in New York think that a few hundred thousand dollars will buy the church, they have missed the blood of Christ, and as the young scholar under discussion thought he had the key to the church, he missed the mission of the apostles. Nehemiah declares in verse 26 that rich and powerful king Solomon made the same mistake and that we should learn from him.

Searching The Scriptures

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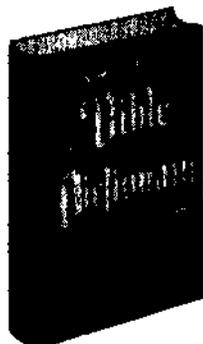
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Editorial . . . James P. Miller

It is with great joy that we read in the **Bible Herald** of January 15, a fine article by brother Fred E. Dennis. All of those of us that are familiar with the great Ohio Valley know of the great esteem and respect that brother Dennis not only commands now, but that he has had there for the last four decades. He has given his heart and tongue to the telling of the story from one end of the valley to another and has baptized hundreds, even thousands into Christ and is responsible for scores of congregations in that part of the world.

In his article he makes three observations to which **Searching The Scriptures** can say a hearty AMEN. First, he states that in forty five years of preaching he has never seen a member of the church that does not believe in taking care of widows and orphans. I have not been preaching as long as brother Dennis, but in almost thirty years of labor in the master's cause I know that he is right. **Secondly**, he says that in those forty five years he has never run across a congregation with more widows and orphans than it could care for and if such a church could be found there would be other churches that would come gladly to its aid. How right he is in this observation. It can not be successfully denied by any preacher or elder who wants to tell the truth. It was true in the first century and it is true now. In the third place he states an undeniable fact. We can do this great work without any other organization or institution other than the local church with its elders and deacons and members.

Searching The Scriptures is not reprinting this article without permission from brother Dennis, but we will be glad to do so. Furthermore, we want to assure him that the pages of this paper are his if he cares to write more on this or any other



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subject.

On the opposite page brother Clifton Inman, one of the editors of the **Herald**, attempts to answer brother Dennis and poses some questions for him. Nothing would suit brother Phillips and me better than to carry all of the exchanges on this very important matter. We want to assure brother Inman that our columns are open to him also. We feel that an open and free discussion of these issues would be of great benefit to the readers of both the **Herald** and **Searching The Scriptures**. We do not know the circulation figures for the **Herald**, but feel we can guarantee as great a reading public as is commanded by that journal.

In the meanwhile we know that Fred Dennis is able to answer for himself and will watch the pages of the **Herald** for his answer. We feel that every child of God in the "valley" should give the most serious attention to the article and the great truth that it teaches.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES,

We are adding some additional features to **Searching The Scriptures** with this issue. Brother Earl Fly, who recently moved to Lawrenceburg, Tennessee to labor with the First Street church, will write under the heading "Worldliness" and will deal with sinful practices of the flesh. Brother Fly is a good writer and an able preacher.

Brother Ferrell Jenkins of Bowling Green, Kentucky has agreed to write a section each month dealing with "Evidences" of God and His word. Brother Jenkins has spent a lot of time and effort studying this subject, and is capable to deal with it in a scriptural manner. He is editor of "Evidence Quarterly" which deals with this class of literature. We are glad to have brother Jenkins' helpful articles on this subject.

Brother Thomas G. O'Neal of Jasper, Alabama has been writing for **Searching The Scriptures** almost from its beginning. He will write each month on "Dangers Facing The Church." Brother O'Neal is a very able young man and will handle his subject in a scriptural manner.

If you have not renewed your subscription, please do so today. We need your renewal and you should be taking this paper. We believe **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES** is as good as any publication you could read, excepting, of course, the word of **God**, which is the only document inspired of God. Send this paper to some of your friends. Send us three subscriptions and receive your own FREE. The price is \$7.50 for the three, and of course your own is free. Do it today!

—H.E.P.

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DO NOT MISS A SINGLE ISSUE

The Menace of Catholicism

II Thessalonians 2:3,4

Luther W. Martin

"HOLY WATER" AND "ETERNAL FLAMES"

As the mortal remains of the late President Kennedy were placed in Arlington National Cemetery, it was announced by the Kennedy family that an "eternal flame" would be lit at his grave, and that it would continue to burn till the end of time.

However, the period of time that the flame would actually burn without being extinguished, was determined by unique and unpredictable factors. It was only a few days after the burial of the late President that a group of parochial school pupils, made a visit to his grave. The students made use of what is called "holy water," and liberally sprinkled the grave with the liquid. During this procedure, the cap or lid came off the bottle of water, and the "eternal flame" was no more.

It might be of interest for us to note some of the additional motives behind the episode:

(1) The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the souls of the departed are confined to what is called "purgatory" a non-biblical term, and this confinement continues until such time as the soul of the deceased is "purged" or cleansed, supposedly, so that it may be released from "purgatory." Further, according to Roman Catholic teaching, the visit by a Catholic to the grave of a deceased Catholic, can accomplish the following: "An indulgence of seven years can be gained, which is applicable only to the departed" (Rudolph F. Beckmann, Assistant Archdiocesan Director of Catholic Cemeteries, Archdiocese of St. Louis).

Therefore, according to Catholic assertion, each child or other Catholic faithful who visits the grave of a deceased faithful Catholic, can effect a seven-year earlier removal from "purgatory" for the deceased.

(2) The Roman Catholic Church and her adherents engage in the "blessing" of all kinds of objects and persons, alive and dead, for various reasons (?), and in this routine, "specially blessed water" called "holy water" is used. Now, "holy water," just like "purgatory" is not mentioned in the Bible. It is something that has evolved and developed down through the later centuries. The first reference to "holy water" or the use of it, goes back to the fifth century A.D., but it has been determined that the document making this early reference to "holy water" is counterfeit. An excerpt from *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, tells of "ONE OF THE EMPEROR'S HORSES BEING CURED, BY FORCING THE ANIMAL TO DRINK WATER BLESSED BY THE SIGN OF THE CROSS" (See Vol. VII, page 433).

Bertrand L. Conway, a priest, writing in *The Question Box*, page 350, states: "The holy water font of to-day goes back to the sixth century." Our only comment to this admission is . . . that half a millennium this side of Christ and the Apostles scarcely brings the use of "holy water" to apostolic practice or to Biblical authority.

So, just as the original flame was extinguished over John F. Kennedy's grave, and a new flame was supplied . . . similarly, the original teaching of the New Testament has been extinguished in the Roman Catholic Church, and in its stead, a new and different collection of religious ideas is taught. Any point of religious doctrine that is peculiar to the Roman Church IS NOT FOUND in Holy Scripture.

BIBLE WORD STUDIES
IN THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

E. V. Sygley, Jr.

CHREMATIZO, "were called," Acts 11:26
 No. 5

CHREMATIZO IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
Rom. 7:3a

In Rom. 7:3a the RSV reads as follows: "Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress (**moichalis chrematisei**) if she lives with another man while her husband is alive . . ." The context of this passage will be readily recognized. Paul is stating the law of the marriage relationship.

To most writers Rom. 7:3 enjoys the distinction of being the only New Testament passage that employs **chrematizo** in a way that is parallel to the use of that verb in Acts 11:26.

On Rom. 7:3 Hodge makes this interesting comment, "She shall be called, **chrematisei**, authoritatively and solemnly declared to be. **Chrematizein** (from **chrema**) is literally 'to transact business,' and specially in the New Testament to utter divine responses . . ." (**Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans**, p. 216).

