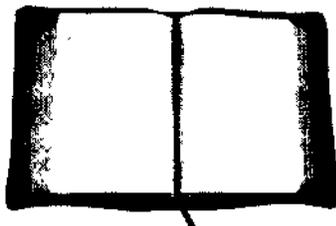


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES



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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A WIDOW INDEED

J. T. Smith, Wauchula, Florida

Throughout the years, there has been a grave mis-understanding about the widow indeed and what constitutes a widow indeed. Many have thought that there was only ONE widow considered in I Tim. 5:3-16. This idea is erroneous. There are, in fact, five different classes of widows mentioned in I Timothy 5.

There are also three different duties set forth with regard to the widows. They are: (1) The responsibility of the individual with regard to his own widows. (2) Those to be **helped** by the church. (3) Those to **be taken into the number** by the church. Much of the confusion is due to a mis-understanding about those who may be helped (relieved) by the church, and those **taken into the number** by the church. These represent two **different** subjects altogether. Thus we shall endeavor to distinguish between them in this article.

1. The first of these widows is the "widow indeed." This widow mentioned in verses 3,5,16, is one who according to verse 5, is desolate. The word *memonemene* in the Greek that is here translated desolate in the King James version means: "to leave alone, to forsake or without children" (Mr. Henry Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, Page 418, Column 2). Thus the "widow indeed" is one without children who is destitute and without any support whatsoever. If she is a faithful Christian — one who trusts in God and continues in supplications (petitions) and prayers — seems to be the concluding statement that would qualify her as a "widow indeed." This woman could conceivably be an old or young woman without any living children or parents; and if she is a faithful Christian she may be relieved by the church (I Tim. 5:16b). This widow, however, is a **different** widow from the widow that is to **be taken into the number** as we shall show when we come to her.

2. The second widow mentioned is not "a widow indeed," but is one who has relatives. Instructions are given to the relatives with regard to their showing piety at home, verses 4,8, and thus points out the first consideration that we mentioned in paragraph two of this article. Those who have widows of their own family are responsible for them, and are given a severe rebuke and a very vivid explanation as to how God sees them if they will not

provide for their own.

3. Now since the church has been charged with the "widow indeed," (I Tim. 5:16b) a contrast is given in verse 6 by discussing the widow who "lives in pleasure." Paul does not charge the church with "relieving" her, but says she is dead (spiritually) while she is living her life, fulfilling her desire for pleasure, instead of following God and His ways.

4. Those to **be taken into the number**. We may not understand all there is to know about this, but the next six verses (9-14) deal with something entirely different from simple "relief." We are going to try just here to determine what is meant by "taken into the number."

It would seem that the widow to "be taken into the number" is **NOT** a "widow indeed." In fact, the things that were being performed by her — brought up children, lodging strangers, reported of for good works, relieving the afflicted — would suggest to this writer that she was a woman of considerable means. Not only this, but you will recall that the "widow indeed" did **NOT** have children, and this woman does. Hence, from the age limit-60- and having all these qualifications, it would seem that this was something unusual or different that the apostle was giving instructions about—but definitely not a "widow indeed."

The Greek word *katalegestho*, translated here "taken into the number," carries with it the idea: "to sit down on a list, register, or enroll." (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, page 333, column 1). Thus, it was not simply a matter of "relief," for the text actually says **nothing** about "relief" for this widow; and, as we have already suggested, this widow that was to be "taken into the number" may well not have needed relief.

We are not sure just what this enrollment involved, but it is suggested by most scholars that this woman, because of her qualifications, was "enrolled" by the church to do that which Paul instructed the older women to do for the younger in Tit. 2:3-5. No one, of course, can say for sure. But by now, it is obvious that this widow to "be taken into the number" is **NOT** the things that would qualify a woman to be a "widow indeed."

5. Now fifth and last, is the young widow that is to be refused. Is she to be refused "relief?" Certainly not! If you will study the context carefully, you will notice that Paul is talking about the younger widows being "taken into the number" or "enrolled," and discourages this and gives his rea-

sons for discouraging it.

We hope this will help to clear up the mis-understanding that many have had about these passages and those that are involved.

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Editorial . . .

H. E. PHILLIPS

PROVING WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light" (Eph. 5:6-13).

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

The Baptists want to believe in the doctrine of salvation by faith only. It is not necessary to find a passage that teaches this; all that is needed is to pervert a series of statements from the word of God and make them sound like "salvation by faith only." The Methodists want to believe in sprinkling instead of baptism. A suggestion or two from some unrelated passage is sufficient "proof" for this practice.

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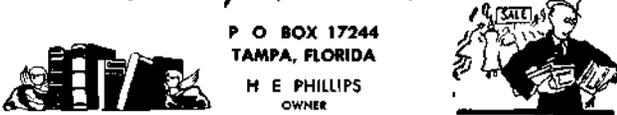
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The Catholics want to believe in the authority of tradition, even above the word of God, and a perversion of some passage is enough to "completely prove" this. The Christian Church wants to believe in instrumental music in the worship. A misapplication of a few passages in the New Testament coupled with practices under the law of Moses "proves" it.

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

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

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

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

preaching sphere. He asserts that his sphere extends even unto Corinth. Thayer remarks that **kanon** refers to "a definitely bounded or fixed space within the limit of which one's power or influence is confined; the province assigned one; one's sphere of activity." Lexicon, p. 324. He cites II Cor. 10:13 as an illustration of this meaning.

One wonders whether **kanon** in II Cor. 10:13 means "that which has been measured," or "that by which something is measured." The phrase under study is **to metron tou kanonos**, "the measure of the rule." Undoubtedly, Paul is speaking of his province or sphere of activity. But what is his province? Is it the metron? Or, is it the **kanonos**? Is Paul saying, "the measure which is the rule"? Or, is he saying, "the measure made by the rule"? It is my conviction that the use of **kanon** in II Cor. 10:13 is a clear allusion to the practice of surveying plots of land with a "rule" of some sort. I believe, then, that Paul's "plot" or "province" (**metron**) was his preaching sphere; the **kanon** that determined it was God's will. I believe, then, that **kanon** in II Cor. 10:13 is seen in its active metaphorical meaning, "that by which something is measured."

We clearly have the passive metaphorical meaning of **kanon** in II Cor. 10:15. Here, again, Paul speaks of his preaching province or sphere, but in this place he uses **kanon** in the sense, "that which has been measured." He is saying, "my province that has been measured by God's rule (**kanon**)." This same passive metaphorical use of **kanon** occurs in II Cor. 10:16.

In Gal. 6:16 **kanon** is clearly used to mean, figuratively, a rule or norm by which human actions **are** to be judged.

