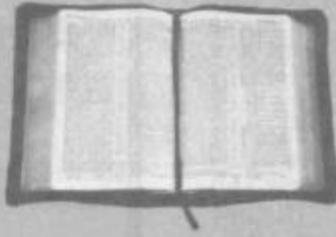


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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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WHAT MUST THE CHURCH DO TO BE SAVED?

James P. Miller

The question, what must I do to be saved can be applied to many different situations in the religious world. It can be asked not only by the pagan jailor at Philippi, but also by the lost child of God, the "do nothing member" of the church, and by the church itself. In this study let us apply it to the church and ask the question, what must the church do to be saved?

First, if the church is to be saved it must be *true to its mission* in the world. Paul writes to Timothy in I Timothy 3:15, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The term "Pillar" carries the idea of the undergirding or support, and the term "ground", translated many times "bulwark", meaning a strong wall of defense. Thus the mission of the church is to support the truth and defend it. From the earliest days in the church in Jerusalem there are those who would turn the church aside from these two great responsibilities and cause it to leave the "ministry of the word", to "serve tables". John cried out in the closing words of the Revelation and said, "the spirit and the bride say come." The denominations around us have long been turned aside. The demands of the social order have triumphed over the call of the soul. On every side churches of Christ are turning to the Fleshly side of man. Entertainment is offered in place of the gospel of the son of God. Recreation is substituted for sound doctrine and the church is made attractive to the world, without a thought of its divine mission. In what other way can we explain such projects among us as "recreation hall", "young peoples churches", "basket ball teams", and a host of other things? Yes, if the church is to be saved it must be true to its mission.

If the church is to be saved it must *recognize the authority of Christ*. In Paul's great essay on the church in God's purpose in Ephesians 1:22,23 we have these words. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things

to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Churches need to learn that they do not have legislative power. All authority belongs to Christ who is "the Saviour of the body." This simple lesson would demand that the church have elders, deacons, evangelists and saints and nothing more. That it confine its efforts to scriptural procedures and to them alone. It is useless to preach against human creeds attached to the church, and then divide the body over human institutions attached to the church. The Lord has given as much authority for one as he has for the other. Christ is LORD in every sense of the term. There is little purpose in calling him Lord, Lord and then going beyond what he has said.

Salvation for the church depends upon the ability of the church to *tell truth from error*. In commending the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2:2 Christ tells them, "thou has tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." Think about a church so well taught that it could prove pretenders to the office of apostle false. We are thrilled to even contemplate such a congregation. It is easy to understand when we read the 20th chapter of the book of Acts. Paul tells the Ephesian elders in verse 20, ... "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." The church at Ephesus did not have to call outside help. They worked from no approval list furnished by some publishing house or college. They simply put the pretender to the test. If churches were this well taught today they would be safe. Any time any part of the truth is not preached "publicly and from house to house", the church is defenseless in this area and can not be the "pillar and ground of the truth." We have seen the storms of error demolish what should be the bulwarks of God. Churches fell to Premillennialism and now to Institutionalism for the simple reason that they could not tell truth from error. Think now how foolish it is to say that since we do not have any Premillennialism here we will deny anyone the right to preach on the subject. Brethren all over this nation have said, Since we are not troubled over the support of human institutions and the Herald of Truth, we will not allow it to be preached or discussed.

What if the elders of the church at Ephesus had said, "Since we have not had any false apostles come our way, we will refuse our preachers the right to

preach on how to test them"? Brethren by the thousands who read this paper, can you not see that it is often too late to lock the barn after the horse is stolen? The time to teach is before error in any form becomes a problem. I think that some of this refusal to permit an open pulpit stems from a love of error itself and some of it comes from an over estimation of the power of elders. Some elders actually believe that they can prevent false teaching and practice simply because they are elders. History denies this to be true. Elders have been set aside, meeting houses have been stolen and entire congregations have been lost simply because the church did not know the truth. The effort to teach came too late. Let no elder be deceived, although his right to rule comes from God, the instrument in his hands to enforce this right is the word. Only when the word is taught fully and completely and the church is warned of every danger is the elder safe and the church safe.

For the church to be saved *it must be pure*. The charges against the church at Sardis were on this point. In Revelation 3:2 Christ tells them that "I have not found thy works perfect before God," then in verse 4 he says, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments: and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." It is a sad commentary on the church today, that while the WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION is condemning Pat Boone for his role in State Fair, under the heading, "Another Christian Has Fallen," the largest school among us is promoting the sale of a new album of spiritual songs in which their chorus sings with Pat praises to God Almighty. If our righteousness is to "exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees", we had better learn from the WCTU. If a group of women who are not Christians in the true sense of the world can see a fallen Christian, and the church made up of Christians can-not, the body of Christ is in real danger.