Granting that the active **chrematizo** is to be translated "shall be called" one is face to face with a question. Does this use of **chrematizo** in any way involve the oracular element usually inherent in the verb? In other words, who "calls" this woman an adulteress? Some writers say the law calls her an adulteress. Is it possible that God calls this woman an adulteress? Of course, this is not to deny that the law naturally recognizes the woman in the same way.

It is generally conceded that in every passage in the New Testament where **chrematizo** occurs (except in Rom. 7:3 and Acts 11:26) God is implied as the source of the communication whether he is mentioned or not. Would this imply a similar use in Rom. 7:3 and Acts 11:26? I am not wholly denying the contention that **chrematizo** means "be called from one's business" in Rom. 7:3. I am merely raising the previous question in light of consistent Bible usage of **chrematizo** elsewhere.

On Rom. 7:3, the ICC makes this comment: "The meanings of **chrematizein** ramify in two directions. The fundamental idea is that of 'transacting business' or 'managing affairs.' Hence we get on the one hand, from the notion of doing business under a certain name, from Polybius onwards (1) 'to bear a name or title' (*chrematizei basileus*, Polyb. V lvii.2);

(2) . . . the 'answers, communications, revelations, given by an oracle or by God." (**A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans** p. 173).

WALKING BACKWARDS

Harold Dowdy, Jacksonville, Fla.

Clowns and comedians use the "walking backwards" bit to give the impression that they are **coming** instead of **going**.

Churches do that too. An example: **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC** ("The Social Gospel" or "Institutionalism" could be used if you like)—

1. If a "church of Christ" had as its regular **preacher** one who was a firm advocate for the use of instrumental music in worship and yet this church said, "We don't go along with the instrumental music crowd," would, you believe it?

2. If this same "church of Christ" used its **NAME** along with those churches in the city who **did** use the instrument, when advertising in the newspapers, and yet said, "We don't go along with it," would you believe it?

3. If this same "church of Christ" used for its **meetings** ONLY those men who advocate the use of the instrument in worship to God, at the very time when this innovation was dividing the Lord's church, and yet this church said, "We don't go along with it," would you think they were coming or going?

4. If this same "church of Christ" encouraged her members to subscribe to **liberal papers** that advocated the use of the instrument and branded all those who opposed its use as "anti," and yet they said, "We don't go along with it," could you tell which way they were going?

This CHURCH says—"We don't go along with it." **God's Word** says—"For he that biddeth him God speed is **partaker** of his evil deeds" (II John 11).

Certainly they "go along with it," whether it be a matter of the instrument, the social gospel or institutionalism. They encourage its use, they allow it to be advocated. Now they may NOT have the courage AT THIS TIME to put it in their worship or work but they DO go along with it.

Sure they GO ALONG WITH IT, and everybody, but everybody knows it but them! They try to give the appearance that they are traveling the other way by WALKING BACKWARDS. Yet all this time they are **in, with, and for** the liberal crowd.

Walking backwards is the best way in the world to fall and break your head.

THE "ISSUE" HAS NOT CHANGED

Walter N. Henderson, Clermont, Florida

Brother Gayle Oler writing in **Boles Home News** under the title "The 'Issue' Has Changed Again!" made the charge that opponents of institutional homes have changed the "issue" after every debate, or two. This article has been reprinted in several of the bulletins published by these homes. For the information of these brethren, and all others, who may be concerned, the real issue has not changed — it hasn't been discussed very much. The real issue is **the extent and scope of the benevolent work of the**

church. Various related matters have been discussed, but the real issue is just now being approached. No doubt, this is why brother Oler thinks the "issue" has been changed.

He says: "The very fact that they change so frequently is a tacit admission that they realize they were wrong, that they have been defeated on previous ones, . . ." If these changes by the opponents of institutionalism "is a tacit admission" they were wrong and defeated on previous positions, what do the changes made by the advocates of these institutional homes indicate? Our brother should have been the last man to have made this charge.

Some one criticized Boles Home for being under elders from several congregations, instead of being under the elders of the local church. Brother Oler answered: "As we have published repeatedly before, the elders of the church of Christ at Terrell, Texas, have the responsibility of the oversight of Boles Home. They appoint a group of men to serve them regularly and properly in the management of the affairs of the Home. These men are answerable to the elders. So the criticism is untrue." (Facts, Feb. 1, 1952.) Five weeks later he wrote: "Boles Home is not a part of the church any more than any other home . . . Boles Home is answerable to the elders of the church in exactly the same way as any other home." (Facts, March 8, 1952.) Brother Oler either thought all of the homes of the members were under the oversight of the elders of the church at Terrell, or he changed his position about the elders having the oversight of Boles Home. Is this "a tacit admission" of being wrong? Perhaps, the "issue" had changed?

Brother Oler stated: "An institution or facility serving the church, or doing a good work as the church's servant is under no obligation to prove itself scriptural (authorized in the scriptures) as to organization, origin or practice, i.e. hospitals, banks. Even so of orphan homes." (Boles Home News, Oct. 10, 1954.) Notice: he placed these homes in the category with utility companies and banks — they are business institutions. On January 31, 1957, during the Porter-Woods Debate at Paragould, Ark., he accepted Woods' contention that these homes are divine institutions. These homes changed from business concerns to divine institutions. What a change! Is this another "tacit admission" of being wrong after another defeat? Had the "issue" changed again?

Perhaps, no one has made more, or greater, changes than brother Guy N. Woods. In this brief article I shall not deal with all of them. Let us hear him: "Of course it is right for the church to care for the 'fatherless and the widows in their afflictions,' but this work should be done by and through the church, with the elders having the oversight thereof, and not through boards and conclaves unknown to the New Testament." (A. C. C. Lectures, 1939, pp. 53, 54.) By January, 1956, a change had taken place; these "boards" which were "unknown to the New Testament" in 1939 were "the means by which, or through which, the church works in order to accomplish that which God ordained." (Woods-Porter Debate, p. 8) The elders had been set aside; "boards and conclaves unknown to the New Testament" had been enthroned over the "God ordained" work of the church. What a change! "The ship of Zion has

floundered" once more "on the sand-bar of institutionalism." When this debate was repeated at Paragould January 1957, these boards which were "unknown to the New Testament" had become divine institutions. Some change! How can a thing "unknown to the New Testament" be a divine institution? Brethren, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." Was Guy's consciousness of being wrong and defeated in proportion to his change? Had the "issue" changed again? At Abilene it was right for the church to care for orphans, but in Birmingham the church couldn't do it. Another "tacit admission" of being wrong.

Christian Church preachers realize the New Testament does not authorize the use of mechanical instruments of music in the worship, so they run to Psalms for their authority. During the Cox-Woods Debate in Miami, brother Woods couldn't find authority for his "boards" which are "unknown to the New Testament," so like the Christian Church preachers, he ran to Psalms to find authority for these homes. Any thing that is not authorized in the New Testament is not a work of the church. "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." (Gal. 5:4) Guy didn't make that argument at Birmingham nor at Newbern. Had the "issue" changed again?

For several years all we could hear was: "The law says these homes operated by churches have to be incorporated," but we didn't hear anything about this at Newbern. Why? The "issue" changed at Birmingham!

About the only position brother Woods has taken relative to church benevolence, which has not changed, is his claim not to have changed.

Brother Oler says: "Several years ago we heard that all these homes should be under the elders 'as a part of the local church,' for elders rule only over the local church.