An examination of the use of **kanon** in the New Testament reveals that the term is used only in the figurative sense (active and passive). It is to be especially noticed that many of the uses of **kanon** in classical Greek do not occur in later writings; that is, in the LXX and in Hellenistic literature. Still fewer of the classical meanings occur in the New Testament. On the other hand, in the post-apostolic period **kanon** takes on meanings that are completely unknown in earlier Greek literature. These later advances in the meaning of **kanon** shall be studied in the last article of this series.

BIBLE WORD STUDIES

IN THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

E. V. Sztybel, Jr.

KANON, "RULE," NO. 4

Kanon in the New Testament

In the best Greek Testament the noun **kanon** occurs only four times. The noun occurs in the following passages: II Cor. 10:13, 15, 16; Gal. 6:16. We may with profit examine the use of **kanon** in these places.

In II Cor. 10:13 the general meaning of Paul is clear: he is speaking of the limits or bounds of his

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I MARVEL

GAL. 1:6

James P. Miller

Too many people today believe that if the church is ever right and is the true church of Christ any thing it does is right. They answer any who ask for chapter and verse for the things they do by simply saying this is the church of Christ. This reminds me of an incident many years ago when a good sister served a meal with tea without ice for dinner. When the song leader who was eating with us asked where the ice was for the ice tea she looked up and said, "Why this is ice tea." It was ice tea to her with or without ice for she thought that was its name. The idea that if the church was right, it is right is a dangerous doctrine.

The Jews made this argument many times in the ministry of John the Baptist and Christ. They were the chosen of God and would always be His chosen people regardless of their action. John told them in Matthew 3:9 that before God would save them without repentance He would raise up of stones children to Abraham. Paul warned the churches of Galatia of the danger of losing their identity and called them "foolish Galatians," in the third chapter and the first verse. The church at Ephesus was instructed to return to first love and repent of their lack of it or have their candle stick removed from its place (Rev. 2:5). The church at Smyrna was teaching false doctrine and the Lord told John to tell them to repent or He would come and "fight against them with the sword of His mouth" (Rev. 2:16). This just means that the minute a congregation begins to preach or practice anything for which they can find no authority they are in great danger. And not only is this true, but if they refuse to repent of this error in due time, after they have been given place to repent they will cease to be the church of the New Testament. The great Roman church today is an apostasy from the one and only true church of Christ. Read II Thes. 2, and this is foretold.

Others believe that the elders in the church are lawmakers: that they have a right to decide for the church without Bible authority. This also is false doctrine. Just as the word of God charts the course for a Christian it also demands book, chapter and verse from the elders. These men simply carry out the instruction of the head of the church, Jesus Christ. Before they can spend one dime of the Lord's money they have to have the authority. For a thing to be expedient it must first be lawful. This is too clear to miss in I Corinthians 10:23. For a thing to be lawful it must be within the law. In this case for it to be lawful for the church it would have to be in the doctrine of Christ. This is exactly the teaching of II John 9: If the Lord had authorized human institutions to do the work of the church then it would be a matter of expediency as to which one would be supported, but this is not the case. There is not one verse of scripture in all of the New Testament that gives the elders power to give to any of them for they are

completely without Bible authority. Therefore, they are not lawful and could not be expedient.

Simply because there is a congregation, or for that matter a section of the country, where these things are practiced without opposition is no proof that they are right. They are opposed by the God of heaven for going beyond His will if they never hear one word of opposition from any man. Liberal brethren quote Romans 16:17 to prove that when these digressions are pointed out the one who does so is dividing the church. They seem to forget completely the last half of the verse, "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." This puts the matter in an altogether different light. The one or ones who teach or practice that which is not a part of the apostles doctrine (see Acts 2:42) are the ones who are responsible for the division. It is always the one who goes beyond what is written that makes us differ, I marvel.

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"

Phil. 4:8

(Through an oversight all of brother Adam's article did not appear in the last issue of this paper. The importance of this subject and the relation of the omitted material to the article requires us to re-publish the whole article as it should have appeared — Editor).

MIRACULOUS DIVINE HEALING (No. 1)

Connie W. Adams, Orlando, Florida

It is confidently believed by those who accept the Bible as the infallible word of God, that the miracles recorded in it verily happened just as they were reported by inspired witnesses. We accept without question Moses' account of creation, the virgin birth of Jesus, the miracles he wrought, his resurrection from the dead and the reported miracles of the apostles and those in the New Testament era endowed with spiritual gifts. All who believe the Bible to be verbally inspired do not agree as to the purpose and duration of miraculous powers. Some, failing to understand the design of miraculous demonstrations, insist that they continue until the present day. Such insistence is responsible for the host of so-called healers who travel throughout the land and the world, advertising salvation for the soul and healing for the body. The more notable of these "miracle workers" are to be found among those within the "Holiness" movement, though for years the Catholics have published their reports of miraculous healing, as have the Mormons, Christian Scientists and others. Within recent years, an effort has been made within the "Holiness" movement to impress the public with the fact that these demonstrations are acclaimed by the rich and mighty as well as the poor and lowly. To that end, a number of them have formed an association which publishes a magazine

reporting on great businessmen and clergymen in various denominations who believe in miraculous divine healing, and showing pictures of great banquets held in the ballrooms of some of the greatest hotels in the largest cities of our country. This is an obvious attempt to elevate the attitude of the public toward such and to remove something of the stigma which people in yesteryear attached to such displays. It is the purpose of this series of articles to examine what the Bible teaches about miracles in general, healing in particular, and the nature, purpose and duration of miraculous powers. We shall then devote some space to the arguments generally made by the proponents of modern day miraculous healing, to their claims and to exposing them for what they are.