If the church is to be saved it must *maintain the unity for which Christ prayed*. This is more than an agreement to disagree. It is a unity that consists of ONE MIND, ONE MOUTH, AND ONE HEART. In the 15th chapter of the Roman letter we have these words, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The early church achieved this unity and we have examples of them practicing it. They were united in doctrine in Acts 2:42. They were united and of one heart in seeing to the needy in Acts 4:32. They were of one mind in Acts 4:24. They knew that true Bible unity could only come from the word of God. The church today must learn this lesson. Many brethren have the idea that we can meet and agree to differ and this will please God. Try the case of Peter at Antioch in the 2nd Chapter of Galatians, Paul said, "I withstood him to his face because he was to be blamed." Here two great apostles differed. What if they had agreed to disagree and Peter had gone through life teaching that there was a difference in the Jew and Gentiles and Paul had spent a lifetime saying, "There is no difference between Jews and Greeks"?

Searching The Scriptures

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The result would have been a unbelieving world, for one of the purposes of unity defined by Christ in John 17 is, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." If brethren differ in regard to Premillennialism, can they please God by simply agreeing not to be disagreeable? Will this fulfill the Saviour's demands? If so, what about our neighbors in denominationalism? Can the church make the same agreement with them? If one brother believes the church to be sufficient in evangelism and benevolence and another argues that it must have a human institution to be complete, what are the requirements for Bible unity? Simply to resolve the differences in the light of the Bible. There must be a unity of mind before there can be unity of mouth. Unity of heart makes unity of practice. God requires, yes, demands, that the part of the body that is without authority bow their head to him who is the head, even Christ. This is what Peter had to do and this is what every institutional brother on earth will have to do 'today if the church is to be of one mind and of one practice. These are some of the things the church must do to be saved.

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ANSWERS

1 Peter 3:15

FOR OUR HOPE

Address questions to:

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This article is in review of one appearing elsewhere in this issue by Gene Dortch on "Social Activities In The Church Building." Please read his article.

Since there has been an exchange of articles between us already on the use of the church building, I am hesitant to extend the discussion further, lest we impose unduly upon our readers. However, realizing that more time, effort, and examination often serve to clarify an issue and to establish truth, I yield to what I believe will be in the interest of that objective. The former articles appeared in the January, March, and May issues of this year.

While a review point by point would be of interest and profit, at least to some, I believe there is a shorter way to reach our objective. For that reason I shall keep my references to his article to a minimum, proceed to emphasize the differences between us, affirm clearly my position once more, and then leave it to the readers to determine truth for themselves in the light of the evidence appealed to and submitted.

The title and first paragraph of the article under review implies something that is false. I made no effort to justify "social activities" in the church building either by the church or anyone else. I am opposed to either and said so in my former articles and gave the reason why. I deny that such follows as a consequence of my position. If Brother Dortch thinks so, that is his privilege, but the error of such thinking should be clear from what follows. Furthermore, the article makes light of my qualifying phrase "in this day." In Paul's day the matter of eating meats sacrificed to idols — even without conscience of the idol — was forbidden. The reason was because of the false impression such might make on others, and they thereby be emboldened to eat with conscience of the idol and sin. There is little if any chance of this being done today in our land. Brother Dortch, the day, place, and circumstances often are an important factor in determining truth, especially, when one's influence and expediencies are involved.

My former articles have clearly affirmed that "the church can use the building only for that which comes within the scope of its mission." I have also conceded that at times **others** (individuals, families, and institutions) may use the church building for purposes other than the church's mission. However, I have shown that this can be done only under certain circumstances. It must not involve the church and it must not leave the impression that such is a function of the church. Now, Brother Dortch holds, if I understand him correctly, that such is impossible. This, primarily, is the difference between us.

The church can acquire property for its use by buying, leasing, renting, borrowing, or even as a gift. This can be done temporarily or permanently. The church can also relinquish that property temporarily or permanently, and when it does so, the church is not involved in any further use of it. There are many churches now that acquire property for use temporarily — sometimes involving only the hours for worship — after which it is relinquished for other uses. The church is not involved in those other uses. However, when ownership of the property by the church is generally known **caution** must be exercised in relinquishing it to others, especially, on a temporary basis, because the release might not be known. In that instance the use made of the building might be understood as a church function, and thereby a false impression be made as to the church's mission.

Brother Dortch ignores the above possibility in his reasoning. He affirms that when the church buys something and it is used for social or secular purposes that "it was either (1) used by the church for social purposes, (2) or used with the church's permission (II John 9-11), (3) or stolen from the church." His conclusion is in error because he arbitrarily binds only three alternatives. There is still another — the one I have submitted. Such is not a matter of the church giving permission in the sense of bidding God speed. In fact, the church is not involved! The use is by another to whom the church has relinquished the property. This conclusion follows necessarily, unless one denies that a church, can make disposition of property, either temporarily or permanently, once it has been acquired, or unless one affirms responsibility on the part of the church for all further use of the property regardless of what disposition has been made of it. Thus, it should be obvious that the scripture brother Dortch is asking for is not needed, for the simple reason the church is not involved in the use under consideration.