"But after a discussion or two, these brethren abandoned such arguments, and said their objection was 'centralized control,' and that the children's home was parallel to the missionary society! Then another discussion or so, they changed their contention and said that the church should care for these children in private homes 'like the Bible teaches,' either in adoption or on a foster-home basis.

"But another discussion or so was disastrous to their position, and so now we find Charlie Holt in Jacksonville declaring that the church of Christ cannot take money from its treasury UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES TO FEED OR CLOTHE A HUNGRY OR HOMELESS CHILD AT ALL! He said he was not concerned about the organization, or the 'how' of it, that it just could not be done!"

This statement does not fairly represent brother Holt's life, position, nor what he said. It is framed so as to create prejudice; it is as the sectarian whine that all who are not baptized will go to hell! The proposition brother Holt affirmed proves the statement to be incorrect: "The Scriptures teach that in the field of benevolence (assisting those in physical need) churches are limited or restricted in the use of their funds from their treasuries to those who are saints (those who have been baptized into Christ)." Some orphans are Christians.

Brother Oler's statement pictures brother Holt as

being a cold, heartless, unchristian man who is an "orphan-hater" who would let them starve. Just the opposite is true. He is a Christian who practices "pure and undefiled religion" while teaching others to do the same. He and his good wife are doing more for homeless children than any congregation I know anything about. They are raising four of them, and you have never heard him blowing his trumpet about it. He is also deeply concerned about the purity of the church, and what the Bible teaches about its work. He is not the kind of man who will put his obligation off on the church or some institutional home. Here is a statement he made to me: "Of course, I do believe that the church can assist an orphan, or anyone else, who is a Christian."

Suppose all who oppose these homes had made all of the changes listed above, what would it prove? Would this change what the Bible teaches? Would it prove the Lord has placed the obligation of building and maintaining these institutional homes on the church? You can rest assured that anything that is authorized by the inconsistency of brethren is not of God.

These homes are not a part of the church, neither does the Bible teach the church is to care for orphans through adoption or in foster-homes. The church gave relief to the poor saints, and the elders had the oversight of this work. Where did any church in the days of the apostles give relief to anyone other than a believer? This is the extent and scope of church benevolence — this is the issue. If brother Oler will show willingness to discuss this on the polemic platform, he will learn what the issue is; there are a number of able men who will take the time to teach him.

It is true that "oversight," "organization," "centralized control," and "parallelism to the missionary society" are all involved in, and related to, the real issue, if the extent and scope of church benevolence is as broad as some teach. Brother Holt is concerned about these things, but he thinks first things ought to come first. Why debate about organization, oversight, centralized control, and such like, until it is proved that the church is obligated to care for unbelievers, and go into the child-raising business? This is like debating the "mode" of baptism while denying its design — a waste of time. Even brother Woods says: "The church is not a charitable organization and it is not authorized to do the work of caring for fatherless children." (Gospel Advocate, 1957, pp. 228,229) On this same subject brother Srygley said: "There is no scriptural way to organize a thing that is not in the Scriptures." (Gospel Advocate, 1931) No, the "issue" has not changed. Charles Holt laid the ax to the tap root of the institutional tree! He laid the ax to the issue and hewed to the line of truth!

In Jacksonville brother Holt begged brother Deaver to leave off human wisdom and discuss what the Bible says about benevolence. He begged for one passage of scripture which authorizes the church to give to any home; he begged him to give one passage which authorized the church to give relief to anyone other than a saint, but his begging went in vain; no such scripture was given.

Brother Oler witnessed the destruction of the Deaver-Warren syllogism; its component parts were smashed; its constituent elements turned to dust.

Deaver said wherever Holt attacked the syllogism, there the battle would be pitched. Holt attacked; Deaver fled the syllogism; he never put it back on the screen. Brother Holt showed the first and last constituent elements were false. He further demonstrated that a valid syllogism did not always teach the truth. He pointed out that this one was built on an assumption; therefore, it taught error.

Brother Deaver became so confused his moderator, brother Warren, spoke out while Deaver was speaking, trying to direct him, but Deaver was too bewildered to be directed; he floundered on unto the end.

Deaver, Warren, and Woods all have used that syllogism, insisting it taught the truth when it contained all of its constituent elements; this they illustrated with the plan of salvation and the worship. But each man's syllogism has differed from the other two's in the number of constituent elements — something is wrong — you couldn't do that with the plan of salvation and the worship and teach the truth.

This issue should never be settled by the inconsistencies of brethren; it must be settled by "Thus saith the Lord." We should be interested in changes only as they are related to the truth. A change away from the truth leads to apostasy; such a change cannot make an unscriptural practice of the church right in God's sight. A change toward the truth shows spiritual growth, and this is to be commended in all. How is a Christian to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:18) without changing? If you are building on man's inconsistency, you are building on sinking sand.

Science and Truth

I Tim. 6:20-21

William D. Burgess

When the fossils in the horse series were arranged there were many fossils that were omitted. There are claims that at each level from Eohippus, the dawn horse, on, adaptive changes took place and numerous groups evolved, but all except Equus are now extinct. This has been decided by those responsible for determining which fossils should go into the evolutionary series of the horse. It seems as if a fossil did not fit the theory then it was put aside. It is possible that the series of the horse is really not a series after all. Consider a horse, a mule and an ass. These three could be arranged in a series but this would not be proof that the ass evolved into the mule and the mule into the horse. Of course this would make a good series, but it is not true. Today horses are born occasionally with one of the splint bones bearing phalanges or toes. The terminal one may bear a reduced hoof. This is much like the condition found in some of the fossils which are supposed to be the early ancestors of our modern horse. There are many forms today, even in the human race which are atypical. There are many factors which affect the skeleton and its development. We can observe this around us today. It is not

impossible that some of the fossils are atypical or even fakes, as some have proven to be in the years past. The real effort in these matters seems to be the effort to exclude God. The evolutionist is generally unwilling to admit that God could create all things as they are, but is ready to declare that a horse the size of a small dog could change, as the need arose, to produce our modern horse. The evolutionist does not believe in miracles; he calls his miracles—evolution!

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: If there be any virtue, if there be any praise,

"THINK ON THESE THINGS"

"THE GOSPEL WHICH WAS PREACHED OF ME"

H. E. Phillips

No man in New Testament times received more attacks and criticism for his preaching than did the apostle Paul. Again and again he was called upon to defend his apostleship and the gospel which he preached. The book of Galatians is largely devoted to the proof of his apostleship and the divine origin of the gospel which he preached in contrast to the false doctrines which were carrying them away from the Lord. The ideas of what constitutes proof of sound doctrine today may vary, but the one way to prove what is sound doctrine was used by the apostle in Galatians 1:11,12:

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Of course, we do not today receive the gospel directly from Jesus Christ, but we do receive what was delivered directly to the apostles. What we read in the New Testament is the word of Christ just as Paul and the other apostles received it. But usually when one comes to prove a proposition or establish a practice he uses other arguments besides the fact that it is written in the New Testament. Those who do such are occupying the grounds of the false teachers against whom Paul wrote in the Galatian epistle. A certain doctrine is taught; and to make the hearer believe it, the teacher or preacher resorts to the following claims:

1. My years of experience. Paul could not say much for his years of experience in the gospel as compared to the other apostles. He speaks of himself as "of one born out of due time." Now one of the first arguments made is that of preaching so **many** years. That is supposed to make the hearer accept what he says. This is no proof because a man may preach error for fifty years and never get right.