WHAT IS A MIRACLE? People of our time are quite free with the use of the word "miracle." Any unusual happening is glibly labeled a miracle. Things which are purely coincidence are called miracles. The fact that an explanation is not readily perceivable in some phenomenon does not mean that there is no natural explanation of it. The fact that the providence of God may intervene in some circumstance, does not necessarily argue that God intervened by miraculous demonstration. God works through natural channels even in heeding the prayers of the saints for the sick. When a person, near death, and who has been the object of the fervent prayers of the righteous, begins to rally, the medicines begin to take effect where they had not before, and the body gradually recovers its strength, it may be said that the providence of God intervened, but he did not do so miraculously, for if he had, there would have been an instant recovering separate from anything wrought by the medicines and treatment being employed. A miracle is a demonstration of supernatural intervention either directly upon an object or person, or through some person or agent, in which no natural force is responsible for the effect produced. In Heb. 2:3-4 we have some information on miracles we would do well to heed. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" This passage sets forth the design of miracles. They were signs, divine testimonies in behalf of truth. Next, the nature of them is presented. They were wonders, supernatural acts calculated to excite wonder and amazement from those who witnessed them. The origin of them is then set forth in that they were called miracles (a form of the word *dunamis*), meaning the exercise of supernatural power. This is the word used of Stephen in Acts 6:8. "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." Paul said "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3:5). The same general classification of supernatural events is given in II Cor. 12:12. "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." The expression "gifts of the Holy Ghost" in Heb. 2:4 denotes the miraculous gifts imparted to some in the early church and describes the source of them. They were of the Holy Spirit. A

miracle then, either transcends natural law or suspends it in order to achieve an effect desired by the Lord. The term should not be used lightly. Note the difference between divine healing and miraculous divine healing. By laws of nature set in motion by God himself, certain things are brought to pass and thus are divine. But miraculous divine healing is that which is accomplished by divine power without any natural law having any part.

It is to be noted in studying the Bible that all three great Bible dispensations were ushered in by miracle and then proceeded according to law. The Patriarchal age began in miracle with the creation of the world and the things therein. The planets were made by miracle but function now according to certain laws of nature which God himself set in motion. Adam was made of the dust of the ground and Eve from a rib taken from his side, but thereafter a natural law of procreation was operative. After the creation account, there were six miracles recorded in the first 2500 years. The Mosaic age also began in miracle and then continued according to law. God called Moses from the burning bush, sent him to Egypt with a rod which could be turned into a serpent as a sign, visited ten plagues on the Egyptians, led Israel miraculously through the Red Sea, gave them water from the rock and manna from heaven in the wilderness, and gave the law under fearful circumstances as the mount smoked and quaked, the voice of God thundered to Moses and his own power engraved the ten commandments on tablets of stone. These were all mighty works. These miracles did not need to be repeated in every century of the history of Israel, for God made provision for them to remember them and instructed them to teach their children what mighty works God had wrought during that time. Things then proceeded according to law. There is a scarcity of miracles throughout the rest of the Old Testament. Even so, the Gospel era was ushered in by miraculous demonstrations. Some miracles were performed only once, such as the virgin birth of Jesus, the transfiguration and his resurrection. The miracles of the New Testament were of five classes: (1) Power over nature, as in the stilling of the tempest; (2) power over disease, as in the healing of the blind and lame; (3) power over demons; (4) power over material things, as in the feeding of the 5,000; and (5) power over death, as in the raising of Lazarus and Dorcas. In each category the power exerted was supernatural and either transcended or suspended natural law as a sign of divine authority provoking wonder or amazement on the part of those who saw them and attesting that the one who performed the miracle was heaven sent and approved. The next article will deal with the purpose of miracles in the New Testament.

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ANSWERS FOR OUR HOPE

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I Peter 3:15

— Marshall E. Patton —

QUESTION — (NOTE: Questions continue to come in on the matter of **fellowship**. This article and, perhaps, one more will cover all of the questions at hand. Most of the questions center around the following: (1) Can a church withdraw **fellowship** from an ungodly member? (2) Can a church withdraw fellowship from another congregation? We shall deal with the former in this article.)

ANSWER — When Paul "assayed to join himself to the disciples" in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-28), he sought **fellowship** with the church there — "he endeavored to get them to count him as one of them." This involved sharing together with them in the responsibilities, privileges, and blessings of the Jerusalem church. According to the true meaning of the term, this is **fellowship**: "Communion, . . . sharing in common" (W. E. Vine).

When the church withdraws from an individual it withdraws only that which it formerly shared with him as a church. One cannot withdraw that which never existed. This limits the withdrawal on the part of the church to only those things in which the church can scripturally have fellowship with its members. Hence, the withdrawn member no longer enjoys the acceptance, good will, and endorsement of the congregation. The church no longer recognizes him in any of its responsibilities, privileges, and blessings — such fellowship is withdrawn. All of this is involved in the church action authorized in I Cor. 5:4,5.

This fellowship is established by **mutual agreement** on the part of the individual voluntarily seeking membership in the local church and the congregation itself as both endeavor to function in harmony with the will of God, which fellowship, in the final analysis, is controlled by the congregation (Acts 9:26-28). Furthermore, this fellowship differs from that referred to in I John 1:7. In the latter, reference is made to that "fellowship" — spiritual communion — existing among individuals who walk in the light and between themselves and God.

It is a mistake to think that a break in this fellowship (I John 1:7) automatically and at the same time brings about a break in church fellowship. The break in church fellowship **follows** the break in fellowship of I John 1:7 and then only **after** the scriptural course of procedure has been followed. In I Cor. 5 we have one in fellowship with the local church who did not enjoy the fellowship of I John 1:7. True, the former was not approved by the Holy Spirit, nevertheless, it did exist. The lack of approval was because of dereliction of duty and not because of a lack of simultaneous action. The facts revealed show that there are two different fellowships involved and that they are not established and broken at the same time. Furthermore, the fellowship of

I John 1:7 depends upon God's judgment and is never in error. Fellowship with a local church depends upon human judgment and sometimes is in error. In III John 9,10 we find some who were not in fellowship with a local church (because Diotrephes and others "casteth them out of the church) but who still enjoyed the fellowship of I John 1:7. These passages establish at least two fellowships for the Christian — fellowship with God and all who "walk in the light" (I John 1:7) and fellowship with a local church (Acts 9:26-28; I Cor. 5:4,5). In a withdrawal of both the latter follows the former in due course and has for its design disciplinary measures.

When disciplinary action has been taken by the church (I Cor. 5:4,5), **individual** Christians have an added responsibility to withdraw all social intercourse (a third fellowship) from the one being disciplined. Paul says that we are to have no company with them "with such a one no, not to eat" (I Cor. 5:9-13). This is individual action — not church action. The church does not have such fellowship in the first place — some liberals to the contrary notwithstanding. That is why it is wrong to speak of, much less have, "church fellowship halls," "church fellowships," etc., when reference is made to social activities. The church knows no such fellowship — not by divine authority! A failure to distinguish between individual and church action and the respective fellowships involved accounts for some arbitrary use of the word "fellowship" among us today.