Since we have carried the matter this far, I want to go further than was anticipated at the beginning and present other grounds upon which funerals and weddings in the church building can be justified. This simply means there are at least two ways of justifying such. The first grounds of justification has been set forth above, namely, the church relinquishes the building to families or individuals so that the church is not involved in its use. Now, in presenting the second grounds of justification, I affirm that the **church** can use its facilities on the occasion of weddings and funerals, because such is in keeping with the mission of the church.

While in my former articles there was no effort or intention of justifying either weddings or funerals upon the grounds that such is within the scope of the church's mission, I will admit that my statement that such is "in keeping with the mission of the church" implies as much, especially, when considered out of context, as brother Dortch used it. (See my reply to this in the May issue.) Thus far I have pointed out the grounds upon which the use of the building by others may be justified. I am willing, however, to defend weddings and funerals in church buildings upon the grounds that such comes within the scope of the church's mission.

The **object** of the funeral occasion is to preach the gospel of Christ. Those in sorrow need that part of

the gospel that comforts, encourages, strengthens, and gives hope. The aliens present, usually more than on any other occasion, need to be impressed with the certainty of death, judgment, heaven or hell, and what to do about it. Can anyone deny that these are a part of the gospel? Can anyone deny that the objective of the occasion is to preach these very things? The presence of the casket, the deceased body, and sorrowing souls create the occasion, but the occasion is one that can and often does involve the church in the discharge of her mission.

The same thing is true of the wedding in the church building. The **objective** of such an occasion is to impress all with the fact that marriage is ordained of God, is sacred, and should be established and maintained according to God's will. If this were not the objective in using the church building, then some civil officer authorized to do so in compliance with civil law would likely perform the ceremony. The presence of the couple getting married, the marriage license, and the exchanging of vows are things that occasion the opportunity, but the **objective** of the whole affair at the church building is in keeping with the mission of the church.

It is unfair to compare these occasions (funerals and weddings) to "banquets and kindergartens, gyms, and all the social trappings of liberalism, **not** 'in keeping' with the church's mission," and to imply that consistency would demand acceptance of such, if "enough solemnity and Bible reading" were present on such occasions. The **objective** of such occasions is not in keeping with the mission of the church, and what solemnity and Bible reading characterize the occasion are incidental. Furthermore, church facilities used in carrying out the mission of the church do not accommodate such activities. Extra facilities must be provided. Indeed, there is a vast difference between such and funerals and weddings.

It is also a fact that varied incidental uses are often made of a building that must be justified upon the grounds that they are purely incidental and not the purpose or objective for which the building was built and is used. Brother Dortch's example of a Catholic Priest using the drive way in which to turn around would be one among such. An injured person could also use facilities available in emergency without a violation of truth being involved. We must be concerned with what use the church makes of the building more than with what the building is used for.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE CHURCH BUILDING

Gene Dortch
5158 Alpha Avenue, Jacksonville, Fla.

The problem of social activities in the church building has been solved by some in this way:

1. The church can't use her meeting house in the area of the "social" . . .
2. So the church authorizes others to use the church's facilities on a "cost basis" for social activities.

(Either the church authorized it or someone has been picking the lock on the door) — However one limitation has been placed on this. It is "**in this day**". Because some might be confused "in this day" as to the work of the church, it would be best not to have a "reception" in the building 'for now'.

I do not believe this to be the right solution. Notice this:

1. The funds of the church, and the facilities bought with church money are to be used by the church for church work.
2. That the church can turn over her funds, facilities, work, or organization to anybody or any thing to do a work, that is not the work of the church, is a position without scriptural authority.

Let us say for a moment that the church buys something . . . anything.

1. The church was wrong to buy that "something" if it was not bought for the church's work, under the direction of the church.
2. But now that the church has bought that "something," let's say that the "something" is used for social or secular purposes.

Then what follows? Well, it was either:

1. Used by the church for social purposes
2. Or used with the church's permission (II John 9-11)
3. Or stolen from the church.

(Of course the Catholic Priest will turn around in the driveway, an **incidental** to the very nature of owning property, and proves nothing in this matter under consideration. It neither proves that the denominational church of Christ can sponsor a banquet in the building, nor does it prove that my brethren can have the building turned over to them for a "wedding.")

In reviewing an article that I wrote about the matter of using the church building for weddings, etc., my dear friend wrote in **Searching the Scriptures** this:

"My former article very clearly affirmed 'the **church** can use the building only for that which comes within the scope of its mission.' I also stated that, 'the issue involved is not so much what may the church building be used for, but rather what may the **church** use the building for?' I also pointed out that at times others (individuals, families, and institutions) may use the church building for purposes other than

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that which is the mission of the church **only**, if and when such use does not involve the church and provided such use (because of close proximity to church activity) does not confuse the minds of any as to the true mission of the church.' In fact, I had quite a bit to say on these two points and warned against any use that would result in a perverted concept of the church and its mission."