2. My education. Paul mentioned his education in the righteousness of the law at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), but he counted all this for nothing in preaching the gospel delivered to him by Christ

(Phil. 3:7-9). One does not know God by the wisdom of this world (I Cor. 1:20,21). The number of degrees a man has does not prove his preaching to be true.

3. I stand with great men of the past. Paul stood with one of the greatest teachers of his day—Gamaliel—but he did not offer that as proof of the truth he preached. Often great men of the past were wrong in what they taught. The thing to do is to prove that these men stood upon the only foundation of truth—the New Testament, then we have only proved that we have the truth because it is taught in the word of God. Just the fact that we stand with great men of the past does not give credence to what we teach; it is the fact that it comes from the New Testament.

4. The majority agree with my stand. Not one time do we read of Paul, or any other apostle, using this argument to prove either apostleship or truth of the gospel which they preached. History abounds with proof that the majority are always opposed to the gospel of Christ. It is true that many people are more persuaded by the stand of the majority and the elite than they are by what is taught in the gospel of Jesus Christ, but this does not prove their doctrine to be true. Just the fact that one stands with the minority does not prove him right. It must be proved by what is taught in the word of God. Neither the majority nor the minority proves a man to be teaching the true gospel.

5. I have never changed. This is supposed to guarantee that the position held without change is the true one. This is certainly not the proof Paul used to establish his apostleship and his gospel. He freely admitted his change and told why. His proof was not in the consistency of his own belief and practice through his years, but rather that he had learned and received the truth that did not come from man, nor by man, but from the Lord himself. He says that in his former course he "thought" he was right, but learned of his error and changed. The mere fact that one has never changed his teachings does not prove his doctrine to be true. The only proof of sound doctrine is what is taught in the New Testament. Let that be our only appeal.

COMMENTS TO EDITORS

"Please renew my subscription to Searching The Scriptures for another year. I enjoy your monthly paper very much."—Walter Overturf, Buckner, Ill.

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PREMILLENNIALISM
(No. 2)

THE ABRAHAMIC PROMISES

Connie W. Adams, Orlando, Florida

Beginning in Genesis 12, God made a series of three distinct promises to Abraham. The fulfillment of those promises occupies the rest of the Bible and concerns our hope for the world to come. God promised (1) that he would make a great nation of Abraham's seed; (2) that he would give to that nation a land; and (3) that in his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed. The first promise concerned the nation of Israel, the second involved the land of Canaan, and the third was spiritual, pointing to the coming of Christ, the seed of Abraham through whom all nations of the earth would be blessed. A study of these promises and their fulfillment is essential to any proper review of the theory of Premillennialism. That system affirms that there will be a literal 1,000 year period of time between the second coming of Christ and the judgment during which he will reign on David's throne in Jerusalem, the Jews will return to Palestine and the kingdom prophecies will then be fulfilled. Since their theory concerns the Jews, Canaan and Christ, and since so much of the Bible is taken up with the fulfillment of these promises, should they be wrong, here, their whole system will be found out of harmony with the greatest portion of the Bible. This I believe to be the case.

1. **The National Promise.** God said to Abraham "And I will make of thee a great nation" (Gen. 12:2). "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the

earth" (Gen. 13:16). "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be" (Gen. 15:5). This promise was made at a time when Abraham and Sarah had no heir. Though the promise was twenty-five years in fulfillment, Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness (Gen. 15:1-6). Both he and Sarah were old, yet Paul said "In hope he believed against hope" (Rom. 4:16-22). The fulfillment of such a promise under such circumstances required divine intervention. This was all part of the divine plan leading to the spiritual promise to bless all nations through Christ. The promise was renewed to Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5). Then to Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Esau were born. God chose Jacob through whom the promises should come. Jacob had twelve sons, one of whom was Joseph. What seemed at the time a great personal tragedy, when Joseph was sold into slavery by his own brethren, proved to be the providential means through which the national promise was fulfilled. It was not until Jacob and all his went down into Egypt that the great nation was formed. Those seventy souls were separated in Egypt and multiplied until they were truly a mighty nation of people, distinct in customs, characteristics and faith. It was four hundred and thirty years from the time of the promise until this nation, newly delivered, and formed through the watchful providence of God, stood at the foot of Mt. Sinai to receive the law from Moses. In Exodus 19:6 the Lord said they were "an holy nation" unto him. That promise was fulfilled.

2. **The Land Promise.** "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever" (Gen. 13:15). "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. 15:18). It is the general contention of premillennial teachers that the land promise has never been fulfilled and they connect that with the return of the Jews to Palestine in the millennium. What they fail to see is that every **land promise concerning Israel has been fulfilled. Not one has failed.** After the nation had wandered in the wilderness forty years, Joshua led them into the promised land. At the end of his life he made this speech: "And behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that **not one thing hath failed** of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and **not one thing hath failed thereof.** Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you; so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good **land which the Lord your God hath given you.** When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good **land which he hath given you**" (Josh. 23-14-16). Joshua said not one thing had failed which God had promised, and twice identified the land as a part of that. But their retaining of the land was conditioned on obedience to God. Disobedience offered the promise that they

would perish off that land. Premillennialists object that the "larger" land promise has never been fulfilled, the land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates. But they are wrong again. Solomon's kingdom covered the exact dimensions of the land promise. "And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt" (II Chron. 9:26; I Kings 4:21). One of the great errors of this system is that they look for the fulfillment of things which have already come to pass.

The premillennialists turn to the promises made during the captivity and say that God never has fulfilled his promise to bring them again into their own land. First, God did not promise to fully restore the land after they went into captivity. He did promise to bring a remnant into the land again and this was done under Ezra, Nehemiah and Zerubbabel (II Chron. 36:20-23). Second, Moses warned them that if they forsook God their days would not be prolonged upon the land, and begged them to choose life that they might continue to dwell in the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Deut. 30:17-20). Third, Joshua told them they would be destroyed from off the land if they broke the covenant God made with them (Josh. 23-15-16). Fourth, Jeremiah promised destruction upon them and dramatized it by taking a potter's vessel and breaking it before the ancients of the people, saying "Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again" (Jer. 19:11). Complete restoration was not promised. The remnant did go back. The lineage of Judah was kept in tact and the promise lived on looking toward the seed to bless all nations. There is not one land promise to Israel that has not been fulfilled and premillennialists are wrong when they seek to inspire false hope in the Jews and cause them to glory in their flesh.