Some would have us restrict our phraseology to the Biblical expression "withdraw yourselves" (II Thess. 3:6). However, this expression, of itself, is not clear. It must be understood in the light of its context. Otherwise, we are forced to face these questions: In what sense and to what extent do we withdraw ourselves? So that we are never found in the same building or room with each other? Or meet on the same street? When and how far apart must we remain? The context shows that we withdraw **socially**. Hence, we withdraw social fellowship, as individuals. But there is also a collective or church withdrawal — "when ye are gathered together... To deliver such an one unto Satan" (I Cor. 5:4,5). This involves what the church, as such, shared in common with him — its responsibilities, privileges, and blessings — as well as, in subsequent action, individual Christians withdrawing social fellowship.

Just as surely as we can speak of "scriptural church cooperation" in the absence of the word "cooperation" in the Scriptures, just that surely we can speak of "a church withdrawing fellowship" from ungodly members, though the word "fellowship" does not appear in that connection in the Scriptures. Both words when properly understood and used express accurately Bible ideas and contribute to brevity and clarity of thought in the absence of any context.

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The Menace of Catholicism

II Thessalonians 2:3,4

Author W. Martin

CATHOLIC ADMISSIONS...COPIED FROM A CATHOLIC HISTORY BOOK

The following excerpts are taken from a two volume work entitled: "The Public and Private History of the Popes of Rome, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time," by Louis Marie de Comenin. It was translated from the French and published in the United States in the year 1846. The copy to which I have access was formerly in the convent library of the Sisters of St. John the Divine, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Although the author was a Roman Catholic, he did not allow his religious profession to blind him to some of her failings. In fact, the author even accepted as factual the legend of the 'Popess Joan' as if she had actually existed . . . a fable which we ourselves do not believe to be true. Although we do not, therefore, accept all his statements, nevertheless, we feel that considerable credence may be placed in his writings wherein legends, myths, and traditions are not primary factors to be weighed.

We copy as follows:

Concerning Urban I, the 18th bishop of Rome, A.D. 226: "Authors say that this bishop introduced into the church the use of precious vessels; if this be so, it places his conduct in strong contrast with that of Alexander Severus, who wanted neither gold nor silver in the temples of the idols, and said with reason, 'that gold could not be of any advantage to religion.'

"The origin of the temporalities in churches is deduced from this bishop; it is added that he appropriated to the wants of the clergy the goods and lands which Christians offered to him . . ." (page 36).

* * * *

Concerning Antheros, the 20th bishop of Rome, A.D. 237: "The letters attributed to him, were never written by him; and we can place no confidence in historians, who affirm that permission was given by him to bishops, to take other sees, not for their own advantage, but from the necessity of the case, or the advancement of religion; for, at this period, these prelates would not have recourse to the bishop of Rome, to authorize these arrangements, since the jurisdiction of the pontiffs was confined within the bound of their diocese. Nevertheless, we ought to know that this usage, then unknown to the faithful, has been scandalously introduced into the church" (page 37).

* * * *

Concerning Fabianus, the 21st bishop of Rome, A.D. 238: "Some days after the death of St. Antheros, Fabianus, who was a Roman or Italian by birth, and a son of Fabius, was chosen pope, in a singular manner, if we can believe Eusebius, and the authors who have followed his account. They say that Fabianus had returned to Rome from the country, in order to be present at the elevation of the new

pontiff. The faithful had assembled in a church, for the purpose of the election; and several persons of consideration were proposed, without any thought of Fabianus, though he was present. Of a sudden, a white dove descended from above, and alighted on his head. Then the faithful, recalling to their recollection that the Holy Spirit had manifested itself, in a like form, at the baptism of Jesus Christ, exclaimed that God had exhibited to them his will. Immediately Fabianus was proclaimed pope, and conducted to the Episcopal See, without other formality than the imposition of hands. At this time, the custom of prostrating themselves before the pontiff of Rome, immediately on his election, nor of kissing his feet, had not been adopted.

"According to some traditions, the holy father introduced the use of renewing the holy oil every year, on Holy Thursday . . ." (page 37-38).

* * * *

For some years at the beginning of the fourth century, the bishopric of Rome was vacant. Concerning the state of the Christian religion at that time, the author states: "The faithful were forced to assemble by night, in private houses, in upper rooms, in the baths, under porticos, in the cemeteries, and even in the tombs, in order to administer the eucharist, and pray.

"But Christians, animated by a holy zeal, assembled at these places, regardless of a shameful and violent death. The priests read the Old and New Testaments, as the Protestants now do. The people brought bread and wine, for the administration of the eucharist. The communion was distributed, in both kinds, (both bread and wine. L.W.M.), to all who were baptized, and the ceremonies, terminated with a collection for the poor of the church.

"In the first century, fountains and rivers supplied the baptismal water. Then this sacrament was administered to the sick, and children, in private houses, and in prisons. Next they went further from apostolic simplicity; for, in the time of Tertullian, infants were anointed, and they presented honey and milk, making many signs of the cross, and the baptized were clothed in a white garment.

"The communion was administered indifferently; either in the morning, fasting, or in the evening, after supper. The eucharist — that is, the consecrated bread and wine — was carried to the sick and absent. As for fasts, they were discretionary, and no one was constrained to observe them.

"In the second century, the faithful adopted the custom of praying for the dead; and, according to Tertullian, the prayers were preceded by many signs of the cross. . .

"In the third century, a difference arose as to the administration of baptism to children; and, at the same time, the fast of Saturday, in commemoration of the burial of Jesus Christ, was introduced at Rome. But this custom was not approved of by the Orientals.

"Christian worship had not yet altars. A single table of marble, served for the communion of the faithful . . .

'Sub-deacons were then established in the church; but history makes no mention of patriarchs, archbishops, or metropolitans. The bishops of the principal sees, unjustly arrogated to themselves superior-

ity over those of the same country, and sometimes over those of several provinces, when these were dependent on the great cities. The popes, in their turn, put in the same pretensions, and the cowardice of the magistrates has rendered too real, their imaginary rights of jurisdiction, both spiritual and temporal" (page 52).

Matters of Controversy

"Earnestly Contend for the Faith"—Jude 3

Ward Hogland

EATING IN THE MEETING HOUSE

In the field of controversy several articles have been written the last few years on eating in the meeting house. Some of the arguments would be funny if the matter were not so serious. I am printing a short article by James D. Bales, professor of Bible at Harding College. Brother Bales probably does as well on this subject as anyone I know. In answering his arguments I have written another article using almost the identical words of brother Bales. This was done to show the fallacy in his reasoning. Notice that Brother Bales says we must keep our social activities and worship services separated by time! I have done that in my article making them an exact parallel.

Here is brother Bale's article on eating in the meeting house:

"The meeting house is not the church. It is no more holy than the house you live in.

Some brethren presume to tell others that they cannot do certain things in a meeting house; things that are not wrong within themselves. They tell you what God authorizes and what he does not authorize to be done in the meeting house, which God has not even required us to build.