It was stated that I "ignored" and "assumed" certain things in my review, let's see if this was one of them. I said in my article:

"Now, the problem is, where is the scripture for the church authorizing other organizations and individuals using the meeting house for purposes other than the church's divine mission?" That is still my question. Didn't "ignore" that one did I?

My friend also said that I, "assumed that the church is involved in those instances under consideration."

Yet I had already stated this: "The article also seems to say (my friends' article) there is a vast difference between the church **actually** using the building for teaching secular subjects, (and) consenting or bidding Godspeed for others to use it (such as public schools). II John 9, 10 teaches we are partakers when we bid others Godspeed." Do you think I assumed that, or that the Holy Spirit said that?

My friend also said I misrepresented him in saying that he said — that marriage ceremonies come within the scope of the church's divine mission.

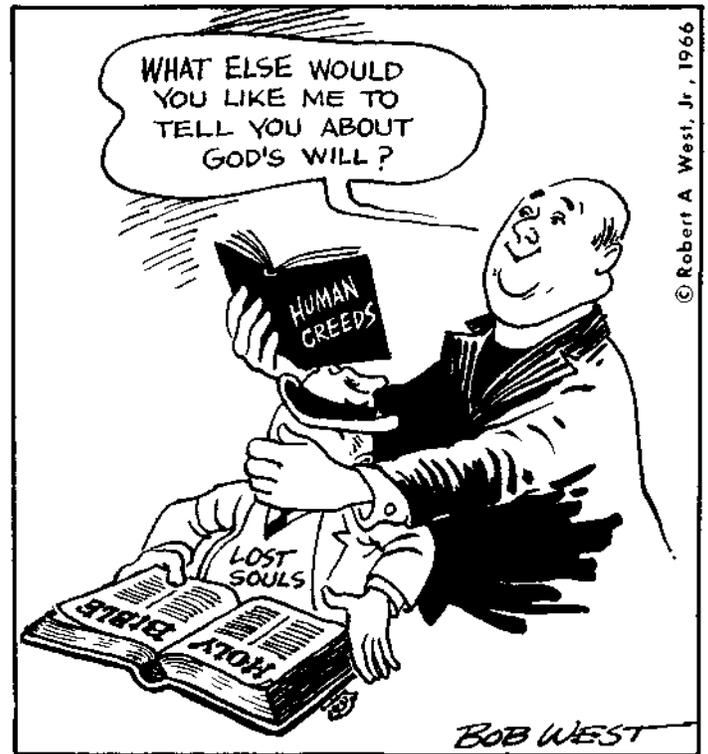
— Yet, here is the statement made by my friend in his article. "The nature of the ceremony, its solemnity, and the teaching done is in keeping with the church and its mission." How about that? Some questions would seem appropriate:

1. Have we found ourselves saying that anything one might do as long as it is solemn in nature, and done with Bible reading, is "in keeping" with the church and its mission?
2. Are the banquets and kindergartens, gyms, and all the social trappings of liberalism, **not** "in keeping" with the church's mission simply because there is not enough solemnity and Bible reading?
3. If these things would not do "in this day" because of the practice of some, would they do in **another** day for the church to turn over to individuals and institutions" on a cost basis the church's facilities for the parties, gyms, etc., etc. Is our objection ^{to} these things on the basis of, "it's the wrong day"?
4. Would we not be on a sound basis if the church bought only that which she was going to use in the Lord's service, and then let the church use it in that way?
5. What do some others of you think about this problem? Not in any way to win an argument, but to find the truth. What do you say?

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Our Religious World



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The Errors of Catholicism

II Thessalonians 2:3,4

Luther W. Martin
707 Salem Ave.
Rollo, Mo.

SIMON PETER... APOSTLE OR BISHOP OF ROME?

Almost the entire structure of Roman Catholic tradition and doctrine stands or falls when the accurate answer to this question is determined: "Was Peter ever in Rome?" Catholic historians (of course) claim that he went there, and died there. Historians without bias or prejudice on the subject, as well as "Protestant" historians, deny that any evidence exists in support of Peter's being in Rome.

CATHOLIC CLAIMS QUOTED!

"The Bishops of Rome, Supreme Pontiffs of the Universal Church. St. Peter (Simon bar-Jona) after A.D. 43; St. Linus c.67." (A Catholic Dictionary, Edited by Donald Attwater.) In a note at the top of the page, the author admits that the dates of the Roman bishops for the first three centuries "are extremely uncertain."