3. The Spiritual Promise. Some premillennialists, though not all, insist that the promise to bless all nations through Christ must await the thousand years for fulfillment. I debated one such teacher in 1958 who flatly said that this promise had not been fulfilled at all. In a book published by that man, entitled *Understanding the Bible*, he denied that any of the promises to Abraham had been fulfilled except making a nation of his seed. If this contention were true, we would be robbed of choice spiritual blessings we presently enjoy in Christ. In Acts 3:25-26 Peter reminded the Jews then present of the promise to Abraham to bless all nations in his seed, and then said God sent Jesus Christ to bless them, "in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." The blessing of the nations through Christ comes as people in those nations are turned from sin unto God. In Gal. 3:6-9, Paul connected this promise to bless all nations with the justification of the heathen through faith, and said those that are of faith are "blessed with faithful Abraham." In Gal. 3:26-29 Paul showed that "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." That which counts now is not Abrahamic flesh, but Abrahamic faith. Paul said that now "he is a Jew who is one inwardly" (Rom. 2:29). The gospel of Christ is to be preached to all nations for the obedience of faith. In this is fulfilled the promise to

bless all nations through the seed of Abraham. That seed was Christ (Gal. 3:16). To misunderstand these promises and their fulfillment is to misunderstand most of the Bible and that is exactly what premillennialists do. The gospel, the church, its work, and the salvation of our souls are all involved in these promises. Further, there was a proper sequence to them that must not be destroyed. The formation of the nation and the giving of the land were all preparatory to the spiritual promise. A nation had to be kept distinct. Lineages had to be recorded and kept to assure the rightful heir to bless all nations. Unto that nation the sacred writings were committed (Rom. 3:2). From them the prophets arose. All of this combined to create an indisputable array of evidence to establish the claims of Jesus Christ and to assure our salvation through him. Premillennialists have been so preoccupied with the material aspects of these promises that they have overlooked the eternal purpose of God to use these means in effecting the salvation of the world. Thus, in a sense they substitute the means of accomplishing the purpose for the purpose itself.

The next article will concern the proper view of prophecy and fulfillment as an answer to Premillennialism.

Tracts

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 Benevolence And The Church, Harris J. Dark

The News Letter Reports

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

GOSPEL MEETING

Hoyt H. Houchen of Abilene, Texas will be the speaker in a series of gospel meetings at the meeting house of the church of Christ in Forest Hills, Tampa, Florida, March 1 through 8, 1964. Services will begin each evening at 7:30 p.m. Brother Houchen is evangelist with the North Park church in Abilene, Texas, and is a capable proclaimer of the truth. You are invited to be present as often as possible. Remember the time: 7:30 p.m. March 1 through 8, 1011 W. Linebaugh Ave., Tampa, Florida.

Roy E. Cogdill of Canoga Park, California, preached in a gospel meeting with Hoyt H. Houchen and the North Park church in Abilene, Texas, January 6-15 . . . James P. Miller preached in a gospel meeting at the Azelea Park congregation in Orlando, Florida, February 2 through 7, at 7:30 each evening . . . A series of sermons will be delivered by different speakers at the meeting house of the Walnut Street church in Greenville, Texas, March 2 through 6. The following will speak beginning Monday and continuing through Friday: Charles Holt, Wichita Falls, Texas, "Walk As Children Of Light;" Vernon Ripley, Lewisville, Texas, "Restoring The New Testament Church in Worship;" Joe Swint, Cooper, Texas, "The Ninety and Nine;" Harold Fite, Ft. Worth, Texas, "The Work of Perfecting ;" and Carl Allen, Mt. Pleasant, Texas, "What Makes and Keeps A Strong Church." Ward Hogland is the preacher at Walnut Street.

James P. Needham of Expressway church in Louisville, Kentucky will be the speaker in a gospel meeting with the Belmont church in Indianapolis, Indiana, March 2 through 8. William Wallace is the preacher at Belmont . . . Dave Fraser preached in a meeting at 9th Street church in Bessemer, Alabama during the week of January 26 . . . A series of sermons dealing with the "Fullness of Christ" were presented at the East Hill meeting house in Pensacola, Florida, January 20 through 24. The following men spoke: Don Patton, Panama City, Florida; Clyde Brannon of Andalusia, Alabama; Pete McKee of Oak Grove, Florida; Sewell Hall of Birmingham, Alabama; and Lynn Headrick of Saraland, Alabama.

The Fifth Avenue church in Bessemer, Alabama enjoyed a gospel meeting January 12-17 with Robert M. Atkinson, who recently moved to Bessemer to labor with this church . . . David Harkrider will be the speaker in a meeting at Pinson, Alabama in March 1-8 . . . Bill Cavender will speak in a series of meetings with the Fourth Street church in Cullman, Alabama, March 15-22. Richard Weaver is the local preacher . . . Edd Hayes will preach in a meeting at Fultondale, Alabama, March 22-29.

Don Patton is doing a good work with the faithful brethren in Panama City, Florida. He recently baptized three, and had to take them out of town to be baptized because he was refused the use of the baptistry by the digressive group . . . H. E. Phillips was with Oaks Gowen and the West Bradenton church

in Bradenton, Florida, February 2 through 9 . . . Irven Lee of Jasper, Alabama, was with William Lewis and the Ninth Avenue church in St. Petersburg, Florida during the week of January 19.

Earl Fly, Orlando, Fla.—After three years with the Holden Heights congregation in Orlando, Florida, I am moving in February to work with the First Street church in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee.

Oak Grove Building Burns—"The meeting house of the Oak Grove church at 9201 Thixton Lane (Louisville, Ky.) caught fire from the furnace and burned up Wednesday of last week (Dec. 25, 1963). Bro. James Hahn is the preacher for this good church. They had some insurance on the building. The Oak Grove church will meet at the usual times for services in the basement of the preacher's home at 9203 Thixton Lane—next door to the building location — until a new auditorium can be built." (Grover Stevens, Park Boulevard Bulletin).

PAUL BROCK TO GEORGIA- OAKS GOWEN TO JACKSONVILLE

In December of last year it was announced to the Lakeshore church in Jacksonville, Florida that Paul Brock would be moving February 1, 1964 to preach with the church in Lakeview, Georgia, near Chattanooga, Tennessee. Oaks Gowen of Bradenton, Florida will move to Lakeshore in Jacksonville in March. Brock moved to Lakeshore nearly four years ago after a good work in Dyersburg, Tennessee. He is leaving the work in Jacksonville because of the need for his labors in Lakeview, Georgia.

The elders at Lakeshore spoke of brother Brock and his work in these words: "Since brother Brock's arrival the church has grown in many ways. The most outstanding way is that the membership has grown spiritually and grown closer together . . . May the Brocks realize their leaving us is much too soon and our hearts are heavy as a result. But may we realize and rejoice that brother Brock has the faith and courage to answer a call where he sees a greater need for his services. Our love and best wishes go with the Brocks."

Brother Oaks Gowen has done an outstanding work in Bradenton for a number of years. He is well loved and respected by faithful brethren in that section of Florida. He is leaving Bradenton with the best wishes and prayers of the brethren there.

Morris D. Noman, Plant City, Fla.—The work of the Lord continues to show some progress in Plant City. There were ten baptisms in 1963. Despite the loss of several families that moved to other areas we were able to hold our own in attendance with an all time high in contribution. We have two programs on WPLA (910KC) Sunday at 8:45 and Wednesday at 11:45. Harry Pickup was with us for five nights in December lecturing on Christ as the Master Teacher; He spoke on: "Jesus, the Maker of Teachers;" "His Methods of Teaching;" "His Objectives;" "His Successes;" and "His Problems." I recommend this series to any church to improve the teaching program and study habits of saints. Marshall Patton will be with us the first week in April.

ANSWERS FOR OUR HOPE

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

I Peter 3:15

Marshall E. Patton

QUESTION: Is there scriptural authority for observing the Lord's supper on Sunday night? Must it be during the daylight hours?—H.H.

ANSWER: Authority for observing the Lord's supper on the first day of the week exclusively comes from the approved example in Acts 20:7. I have formerly shown in this column that such authority cannot be established in any other way, the opinions and efforts of a few to the contrary notwithstanding. Hence, the answer to our question must be determined from the time designated in this verse.