Who made the church building such a holy place that social activities cannot take place there? There are some brethren who think one can smoke on the front steps but cannot cook a meal in a room in the building. Is it right to use the church's money to build a kitchen in a home for a preacher but wrong to use it to put a kitchen for the use of the brethren in the meeting house?

What about I Cor. 11:22-24? Is Paul discussing the purpose of a worshipping assembly or the sacredness of a meeting house? Is he saying that we must eat in a house and that we cannot have an outdoor picnic? Is he maintaining that we must eat at our home and not some brother's home?

If I Cor. 11:22-24 means that a Christian cannot eat in a building in which they assemble for worship, then where did Priscilla and Aquila eat? (Rom. 16:3-5). Did Paul deprive them of the very place where he told the Corinthians they could eat — their house? Their home was the meeting place of the church. Was it wrong to have a kitchen in it?

Is it wrong to eat in the meeting house but right

to drink water there? I Cor. 11:22,24 speaks of drinking as well as eating.

Is it right to eat together? (Acts 2:46; 10:48 and 11:3; Jude 12). Who has the right to legislate as to where it is to be or not to be, just so long as it is not in connection with the Lord's supper? So long as we keep our worship service separated from our social activities in point of time, by what authority does anyone legislate as to what may or may not be done in a meeting house, if the thing is not wrong? The church is a family. Is it wrong for a family to eat together? The church is a brotherhood. Is it wrong for brethren to engage in social activities?"

Here is my article called, "Serving steak on the communion plate."

The communion plate is not holy. It is no more holy than a plate you would serve steak on in your home.

Some brethren presume to tell others that they cannot do certain things with the communion plate; things that are not wrong within themselves. They tell you what God authorizes and what he does not authorize to be done with a communion plate, which God has not even required us to use.

Who made a communion plate such a holy thing that steak cannot be served there? There are some brethren who think one can smoke on the front steps but cannot serve a little steak along with the unleavened bread. Is it right to use the church's money to build a kitchen in a home for the preacher, where he serves steak as often as he can afford it, and refuse brethren the right to serve a little steak on the communion plate?

What about 1 Cor. 11:22-24, is Paul discussing the purpose of a worshipping assembly or the sacredness of a communion plate? Is he saying that we must eat steak in a house and that we cannot serve steak in an outdoor picnic? Is he maintaining that we must eat steak, on a plate at home but not on some brother's plate?

If I Cor. 11:22-24 means that Christians cannot eat steak on the communion plate then where did Priscilla and Aquila get a plate to eat their steak? (Rom. 16:3-5). Did Paul deprive them of eating steak on a plate? They ate steak in their home where the church met. Was it wrong to eat steak on a plate there?

Is it wrong to eat steak on the communion plate but right to drink a sip of water? I Cor. 11, speaks of drinking as well as eating.

Is it right to eat steak on plates together? (Acts 2:46; 10:48 and 11:3; Jude 12). Who has the right to legislate as to where the steak is served, just so long as it is not mixed with the unleavened bread? So long as we keep the bread on one side of the plate and the steak on the other side, by what authority does anyone legislate where we might serve steak? After all, our minds can be Christ centered while we eat the unleavened bread, and then shift to physical things when we eat the steak. How long does it take for a Christian to shift his mind anyway? Where is the scripture which says how long we must keep our minds on Christ and him crucified when we eat the bread? Who can legislate on a matter of time, After all, we will be eating our noon meal within the hour anyway. What is the difference in three seconds and one hour? Some brethren are always wanting to legislate where God has not. The im-

portant thing is that we keep them separated on the plate, and by a little time. The only possible way it could be unscriptural is to take a grinder of some kind and grind the bread and steak together! This would make it unscriptural because you have mixed the two together. As long as you keep them separated on the plate and control your mind, the Lord is well pleased when you serve steak on the plate. After all, it isn't wrong to have social activities in the church building anyway!

COMMENTS TO EDITORS

"I want to commend you for Searching The Scriptures. It is an excellent paper and full of truth." — Tommy Thrasher, Hartselle, Ala.

"Please send me a copy as I don't want to miss it, enjoy it so much." — H. H. Evans, Kreole, Miss.

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"I am happy to send you the enclosed list for subscriptions to Searching The Scriptures. It is truly an outstanding publication among the brotherhood and I know that those who will be receiving it will be greatly benefited. It is my prayer that the Lord will continue to bless you in health, strength and determination to carry on this work. Never allow anything to discourage you from this work you are now doing, as it is so badly needed today in view of so many dangers facing the church." — Leo Rogol, Hopewell, Va.

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"Best wishes to you in all your worthy efforts." — Irven Lee, Jasper, Ala.

DEBATE TAPES

Dr. Albert Garner, president of Florida Baptist Institute and Seminary, and brother A. C. Grider of Meridian, Mississippi engaged in a discussion on the conditions of salvation and the apostasy questions in Wauchula, Florida city auditorium, January 18, 19, 21, 22, 1965.

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Proposition: "The Scriptures Teach That The Alien Sinner Is Saved At The Point of Faith in Christ Before And Without Water Baptism." Albert Garner affirms — A. C. Grider denies

Proposition: "The Scriptures Teach That a Child of God Cannot So Sin As Finally To Be Lost In Hell." Albert Garner affirms — A. C. Grider denies

Proposition: "The Scriptures Teach That a Child of God May So Sin As To Be Finally Lost In Hell." A. C. Grider affirms — Albert Garner denies

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The News Letter Reports

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

DEBATE AT TAMPA, FLA.

There will be a debate on the issues before the church today in Tampa, Florida, August 16-20, 1965. G. K. Wallace and James P. Miller will discuss the following propositions.

It is in harmony with the Scriptures for churches of Christ to build and maintain benevolent organizations for the care of the needy, such as Boles Home, Tipton Home, Tennessee Orphan Home, Childhaven, and other orphan homes and homes for the aged that are among us.

Affirmative — G. K. Wallace

Negative — James P. Miller

Such an arrangement and cooperative effort on the part of churches of Christ for the preaching of the gospel as the "Herald of Truth" is without Scriptural authority.

Affirmative — James P. Miller

Negative — G. K. Wallace

The first two nights will be held at the Florida Avenue church building, 12720 Florida Avenue. This will be August 16th and 17th. The last two nights, August 19th and 20th will be in the Seminole church building at Rome Avenue and Wishart Boulevard. There will be no Wednesday night session since all have a prior commitment.