A booklet entitled: "The Truth About Catholics" carrying the IMPRIMATUR (Let it be printed.) of John J. Cantwell, Archbishop of Los Angeles, lists Peter as "Supreme Pontiff" or "Bishop of Rome" from 33 A.D. until either 65 or 67 A.D.

Before we refer to the New Testament concerning this subject, may we point out that IF the second

Catholic source quoted above is correct, then Peter was "Bishop of Rome" while he was still in Jerusalem!

**PETER'S POINTS OF ACTIVITY...
NEW TESTAMENT QUOTED!**

First, allow us to emphasize the fact that such expressions as "Supreme Pontiff" "THE Bishop of Rome," "Pope," or "Holy See" cannot be found in Holy Scripture. Therefore, since they were not used in the New Testament writings, it is completely improper for any Catholic priest, scholar or historian, to ascribe to the New Testament era, that which did not come to pass or come into practice until later centuries.

The Confraternity Version (Roman Catholic) of the New Testament gives the date of Paul's letter to the congregation in Rome (the Roman Letter) as 57-58 A.D. Keeping this date in mind, we learn several interesting facts from a study of the Roman epistle.

(1) NO APOSTLE had visited Rome as late as 58 A.D. . . . otherwise Paul would not have written: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established" (Rom. 1:11). If Peter had become "Bishop of Rome" or "Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church" as she asserts today . . . and if it had already happened (33 A.D. or 43 A.D.) as claimed in the two Roman publications quoted above, then there would have been no need whatsoever for Paul to "IMPART unto you some SPIRITUAL GIFT, to the end ye may be ESTABLISHED." The very fact, that such had not occurred, is evidence within itself, showing that Peter HAD NOT BEEN TO ROME as late as 58 A.D.!

(2) In the last chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans, he sends personal greetings to twenty-six specific individuals, listing their names . . . BUT PETER IS NOT ONCE LISTED! IF PETER HAD BEEN IN ROME, when Paul wrote the letter, PAUL WOULD HAVE MENTIONED HIM . . . otherwise Paul would have "snubbed" one of his brother Apostles.

(3) During the time of Paul's imprisonment in Rome, he wrote his well-known letters to Timothy, Titus, Philemon; and to the congregations in Philippi, Ephesus, and Colossae. Most scholars give the date of these writings as about 63 A.D. If this be the case, then Paul wrote SEVEN LETTERS FROM ROME as late as the year 63 A.D., and not one time in any of these letters does he mention the Apostle Peter . . . who according to Roman Catholic tradition and present day claim, was the "Bishop of Rome" and then living in Rome!

**ACTS OF THE APOSTLES...
AN HISTORICAL BOOK**

Of all the books of the New Testament, only Acts of The Apostles can be properly called a "book of history." Therein is given, by inspiration, the history of the fulfillment of the many prophecies of the establishment of Christ's church, His kingdom. Peter's first presentation to the world of the saving gospel of Christ on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 33, is recorded in the second chapter. Also, Peter's first sermon to Gentiles is recorded in the 10th chapter of Acts, as delivered in the city of Caesarea. In fact, Luke, the writer of Acts, lists Peter's activities in JERUSALEM, SAMARIA, LYDDA, JOPPA, AND

CAESAREA . . . BUT NOT IN ROME! The Confraternity Version (Roman Catholic) gives the date of 63 A.D. for the authorship of Acts of The Apostles . . . but fails to mention Peter's being in Rome.

The 15th chapter of Acts records Peter's presence in the group of "apostles and elders" at Jerusalem upon that occasion. A Roman Catholic priest, Raymond J. Neufeld, who conducts a question and answer column in THE TABLET, the official publication, of the Archdiocese of Brooklyn (N.Y.), gives the date of the "Jerusalem conference" as being 50 A.D. If this date be correct, then Peter still was not "Bishop of Rome" at that time, according to their own admission.

THE APOSTLE PAUL'S FURTHER TESTIMONY

Paul wrote about his SOURCE of instruction as follows: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called be my his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen (Gentiles. L.W.M.) ; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother" (Gal. 1:15-19). Please note . . . Peter was NOT at Rome! The Douay Version (Roman Catholic) of the Bible gives this date (after three years) as 39 A.D.