The word "day" appears in italics (K.J.V.) which indicates that the word has been supplied by the translators. A more literal translation of the original reads, "And upon the first of the week." This is also true of other passages, e.g., John 20:1,19; Lk. 24:1; Matt. 28:1; Mk. 16:2; I Cor. 16:2. The word translated "week" in this verse is from the Greek "Sabbaton" which is denned by scholars to mean: "Sabbath to Sabbath," "seven days, a week"—hence, the week equally divided into seven divisions. The Greek "Mia" which precedes "Sabbaton" in our text means "one"—hence, the "one" or **first** division of the week. The first one seventh of a week is a solar day of twenty-four hours.

The New Testament writers reckoned time or the "day" according to three different customs: Hebrew—sunset to sunset; Greek—sunrise to sunset, and Roman—midnight to midnight. The context of Acts 20:7 shows the "day" to be reckoned according to Roman custom—from midnight to midnight.

Notice that when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul intended to depart on the **morrow** (v. 7). According to verse eleven, Paul departed after "break of day." Unless there was a change in plans (and there is no evidence of such) he departed on the "morrow" from the "first day of the week"—the time they assembled. Since the "day" refers to a twenty-four hour division, it must be according to either Hebrew or Roman reckoning. Since the context shows this to be a night meeting (vs. 7,8), the only possible transition from one day to the other during the course of events herein revealed had to come at midnight—hence, Roman reckoning. Therefore, Acts 20:7 authorizes any hour that expediency might dictate within the first division of the week (Sabbaton), according to Roman reckoning—from midnight to midnight.

It is interesting to note that the resurrection day of our Lord is also identified in the Scriptures according to Roman reckoning. In John 20:1 we learn that Mary Magdalene came to the tomb "The first day of the week . . . when it was yet dark." The "first day" here included darkness before daylight. Our Lord had already arisen, yet the daylight hours following this darkness are called the "same day" (Lk. 24:13). Then in John 20:19 we read, "Then

the same day at evening, being the first day of the week." The word translated "evening" is from the Greek "ouses opsia," an expression used to identify the late evening or after sunset. Therefore, we have darkness before daylight, the daylight itself, and after sunset—all identified in the Scriptures as the same day—the first day of the week.

Matters of Controversy

"Earnestly Contend for the Faith"—Jude 3

Ward Hogland

HOW LONG SHOULD I ATTEND?

A question which has agitated many members of the one Body the last few years is: "How long should I attend a congregation which practices things I believe to be unscriptural?" This has especially been true since the so called issues have been in the church. I hasten to say that perhaps too much emphasis has been placed on the issues and not enough on other departures.

I feel that two dangerous extremes have been taken by brethren on the above question. The first is when brethren stay on and on with an unscriptural congregation when they know very well that there is no hope. They salve their conscience with the idea that no congregation is perfect! These people do an injustice to themselves and to the congregation by staying in a situation of that kind. On the other hand, we have brethren who go to the extreme and "quit" a congregation at the slightest provocation. Many congregations could be saved from liberalism and sin if we would put forth the proper effort. I know from personal experience that both individuals and congregations may be saved with work and prayer. It is my deep conviction that both extremes are wrong. I am fully cognizant that no ONE answer could apply to all situations.

In Acts 13:51 Luke says, "But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium." Paul's preaching had been rejected at Antioch of Pisidia and Luke says, "They shook off the dust of their feet—." This proves that there is a LIMIT to which a Christian must go. In Matt. 10:14 the Lord told his disciples about the same thing. Then in Rev. 2:5 the Lord said to the church at Ephesus, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent." When does the Lord remove the candlestick from a church? I do not claim to know the exact time. I doubt that any living person knows. We will all have to agree that a LIMIT is placed on a congregation. If they do not repent the Lord will do his part. I firmly believe the informed child of God will know when to stay and when to quit!

Many times people move to a new area where there is only one congregation. If they feel that the congregation is unscriptural they have two or three alternatives. One is to convert them to the truth.

If this is impossible they could quit and establish another congregation. If this is not expedient they might drive to the nearest scriptural congregation. Gentle reader, in summation I believe the Bible answer is this: Attend a congregation as long as progress is being made toward truth. Some times elders and others are honestly mistaken! Don't give up too easily. I feel that many of us would have given up the seven churches of Asia much sooner than the Lord. On the other hand if you are just "spinning your wheels" and have become a voice in the wilderness you might as well throw in the towel! When elders and members have closed their ears and minds, you might as well shake the dust off! There is no doubt that some congregations have gone beyond the point of no return.



THE SIN OF MURMURING

The word "murmur" is defined as "low, muttered complaints; grumbling." (Webster). It is condemned by God as being sinful. We are commended to "do all things **without murmurings** and disputings." (Phil. 2:16). The apostle Paul warned Christians against this sin in his letter to the Corinthians: "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer" (I Cor. 10:10). The sinfulness of murmuring is vividly illustrated by God's severity of punishment toward the guilty Jews, as shown in the following account.

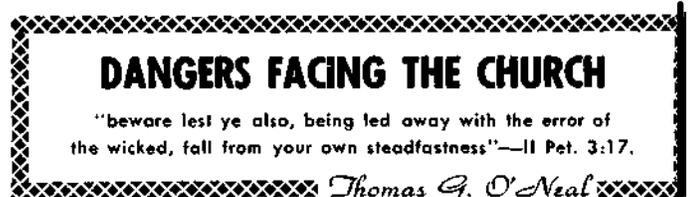
Korah, Dathan, Abiram, fifty princes of the congregation and others rebelled and murmured against God's servants, Moses and Aaron (Num. 16:1-11). "The earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up ... they, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the congregation." (Verses 32-33). "And there come out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense. (Verse 35). When the Jews murmured that Moses and Aaron were responsible for the deaths, God killed **fourteen thousand, seven hundred** of them by a plague. (Verses 41-49). This is written for our admonition and should cause all murmurers in the church to repent and reform, lest they suffer a "soror punishment." (Heb. 10:28-29).

A murmurer can do great harm and irreparable damage in a congregation by creating discontent, discouragement and apathy among members, by sowing discord among the brethren (which God hates—Prov. 6:19), by undermining the work of the preacher teachers, deacons and the rule of elders. This many times creates a general attitude of dissatisfaction and loss of interest, enthusiasm and zeal, resulting in decreased attendance, contribution, and impairment of all work in general. The murmurer may then be the first to criticize the lack of growth, and may use the preacher or someone else as the scapegoat to bear the blame, not realizing

or ignoring the fact that his own sin is responsible.

The murmurer does not truly love God and is not really interested in the welfare and growth of the church, but in his own selfish desires and opinions. He is either woefully ignorant of or willfully disregards God's word regarding his sin, and is a dangerous threat to the cause of Christ. He can and does destroy or greatly lessen the influence and work of those who happen to be the object of his disgruntled attack. It ..is difficult to deal with such a situation because oftentimes the murmurer does not have the courage or character to honorably discuss his complaints with the proper ones, but whispers them in secret to others. Christians should not lend receptive ears nor endorsement to murmuring, but exhort the guilty one to cease his sin. Remember, if one will murmur **TO** you, he may murmur **ABOUT** you, because many times he is a Pharisaical faultfinder, a chronic complainer with a hypercritical attitude who is usually never satisfied very long with any arrangement.