REMINDER, MURRAY, KENTUCKY MEETING

This is to remind the brethren everywhere of the tent meeting in Calloway County, Kentucky. The effort will be under a tent close to Murray. The exact location of the tent is not yet known but will be determined in the next few days. The first service will be on Lord's Day morning July the 11th in the Luther Robinson school. The first service under the tent will be on Lord's Day evening of the 11th. All brethren who have kin in that section are urged to come home and not only attend the meeting but to encourage their people to come. A small band of Christians are already meeting in Murray. This will form the basis of a strong church there and in a short time there should be sound congregations in Mayfield, Benton, Paducah, all in Kentucky and in Paris, Tennessee. Remember the meeting in Murray, July 11th through the 21st.

James P. Miller

Lloyd Barker, Hammond, Ind. — During services last Lord's day evening (May 9) brother **Robert Killebrew**, one of our two elders, was taken to St. Margaret Hospital with severe pains in his chest. The next day, Monday afternoon, he passed away. He leaves behind a godly wife and a faithful Christian son, also many grieving brethren here at Highland Street where he shared the oversight with brother Thatcher. We have lost a dear and faithful friend and the cause of Christ has lost a champion. This writer is not able to put into words the many things

that might be said about him. In Acts 4:13 the scripture tells us that when they saw the boldness of Peter and John they marveled: "and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." I want to change this passage a little and then apply it to brother Killebrew: "You had to take knowledge of him, that he walked with Jesus." This sums up all the things that I knew about him. Burial was in Dresden, Tennessee at 2 p.m. and this writer conducted the services.

Ross O. Spears, Tompkinsville, Ky. — After three years of the most pleasant work of my life, with the Grandview church, of Christ in Tompkinsville, Ky., I am moving June 15, to Mustang, Oklahoma to work with a small group of Christians presently meeting in a small converted dwelling.

The church here in Tompkinsville is now well established and self-supporting. Brother **Donald Townsley** will begin work here July 1st. I am confident the work will go on to greater things with his able help. This congregation will continue to be an influence for soundness throughout the years. My new address is: Box 27, Mustang, Okla.

Donald R. Givens, Coalinga, Calif. — At the E. Elm Street church in Coalinga, California, one was baptized on May 16, and one was restored. About the middle of June, I will move to start preaching for the church in Novato, California. My new address is: 1309 Chase St., Novato, Calif. 94947.

Morris D. Norman, Plant City, Fla. — A young wife and mother was baptized here at Plant City Lord's Day, May 16, 1965. After over four years labor with the church in Plant City, Florida, I will move to Akron, Ohio to begin work with the Southeast church on July 11. I will follow **Tom Hickey**. The elders here have not yet selected a man to follow me. I will continue publication of the Southeast Sower and would like to exchange with all brethren reading this who publish a bulletin. My new address will be: 877 East Archwood Ave., Akron, Ohio 44306.

Ross T. Saunders, Lake Wales, Fla. — I have just completed one of the finest meetings that it has been my pleasure to engage in for quite some time. The meeting at Winter Haven, Florida, scheduled May 2-8, was going so well the brethren decided to extend it until May 12th. It resulted in fifteen responses: eight baptized and seven restored. The brethren at 34th Street in Winter Haven worked very hard for the meeting, and their efforts are a living example of what a gospel meeting can do if brethren are will-ing to work for it.

The Lord willing, we shall move from Lake Wales, Florida, June 7, and will be working with the 2nd and Walnut Street church in Paragould, Arkansas. Our address will be: 401 N. 3rd Street, Paragould, Arkansas. The brethren there have offered to send me to hold meetings where the need is great and funds are low. This I appreciate very much, and

shall be looking forward to our work with this congregation.

PREACHER NEEDED

Hugh A. Hendrix, Pompano Beach, Fla. — The Northside church in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida will be needing a full time preacher around June 13. Brother **Roland Warren** has been preaching for us but is leaving in June to work with the church in Gainesville, Georgia. We can offer a 3 bedroom, 2 bath home which is next to the meeting house, plus partial support. The church at Northside is sound and at peace. There is a good work to be done here and the prospects for growth are improving. Any preacher of the gospel interested in the work or anyone knowing of such a preacher available may write to me at 181 S.W. 14th St., Pompano Beach, Florida.

Walter D. Bunnell, National City, Calif. — I am told that in 1942 the church of Christ in National City was one of the largest churches in southern California. Internal strife took its toll of the church, and today there are two factions: one no-Bible-class-one copper congregation and one liberal church in National City in addition to the faithful church for which I preach. Due to internal strife the membership of the church has decreased on two different occasions. The church here is at peace and harmony among the members is at its best. We are endeavoring to follow the truth in its ancient simplicity. We enjoy the fellowship of other conservative churches in the San Diego area.

On Friday evening, April 2, brother **Roy Crowe** of El Cajan preached for us. On Friday evening, April 16, brother **Tommy McClure** of El Cajan preached for us; and on Sunday, April 25, brother **George Tyler** of San Diego preached for us. If you publish a bulletin, please put me on your mailing list. Walter D. Bunnell, P.O. Box 423, National City, Calif., 92050.

H. E. Phillips, Tampa, Fla. — I enjoyed the responsibility of speaking in a meeting at the Berney Points church in Birmingham, Alabama, June 7-13. This is a fine congregation with the best spirit among its members. They have three fine elders who are highly respected by the members of this congregation, and a sound gospel preacher in **Dennis L. Reed**. Brother Reed is doing a very effective work in this area. Eight were baptized and one restored during the time I was with them. **Eugene Britnell** and **Hiram Hutto** were in meeting in the Birmingham area during the time I was there. The work among faithful churches in the Birmingham area is making good progress.

James E. Gunn, Eau Gallie, Fla. — Our work here continues to move along in an encouraging way. Last month we baptized two and had one to be restored and identified. We are hoping to be self-supporting by the beginning of 1966. There will be many Christians from Florida and other states who will be visiting the Cape Kennedy and Patrick AFB, Florida's most photographed attraction, area during the year. The cape is only open for tours on Sunday afternoon from 1 p.m. till 4 p.m. We would like for them to know there is a church close by that they can worship with. Anyone desiring to do so would have

plenty of time to worship with us and get to the cape by the time the gates open. Our building is located on Sarno Road just two blocks west of Highway No. 1.

D. M. Black, Jacksonville, Fla. — After working with the Hyde Park church in Jacksonville for almost two years, I have been asked by the faithful church in Lafayette, Georgia to come and work with them. According to our plans, June 13 will be our last Sunday at Hyde Park. We have mixed emotions about leaving Hyde Park and Florida, but we are looking forward to a good work in Lafayette. This fine group of Christians left the unfaithful group about nine months ago after much pleading and efforts to unite on what the Bible teaches. We are praying that those who are presently members of the unfaithful group there (and everywhere) will not continue to swallow the "installment plan" of digression. Lafayette is about 25 miles south of Chattanooga, Tennessee. We extend to all an invitation to visit with us when in that area.