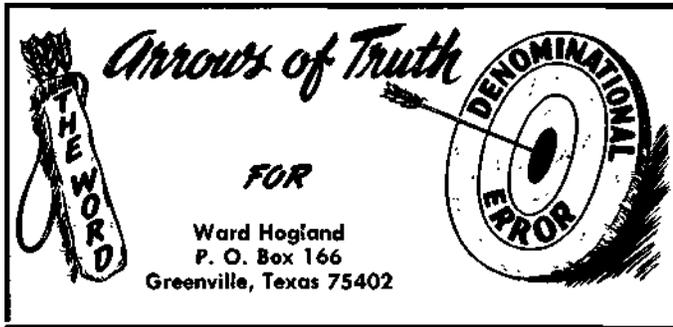
Next, we copy from Paul's further statements: "Then fourteen years after I went up AGAIN (emphasis mine. L.W.M.) to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also" (Gal. 2:1). Paul continues: "And when James, Cephas (Peter. L.W.M.), and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go to the heathen (Gentiles. L.W.M.), and they (James, Peter and John. L.W.M.) unto the circumcision (Jews. L.W.M.)" (Gal. 2:9). Notice, again . . . "fourteen years after" . . . Peter was still in JERUSALEM. Obviously, the responsibility committed unto Peter by the Holy Spirit, required that he REMAIN WITH THE JEWS. "For He who wrought in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, wrought in me also among the Gentiles" (Gal. 2:8).

CONCLUSION

In this article, we have supplied dates ranging from 33 A.D. through 63 A.D., said dates being taken from approved Roman Catholic publications, which either specifically show Peter to have been in Jerusalem during these years, or by their context, show him NOT TO HAVE BEEN IN ROME at any time during these years. The claims, assertions and allegations of the Roman Church, that Peter was "Bishop of Rome" and thus the first alleged "Roman Pope" are unsupported by evidence of fact.

If the honest and sincere student of the Bible is to accept its inspired evidence honorably, then the Roman Catholic traditions can only be REJECTED.

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THE EXTREME RIGHT AND LEFT

In the realm of politics we hear a great deal about the extreme right and the extreme left. Of course, what exists to a man's life or right depends on where he is standing! If I were to plant my feet on Louisville, Kentucky and face the North I would have much more land on my left than on my right. However, if I were to stand in Salt Lake City, Utah, and face the same direction, I would have much more land on my right than on my left. So it just depends on where a man is standing. This has always been true in the church of our Lord. When one plants his feet firmly on the Bible he will always have people on his left and also on his right. While the great apostle Paul was on earth he had the same problem. In Paul's day people on the **extreme left** thought it was wrong to eat meat sacrificed to idols, under any circumstances. Others, on the **extreme right**, thought they could eat the same meat, even if it caused a weak brother to stumble. Paul makes it clear that both groups were wrong. To the ones on the **left** he said, "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no questions for conscience' sake" (I Cor. 10: 25). To the one on the **right** he said, "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died" (Rom. 14:15). Paul makes it crystal clear that eating meat, at times, would have the divine approbation of God, whereas at other times it would have his condemnation.

In the church of our Lord today we have the same problems, and it looks like, as the Lord said about the "poor" we will always have them with us. It has always been easy for the ones on the extreme **right**, to point a finger, and call attention to the people on the extreme **left**; and it is equally true that the ones on the extreme **left** desire to point a finger to the ones on the extreme **right**! Actually, what we need to do is to stand on the Bible and not be moved. When this occurs, we have people on the extreme right who believe the church may support such things as youth camps, missionary societies, colleges, holy hootenannies, boy scout troops, herald of truth, orphan asylums, recreational programs and a host of other things. On the extreme left, we have people who feel that it is sinful to have simultaneous Bible classes, a plurality of communion containers, literature, baptisteries, invitation songs and other things. May I say in all seriousness that if (and this is a big little word) one can take the Bible and prove that the Herald of Truth, orphan asylums, youth camps, colleges, etc., may be supported out of the church treasury, then he is standing on the Bible and I am on the extreme

Left! However, I have given scores of preachers this chance and not **ONE** has produced even one **SCRIPTURE** to justify their position. I am still waiting for the scripture, and if it is given I will join forces with them because the churches are bigger and the money flows freely! May I hasten also to say, that if I cannot take the Bible and prove that having simultaneous classes, cups (containers), literature, invitation songs, etc., are authorized by the Bible, then I am on the extreme right, and had better move over before it is too late. I have met, in public debate, on more than one occasion these brethren and given Bible authority for these things and to this day the arguments have not been answered. So I shall continue to stand.

When Martin Luther was with the Catholics he was on the extreme right. He left them and started back toward Jerusalem (the Bible) but on his way he got up so much speed he ran completely past Jerusalem and found himself butting the walls of Jericho! This was the extreme left. This is what Martin Luther did on the subject of **WORKS**. We have brethren today who will badger and goad us with people who don't believe in Bible classes. This is done to try to justify their extreme **RIGHT** position. Brethren, don't be moved until they produce some scripture. On the other hand we have some who will goad us about instrumental music and the societies to try to get us to swing to the extreme left! Brethren, stand your ground as long as you have the Bible.

Gentle reader, we must always have the humility to change if error is pointed out, but on the other hand we must fight to the end if we are standing on the platform of God's word. In Paul's day the scriptures settled the question of meats, marriage and discipline. People then, as now, stood on the **left** and **right**. We can humbly settle all of our problems if we will just study our Bibles and stop listening to public opinion, preachers and ungodly kinfolks!