We earnestly exhort all murmurers everywhere in the name of Christ to repent of this sin, to cease and desist in tearing down the work of God, and to get busy in the kingdom to build it up. Those who truly love God and his church have no desire to be hypercritical faultfinders, wandering about murmuring to all who will listen. If anyone should persist in this sin after proper warnings and efforts to restore, then scriptural discipline should be brought about to protect the flock of God and its work. The work of our Lord is too important to allow murmurers to **run** and **ruin** the church.



The danger confronting the church that we want to study with the reader in this article is the lack of zeal and enthusiasm in the Lord's work.

Zeal will beget zeal. If brethren would show a zeal for the work that the Lord wants done, others would catch on and start working zealously in the service of the Lord. In the eighth and ninth chapters of second Corinthians Paul was writing about the contribution that was being made for the poor saints in Jerusalem. He had encouraged other churches that were able to give to the needs of their brethren in Jerusalem. Of Corinth he said in II Cor. 9:2, "... and your zeal hath provoked very many." By the zeal which the Corinthian church had manifested in getting a contribution ready for their needy brethren, others had been made to realize the need and they were provoked to be zealous unto this good work.

If one will turn the page back to the eighth chapter of this same book, Paul is using the willingness of the churches in Macedonia to stir up the Corinthians to give. He points out to Corinth that ill comparison with them the churches of Macedonia were in "deep poverty" (II Cor. 8:2). Yet, the churches of Macedonia were able to give to Jerusa-

lem and enable Jerusalem to carry out their responsibility toward her needy saints, a thing which Jerusalem could not do unaided. In this Paul uses the zeal of the churches of Macedonia to encourage the church in Corinth to help Jerusalem and then uses the zeal of Corinth to provoke other churches to help Jerusalem. This shows that zeal is catching.

Many brethren seem to be satisfied with present conditions. It is almost impossible to get them up off the stool of "do nothing" and to get them actively engaged in the service of the Lord. Brethren can preach unto them, but it seems to do them no good because they go on in the same old rut that they have been in for years. In many places try getting the church which is able to send or help send some man into a field to preach the gospel and see how far you get. Do we not find the attitude of unconcernness and indifference? Good churches are supporting many fine men in preaching and for such they are to be commended, but isn't it time that all of us get up and get to work doing all that we can for the Lord? How many of us are eager for the work to be done but are willing to let someone else do the job for us? We need to become personally involved in serving the Lord. We will receive a blessing and souls will be saved.

While we need all the zeal we can bring forth into the service of our God, at the same time we need to learn that there is the danger of our zeal being directed in the wrong way. I remember that of Israel Paul said in Romans 10, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." True, Israel had "a zeal of God," but it was directed wrong. It was not according to knowledge! Unguided zeal is dangerous. To be properly guided depends upon proper teaching. Christians are to be "zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:14). However, the good works are to be directed or authorized by the word of the Lord (II Tim. 3:16-17).

All need to learn the lesson that when our zeal is properly guided we will never do more than we should for the Lord. The Lord expects us to do to the extent of our ability (Matt. 25:14-30). May all of us study His will daily to learn our duty and then may we ever be busy in doing it to the very best of our ability, knowing then that we are pleasing unto the Lord.

May we all have the attitude of wanting to do all that we can in the Lord's service that we will please Him in the last day when we stand before him.

OBSERVATIONS

by Tychicus

Those who are in doubt as to the outcome of the present liberal movement among some of the churches should read the history of the Lord's church in America. The present and the future are an unfolding of the past. With a small beginning near the first of the nineteenth century the gospel spread slowly for many years. However, from around

1825 until shortly before the war between the states the gospel spread rapidly. After 1835 some grew dissatisfied with the Lord's plan and started talking of one of their own. This was about fifteen years before the American Christian Missionary Society was organized. This was opposed through the years but was kept alive by the liberals of that day. The first mechanical instrument of music was used in worship about ten years after the society was organized. This met with strong opposition, but eventually most of the churches used some kind of an instrument.

It was during this period that many who favored the society opposed the instrument. Yet, they never did see fit to join hands with those who opposed all innovations and schemes of men. They tried to hold what some called a middle-of-the-road position. Their opposition to the instrument was ignored and those who held this position became fewer and fewer in number as the years went by. Those who try to hold a middle-of-the-road position today will finally meet the same fate. For men to grieve over the liberalism and modernism in the churches and still apologize for the institutions which were started by the liberal attitude is worse than folly. That was the mistake made by those who held this middle-of-the-road position eighty years ago.

If such men as Moses E. Lard and J. W. McGarvey (who were middle-of-the-roaders) were unsuccessful in their fight against digression, what can men today hope to accomplish when they oppose one unscriptural practice and apologize for another?

By the turn of the present century the apostasy had about run its course. Very few churches drifted away after the Otey-Briney Debate held in Louisville, Kentucky in 1908. Faithful brethren went to work and in a few years loyal churches numbered several thousand with over a million members. While faithful Christians worked to build up churches a few promoters were busy working for themselves. Instead of following the pattern left by the apostles, they were busy following the pattern of the denominations in setting up institutions to saddle the churches with. Since many in the church never read their Bibles, they have been deceived by these promoters. Others (mostly preachers) went along with them in order to remain popular. Two major apostasies in the lifetime of some still living should teach us a lesson. We need to depend more upon the word of God and less upon the word of men. Remember, when we turn a deaf ear to the scheme of a promoter, we have only rejected that which God considers foolishness already (I Cor. 1:19,20). Did the Holy Spirit fail to furnish all of the information we need?

DOES THE TRUTH PRODUCE ERROR?

A. H. Payne, Jackson, Mississippi

When a man's position can not be sustained by the scriptures, the common way of defense is to create prejudice against his opponent by attributing an unreasonable and false position. The Pharisee used this kind of treatment when Jesus cast the demons out of the blind and dumb man. (Matt. 12:22-24.) They could not meet Jesus in an honorable way and retain their error, so they accused him of casting out the

demons by Beezlebug, the prince of demons. They attributed to Jesus a position that was untrue and which was not held by Jesus, but it served their cause of deception.

A modern-day example of such tactics follow in this quotation from a brother in Gulf Port, Miss. "Premise: The Church can not scripturally give material help to those who are not members of the Church, but individual members must give such assistance, if able.

"Consider: A child, at the age of four, would not be a Church member, and so if the above statement is accepted, could not be given material assistance by the church, even if bereft of parents.

"Therefore: It is necessary that we decide to accept the man-made doctrine of 'original sin' and also 'conceived in iniquity and born in sin' and place the child among the lost or that we support the teaching of Jesus (Mark 10:4) "of such is the kingdom of heaven" and (Mark 9:36) "and he took a child and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them; whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me receiveth not me, but him that sent me."

"It follows then that the child is accepted of Christ and God as a child of God. The Church of God (Acts 20:28) cannot refuse to give needed material help to one of God's children." We shall offer an answer to this charge in the same spirit of our Lord when he answered the Pharisees.

The "Premise"

1. That the church can not scripturally act in general benevolence among those not members of the church is sustained by the following authority: Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35; 6:1-6; 11:27-30; Romans 15:25-26; 1 Cor. 16:12, 2 Cor. 8:1-24; 2 Cor. 9:1-15; 1 Tim. 5:16. This is the sum-total of the New Testament that has to do with the benevolent work of "A" church from its treasury. In every case this work was among the saints — faithful and needy church members.