Thomas A. Thornhill, Tampa, Fla. — In September I will have completed my first year with the church at MacDill Avenue, and I can say that I have benefited greatly by my association with this fine group of brethren and also in being a co-laborer with brother **Harry Pickup**. The brethren have asked me to stay another year and for this I rejoice. The brethren here will allow me to hold two meetings a year and will continue my support during that time. If there are any congregations who need a meeting but cannot afford to pay, I will be glad to assist them. Write to me: 5008 So. MacDill Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33611.

We will have a meeting with different speakers, July 26-30, 1965. The theme will be: God's Program Of Positive Action. The speakers will be: Monday, James P. Miller: "Evangelistic Work-Reaching the Lord." Tuesday, Roland Lewis: "Scriptural Worship — Public and Private Devotion." Wednesday, Jack Hobby: "Personal Purity — Spiritual Cleanliness." Thursday, H. E. Phillips: "Training for Leadership — Responsibility and Work of Elders and Deacons." Friday, James R. Cope: "Benevolent Work — Caring for the Needy."

Wayne G. Francis, Terre Haute, Ind. — I moved to Terre Haute, Ind. September 1, 1964 and started worshipping with a new congregation of people standing for the truth. Following is the brief history of Central church of Christ.

On May 3, 1964 a few faithful Christians began meeting at the Red Men Hall in Terre Haute, Indiana. Because the facilities were only available on Sunday, the mid-week Bible study was held in the home of one of the members. After six months of handicap and discouragement, prayers were answered and a building was available. The original group of 14 members had now grown to 20. The building was purchased and the Central church of Christ at 201 Kent Avenue, Terre Haute, Indiana was a reality. After one year of service this group has had two gospel meetings. One was held in December with brother **Mel Myers** of Indianapolis, Indiana speaking, and the other in April with brother **Robert Jackson** of Nashville, Tennessee doing the preaching.

The congregation was set in order and two elders, brother **M. L. Darrow** and **Ray Harris** were appointed in December. Both had served as elders in other congregations in town.

Terre Haute is located on Highways U.S. 40 and 41. Central church of Christ is the only sound church within a 50 mile radius. There is much good work to be done in this area. Brother **Bill Farris**, Salem, Ohio, has agreed to move to Terre Haute in August. The congregation cannot support a man full time without outside help. If you are interested in helping brother Farris, please let us know.

PREACHER WANTED

W. C. Sawyer, New Albany, Ind. — The Silver Street congregation in New Albany, Indiana is looking for a qualified preacher. This is a fine congregation with a bright future. I have worked and have had an enjoyable work. The five elders and I have worked together as near perfection as is humanly possible. I will be moving just across the river into Louisville, Kentucky to work with the South End congregation. A sound, qualified man is being sought. If interested contact one of the elders (**Roy Phillips, Fred Jewell, William Roberts, Sam Jeffers** or **Orel Gilliatt**), or write to the elders in care of the Silver Street church of Christ, New Albany, Indiana.

Luther G. Roberts, Salem, Oregon — The work here goes fairly well. Three identified and one restored recently. I have preached in meetings at Fairview, Santa Ana, Calif., Kent, Washington, Sunnyvale, Calif., so far. I am to preach in meetings at Dillard, Oregon, June 27-July 3; Dallas, Oregon, August 15-22; Santa Clara, Calif., October 20-27; New Haven, Tenn., November, the date not specified yet. It is good to be kept busy.

Jerry D. Eubanks, Rector, Ark. — The Sunday of July 25 marks the end of almost four years laboring with the Ninth Street church in Rector, Arkansas. My family and I will be moving to Atlanta, Georgia to begin work with the Northeast congregation on August 1.

E. Paul Price, Borger, Texas — On June 20th I will begin work with the church meeting at 5510 Hogaboom Road in Groves, Texas. My address will be 5515 Sonnier Lane, Groves, Texas 77619. We are leaving one of the most pleasant works that one could desire. The church is at peace and loves the truth. Brethren A. R. Cox and Hayse Reneau will do the preaching for the time being.

Choice L. Bryant, McMinnville, Oregon — My family and I have been living in McMinnville, Oregon and have been working with this small struggling church since September, 1963. Of recent date, however, due to some unavoidable circumstances, I find myself in need of some support. The need that we stay here and continue our work with this small church, in this mission effort, is so great that my family and I have decided to do so even in spite of the inadequate support. If there is a church, or an individual, that would like to put some "mission money" into this work, please let me know. I can use the help. Please address your correspondence to: Choice L. Bryant, 620 East

14th Street, McMinnville, Oregon 97128.

Due to a change in my schedule of work, I am now available for some protracted meetings and/or singing schools than I have been in the recent past. All who may desire my services, please contact me at the above address.

Ralph Givens, Sunnyvale, Calif. — **James P. Needham** of Louisville, Kentucky will be with the church in Sunnyvale, Calif., in a meeting July 11-18.

Connie W. Adams, 303 Selden Ave., Akron 1, Ohio — After three very pleasant years with the Pine Hills church in Orlando, Florida we have moved to Akron, Ohio where we are working with **Cecil Willis** and the Brown Street church. The Pine Hills church is one of the best congregations I know of anywhere and is well blessed with many talented people who can do many things to advance the cause of Christ. Several of the men are capable preachers in their own right and are often called on to preach in the area, or to fill the pulpit at Pine Hills when the regular preacher is gone. The records show that 30 were baptized, 38 restored and 40 were identified with us. **Jere E. Frost**, formerly with the 77th Street church in Birmingham, Ala., is the new preacher at Pine Hills. The plan at Brown Street is for one preacher to be in the field in meetings while the other is at home. We will divide the time equally and hope to accomplish much for the Lord, especially in the North. I will also do several weeks of work a year in Canada. Please note the change of address.

Jimmy Tuten, Jr., St. Louis, Mo. — A telegram bearing sad news of the death of Merita Packard, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida brought to my mind the faithfulness of this saint who has pillared her head in rest and joined the multitude who sleep in Christ. She passed from this life June 4 at 10 a.m. Though an invalid, crippled with arthritis, she did not become bitter in her suffering. She knew that: 'For every pain we must bear, for every sorrow, every care, There is a reason.' 'But, if we trust Him as we should, all will work out for our own good; God knows the reason.'