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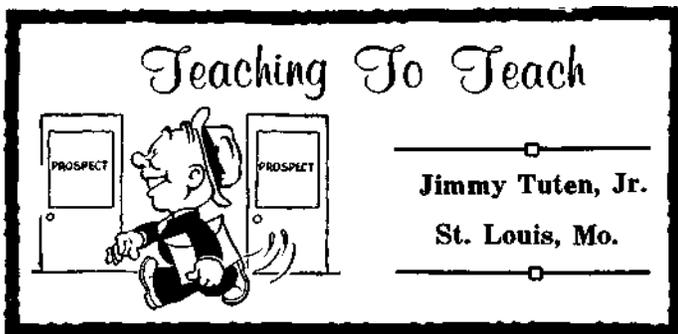
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PERSONAL WORK: SUCCESSFUL AND PRACTICAL

In the next several issues of *Searching The Scriptures*, there will appear under the general heading "Teaching To Teach," a series of articles which the writer believes to be very timely and appropriate. The subject matter will deal with ways and means of meeting and fulfilling personal responsibilities through personal work. Since it is a known fact that in some areas the cause of Christ has suffered due to failure to become satiated in the simplicity of the principles and methods of personal evangelism, it is obvious that this mode of teaching has been neglected. Where men and women are not engaged in the work of drawing others to Christ, there is, in this respect, a departure from the early church. Such failures are not due to a lack of faith in personal work, nor to a lack of zeal. It is due to a lack of know-how as to procedure. Most disciples of Jesus are eager to advance the Kingdom of God, but they do not know how or what to do. There is no more stupendous blunder than the assumption that they are not willing, or that they know just how and where to begin. Some are too timid to express their willingness, but more often than not, the greater majority check and freeze the fountain of aspiration by minimizing their powers. When some individual maps out the work to be done, people are put to doing, and this phase of the work of the church is better accomplished. A well thought-out program of personal work not only shows the Christian what needs to be done, but when necessary, it maps it out for him so that a wayfaring man cannot err therein.

The practical nature of personal evangelism is seen not only in the fact that Jesus choose twelve men from different walks of life, and through these men caused the Word of the Lord to go forth from Jerusalem, to Judea, and to the uttermost parts of the world (Acts 1:8; Col. 1:6,23). It is seen in the fact that when the disciples in Jerusalem "were scattered abroad," they "went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). His passage does not suggest continuous "meeting work," but the type of personal action that will bring people at all times to believe and obey their Saviour. It shows the fulfillment of the principle involved in the command, "and the things that thou has heard of me among any witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2). There is no succession of the apostolic office, nor what sectarians call "clergy succession." But there is a succession of the ministry of the gospel! The apostolic doctrine is to be deposited or trusted to faithful and competent

brethren who in turn can teach others the changeless gospel of Jesus Christ. This work is not the privilege of a few. It is the heritage of all of God's people. We are fellows in a common cause, and are bonded together in Him in Whom our faith rests. Through such action, we are brought back to the simplicity of personal devotion and to the self-sacrifice of the early church; to the realization that the church is truly the "pillar and ground of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Personal work places no emphasis upon the use of gimmicks and high-powered procedures for the giving of oneself into the service of the Master.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

Some of the underlying principles of personal evangelism are as follows:

Evangelism: By personal evangelism is meant the function of saving souls and the edifying or building up of the body of Christ (II Tim. 4:1-2; I Thess.: 5:11). This type of work lays stress upon individual responsibility in contrast to group activity, whose ultimate is to bring men to the knowledge, faith, obedience and service of the Redeemer. It causes one to be a "fisher of men" (Matt. 4:18-20), and makes those who are caught in the net of the gospel, "Christians," no more and no less. It develops the Philip who knows how to seek out the Nathanael. This type of work places upon the Christian the real test of discipleship.

Consecration: A second cardinal principle of personal evangelism is consecration and devotion of the Christian — body, soul, and spirit — and all that he has to God. This is an everyday responsibility in a world that is a hopeless wreck because of sin. The personal worker, in keeping with the principle of N. T. Evangelism, seeks to the extent of his or her ability to save the wreck itself. These fishers of men are not so foolish as to think that they can literally imitate Christ and His Apostles under modern, twentieth century conditions. They do, however, endeavor to fill themselves with the spirit of individual evangelism as taught in God's word. They seek to do this to the point that they become to the men of today what the Apostles and other inspired men were to the people of their time. It lays stress upon the fact that all Christians are ministers sent to do service for the Master.