2. That individuals must give assistance, as able (from their own treasury), to anyone in need is sustained by the following: Matt. 25:34-36; Mark 9:36; Gal. 6:10; 1 Tim. 5:4-16; James 1:27. (These are but a few of similar passages, but are sufficient to prove the extent of the individual's activity.)

3. Before we go farther, we must remember that the above must be proven false before the "consider" and "therefore" of the paper under review means anything. Human wisdom and this brother's logic means absolutely nothing until the above plain statements from the New Testament are proven to be wrong. They can be disproven by:

a. Including more than faithful, needy church members in the passages we offer as addressed to "A" church. Perhaps 2 Cor. 9:13 will be the only passage in dispute and the "all men" as occurs in the King James version should read "all," as "men" is an interpolation. The context modifies the "all" which requires the meaning to be "all saints in need."

b. Or, proving that one or more of the passages that we contend are addressed to the individual should be practiced by "A" church from its treasury. Every passage in the New Testament (except the 9 which teach the work of "A" church that are given in No. 1) that teaches benevolence is addressed to the Christian, not "A" church.

4. Therefore, the "premise" has been proven true by the scriptures. All the wisdom of the world, logic, hypothetical situations, total situations, arguing, wrangling or assuming will not change the eternal Word of God.

The "Consider"

We are taught in James 1:27 that the individual is to care for the fatherless. Let us apply this teaching to the situation that is offered. The child of 4 years old, who is fatherless, is in need. James teaches the individual to supply this need. Christians will practice what James taught.

What is this brother's real motive and interest?

1. Is his ONLY interest that of seeing "material assistance" being given "by the church."

OR —

2. Is he interested in the welfare of the child and following the teachings of the New Testament?

3. If his ONLY interest is that of seeing material assistance being given by the church, he is merciless and hypocritical.

4. If he is interested in the welfare of the child and following the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Christian will fully supply every need of this 4 year old child according to the scriptures.

Then, The "Therefore"

We utterly repudiate the man-made doctrine of "original sin" and "conceived in iniquity and born in sin" for such is condemned by the scriptures. God is the father of spirits, Heb. 12:9, and we are his offspring, Acts 17:28. It is not necessary to accept "original sin" to sustain the "Premise" in lieu of the teachings of Jesus in Mark 9:36; 10:4 To the contrary, we accept and apply them to sustain the "Premise."

The child of 4 years old is innocent, sinless, and safe. It is not in a like category as the church member who was once lost, but is now saved from past sins. Both are proper subjects for heaven, but stand in different categories. The child is not a church member, but the saved person is. The child is not a Christian, but the saved person is.

We do not exclude the child from support by the church because it is lost, but because it is not a church member. God restricted church support to church members. God assigned the care of the 4 year old to the individual.

All of God's children are in God's house, which is the church. 1 Tim. 2:15. According to this brother, the 4 year old child is a child of God. Then, according to this brother, this child (4 years old) would logically be a member of the church. This I reject.

Conclusion

"And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." These are the words of Jesus and brethren would do well to heed them.

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HOW IS YOUR T.V. WORKING?

Donald R. Givens, Coalinga, California

Perhaps you are wondering what the question of the title has to do with living the Christian life. What connection does television have with our service to God? Actually, nothing in the main, except we' want to draw a parallel between the working or operation of the T.V. set and the living of the Christian life.

The Christian is a walking picture. Others look at us who are children of God and they either receive a bad or a good impression. Let us briefly see what kind of a picture we are giving to the world.

The very first thing one has to do if he desires to see his favorite program on T.V. is **turn it on**. One must turn the set on before it will operate. Now, our parallel with the Christian life is that before we can have any influence for good in the darkened world — **we must turn our light on brightly**. Let the light shine in your life. Allow Christ to have His effect on your character by an honest and diligent study of His word. Turn the light of knowledge on in your mind. Now, that we have the set turned on; is this enough? No, when one turns on the T.V. set to his favorite show, he must be sure that, secondly:

It is on the **proper channel**. One cannot watch his favorite show on the wrong channel. Again, a child of God can never glorify God by walking in sinful ways, that is, in the wrong channel of life. We must walk within the straight and narrow way (Matt. 7:13,14) and within the correct channel which is Jesus Christ. The T.V. watcher becomes angry if the channel is switched while he is in the process of enjoying his show. So also does the Christian disrupt his life when he changes from the right to the evil channel. His righteous picture that he presented to the world is now stained with sin and no longer does his light shine. Christ is not seen in him any longer. So the erring child of God had better put his life back in the right channel or destruction shall come. Ephesians 4:4-6 tells us plainly that "There is **one body**, and **one Spirit**, even as also ye were called in **one hope** of your calling; **one Lord**, **one faith**, **one baptism**, **one God**, and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." May we strengthen ourselves to stay within the oneness of God. Just as you cannot see your favorite program on the wrong channel — you cannot be saved in the wrong body or church. Jesus said, "I am **THE WAY**, **THE TRUTH**, and **THE LIFE**, no man cometh to the Father but by me." (John 14:6) Now that we have the set turned on, and on the right channel; what must we do next?

We must **remove all the blurs, lines** and spots. No one desires to see a picture out of proportion or distorted. We want a clear and distinct image on the T.V. set. The same it is with our more glorious example — the Christian life. The child of God must remove all stains and distortions in his life. He must present a clear and righteous picture to others. All

sin has to be banished from his thoughts and actions. Paul instructed the Ephesians and us today; "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it NOT EVEN BE NAMED AMONG YOU, as becometh saints." (Eph. 5:3). Read also verses 4 through 14. And Colossians 3:1-17.

Now that we have a clear and distinct picture, this still is not the end of our job. No one wants to watch T.V. without **sound**. It must be loud enough and clear enough to please us. A pleasant tone is desired. The same it is in our Christian life. Let us speak up! Teach others by word of mouth. Tell your friends and neighbors of the salvation found in Jesus Christ and His glorious church. Too many of us have our volume down too low — we never teach or tell others the words of eternal life. On the other hand, no one likes to hear a glaring, screaming sound — so do not try to force the Gospel down anyone's throat. Teach it calmly, firmly, yet with love. So we now have the T.V. turned on, it is on the proper channel and all blurs and spots have been removed and the volume is clear and loud enough. What is next?

See the program **to the end**. No one wants to stop watching his favorite program when only half over. No one likes for it to be shut off abruptly. If at all possible — we see it to the end. Why then, should anyone become a Christian, the greatest thing one can be, and start out on the road to eternal life — then shut off this hope?? Why quit and give up when you have the greatest reward ever promised? The Christian walk can give far, far greater benefits than any temporal enjoyment derived from a television program. But if one quits, he has lost all he could have gained if he had remained faithful unto the end.

Well, we have seen our program now. Only one other thing remains. What about repairs? Yes, oftentimes the T.V. set "goes on the blink" does it not? So we call the repairman to come and fix our set so again we may enjoy our viewing. But what if our spiritual life needs repairs? Frequently it does. We fail in our obligations to God and fellowman. Where do we go? When the Christian needs strength to carry the burden, comfort in his sorrows and joy to press forward — where does he go? Nowhere but to Jehovah God! Call on God in prayer and pour out your soul to Him. He will understand if you but have a penitent heart. Yes, when sin enters our life; something **MUST** be done to correct the situation or our picture to the world becomes distorted.

How is your television working? Yes, my friend, what condition is your spiritual life in today? What sort of an image of Jesus do YOU show to the lost and dying world? In that great day of judgment, you will answer to Jehovah for how you are **NOW** living.