Uncomplainingly, she demonstrated to onlookers the reality and power of true religion in suffering. Though carried as an infant, she attended services when weather and health permitted. She will be remembered most for what I call "wheel-chair evangelism." She never passed up an opportunity to teach New Testament Christianity to those willing to listen. I know of at least two ladies baptized through her efforts. She stood firm against digression and innovations, though these meant the sacrifice of friends. She has been rejected and scorned in her firmness against liberalism. Who knows but that her sickness was for the glory of God (John 11:4)?

Colin Williamson, Jonesboro, Tenn. — We had a good meeting with brother **Earl Kimbrough**. Five were baptized and two restored. Since the meeting two more have been baptized. Five of these were adult individuals. Brother Kimbrough's lessons were

fine and just packed with scriptures — the kind we all need.

Flavil Wallace, Pontiac, Mich. — We, the members of the Gingellville church of Christ, beseech you to respond to our plea. The congregation here consists of thirty-two (32) souls, representing twelve (12) families. In the Detroit and suburban area — an area containing in excess of six million people — there are only three or four faithful congregations including the one located here at Gingellville. Only one of the congregations to our knowledge has a "full-time" preacher and we at Gingellville have not had a preacher for the past seven months. We are currently sharing the responsibility for the edification of the congregation by having each of the men of the congregation prepare and present a lesson at the various services throughout the week.

The congregation was formed in May 1962, when a nucleus of Christians became dissatisfied with the growing apostasies occurring in a local congregation that was at one time faithful but has fallen away. These dissenting brethren wanted to preach and study the Word of God in its pure form without being subjected to the encroaching modernist doctrines of "church kitchens", "church recreation halls", "church orphanages", "church schools", and all the many other earthly organizations not authorized by the Word of God. They met for a time in their homes and finally were able to obtain a loan and buy the property now occupied in Gingellville. The property which included a small (20x28) one room building costing \$6,500 and is located approximately one mile from Interstate 75. The loan for this property has been repaid through the diligent continuing effort and determination of the members. We have, to date, had no outside financial aid. The building is totally unsuited for the congregation of any number of people and in fact has been condemned as a health and fire hazard by the local authorities and rightly so. Plans are now under way, the foundation is being laid, and a loan is being obtained for the sum of \$12,000 to finance the construction of a new building. This building will be 30 by 50, have a full basement, and central heating. We plan to have a construction company build the shell and the members of the congregation do the finish work themselves. We have also made arrangements with the construction company to provide them with labor from the congregation on a part-time basis and thereby further reduce the expense of the building.

We are desperately in need of aid in order to continue the work here. For the Christians in this area, it is imperative that this congregation continue to exist because there are no other faithful congregations within a forty mile radius of the Gingellville community.

We at Gingellville particularly need your financial aid to help us with the construction of a suitable meeting house and to help us acquire a preacher to supply impetus and direction to our efforts to carry on the work of Christ in this neglected area.

If you can aid us in any way, please contact us at 4193 Baldwin Road, Pontiac, Michigan.

DANGERS FACING THE CHURCH

"beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness"—I Pet. 3:17.

Thomas G O'Neal

As we study together in this article, I want to call the readers attention to another danger the church faces, that is, the lack of qualified elders.

There are a number of faithful men serving as elders in churches over the country, doing a good job and often these men do not have the appreciation expressed to them that the congregation should show them. Where men like this are in the eldership, the church moves forward. On the other hand, where men are elders while being unqualified the church will have a multitude of problems.

A congregation will not rise above its leadership. Elders are to lead and direct the church. Where there is no direction forward there is movement backward. There is no stand still position in the Lord's service.

Often the church faces a danger in selecting men to serve as elders. Sometimes the attitude is found that if a man is successful in business, is socially prominent in the community, has shown marks of being wealthy, or some other similar mark, that he is put in to serve as an elder. When such is done, disregarding the qualification given in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1, one is not a HOLY SPIRIT MADE ELDER. These marks mentioned above may be good in certain places, but they are not the ones the Lord set for men to meet in being elders.

Often the eldership is a popularity contest. The man is made an elder if he can swing the most in his favor to vote for him. A man who is qualified according to the Scriptures often is rejected for a man who is able to exercise a certain amount of political pull within the congregation.

The elder is to "tend the flock" (I Pet. 5:1-4). Some "desire the work" but when made an elder will not tend the flock or do the work. They have the idea that the eldership is a position of honor and not one of service. How often have men desired to be elders and when so made, would not WORK. Often some would become unfaithful to the Lord and the elders would not make an effort to watch for their souls. They are so charged in the Scriptures (Heb. 13:17).

Again the Bible teaches elders are to oversee the flock (Acts 20:28). They are to watch for those among themselves or from without leading away disciples after them by false doctrine. In connection with this, elders are to be apt to teach. Some are apt to teach — apt to teach error because they are ignorant of the Scriptures. They are not willing to make the necessary sacrifice in order to study to learn the word of God. I heard an elder one time telling how hard he had studied one afternoon and when he told what he had done he had looked up some verses that mention the word "sword" and upon another occasion had looked at some passages that mentioned the word "fox." Certainly a church with such a one for an elder could not be sure to have the attention, at least from that elder, that it should have. It is elders like this that when a class is being taught in such books as Romans or Hebrews that the elder will sit through the entire class week after

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week without any comments to make and the reason is that his knowledge of the word of God is so shallow that he does not see what the apostle is teaching.

Elders are charged with "Hold fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). Elders are to be men of ability to not only see the wolf coming into the flock of God, but when they do see him not to become "unglued" but rather know where and how to start to answer his cunning false doctrine. Elders are the watchdogs of a congregation. Within the congregation there will be those that are babes in Christ that will not detect error at first, but elders are to be those constantly on the look out for such and when they see the wolf, get to work skinning the wolf. They have the responsibility to not only show the flock where the false teacher is in error, but even the ultimate goal to show the false teacher wherein he is wrong in bringing him to a knowledge of the truth.

Churches that have elders who are qualified according to the Scriptures have men that can guide them into paths of greater usefulness and service to the Lord. What a beautiful picture it is to see a church with qualified men in the eldership holding the confidence and good will of the congregation working night and day in the service of Christ to the end that the gospel is preached both at home and abroad, saints are edified and built up in the most holy faith. Churches like this can be towers of strength for the Lord in every area where they are found. Brethren, remember, the Lord wants elders in every church just as soon as qualified men can be found, but the Lord doesn't want men who are not qualified. The fact that a church doesn't have at a particular time, qualified men, doesn't give them the right to appoint the "best they have." God has never been pleased with the best men have, in the place of what he has said.

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