Organization: Many churches are literally falling to pieces because of loose, haphazard, unbusinesslike ways of trying to reach the lost. Often times this takes place where there is infinite power in a willing people. This power needs to be utilized so that the people may be brought together in the right relation to one another and to God. Servants of Christ need to serve. When this type of work is organized, material environment provided through which systematic arrangement produces united and harmonious action. The curse of men being content to do for others by proxy is eliminated by activation of the principle: "the good of doing is reactive upon the doer, and is not alone felt by the recipient." Just as a mob of brave men never make an army, so disciples of Christ working in their local sphere of activity never become lights upon a thousand hills, nor a moving power in the great work of the kingdom unless things are done systematically. This is true whether one works individually, or in conjunction with others.

Adaptability! The final principle of personal work

is that it provides the means of varying the features of the working groups within the framework of God's collectives. According to local needs, one plan or procedure may be substituted for another, until a workable plan is found for bringing people to Christ and keeping them there. It is a basic fact that a method of personal evangelism that works well in one place, may not go over well in another. Those who fail to recognize this most important principle are sure to fail of true success. Laborers in the vineyard should not be afraid to revamp until they hit upon a workable plan that suits their needs. Evaluation is a must.

CONCLUSION

The aims of personal work is to make personal workers of all converts to the cause of Christ by showing them the how, the what and the where of personal evangelism (John 1:40-42). The program is simple: i.e., FINDING, SAYING AND BRINGING! It is related that during the reign of Oliver Cromwell the government ran out of silver with which to make the coinage of the realm. Cromwell therefore sent his men everywhere to see if they could find more silver. They returned to report that the only precious metal they could find was in the statues of the saints which were on display in the various cathedrals of the land. "Gods," replied Cromwell, "we will melt down the saints and put them into circulation." Certainly today the greatest need is that God's true saints be "melted down" by personal devotion and service to God, and put into circulation winning the lost.

THE CORNERSTONE STORY

Kenneth Hirshey, Hannibal, Mo.

In the Northwestern Missouri community of Louisiana, there is a building in which the first Christian Church meets. Part of this building is old and contains a cornerstone which reads:

**CHURCH OF CHRIST
A. D. 1895**

The remainder of the building has been constructed more recently and contains a cornerstone which reads:

**EDUCATIONAL BUILDING
1959**

Thus, the story told by the cornerstones. The Church of Christ was established in Louisiana sometime before 1895, and a new meetinghouse was erected in which to worship God, without the instrument, and in which to preach the Gospel, without the missionary society. But, something happened, and it is not difficult to surmise the events from the present condition of the group which meets in this building. Although I do not know the history of this particular congregation, I can readily imagine what took place. I imagine someone suggested that the instrument and missionary society should be adopted as a part of the work and worship of the church as "we do many things for which we have no authority." An-

other agreed and noted how pretty and soothing the sounds of the instrument were and after all "the Bible doesn't say we can't." One of the missionary society advocated chimed in to say "the Bible tells us to go preach the Gospel, but doesn't say how." "No local congregation, alone, can fulfill the great commission, and we must cooperate." About this time, someone spoke up to add to the discussion the following bit of thought, "the Bible only commands us to sing with our voices and does not mention the instrument. I believe we should respect the silence of the scriptures." And another said, "God gave us the organization through which to preach the Gospel, the local church, and not once can we find Churches of Christ pooling money to preach the Gospel, thus we don't need the missionary society. Let the local church do its own work through the organization God gave it." After some more such discussion, a vote was taken by the men as to what to do about this matter.

The next Lord's day, the following announcement was made: "At the regular business meeting, with the elders presiding, the men voted, by majority, that this congregation should send money to the missionary society, and adopt the organ as a part of our worship. There were a few of the men opposed to these, but they were in the minority. We must not listen to these men, because they are seeking to bind laws where God has not bound, they are anti-preaching the Gospel, they do not believe in cooperation between churches, they are against progress, and . . ." Sound familiar? The story is being repeated today, and buildings are being lost today to those who wish to introduce societies, recreation, etc. Secret meetings and majority rule is the order of the day. Brethren refuse to discuss issues, and seek to discredit those who will not "go along" with their various schemes, by labeling them with distasteful names and phrases. If one asks for scripture to support a practice, he is looked upon with suspicion. If you will not go along, then you must leave.

It is almost unbelievable to think that brethren today would allow teaching and practice, without scriptural authority, to be introduced into the church, when the denominational Christian Church stands as an example of the harvest of the same seed sown not more than 50 or 100 years ago. Seldom do we have the "handwriting on the wall" such as we can see at Louisiana, Missouri. Our Savior warned us of such when He spoke of the false prophets "in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves" (Matt. 7:15). The apostle John mentioned the same thing, when he wrote: "Beloved believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

It was necessary, then, to restore the Church of Christ, in many places, because of the turning away in apostasy, of the existing church. Today, in many places, brethren are finding it necessary to repeat this very same process. A congregation of the Lord's church now meets near Louisiana. This congregation is less than one year old. Words of encouragement, such as those written by brother L. D. Morgan in Torch (Vol. 1, No. 6, p. 32) to Brother Wallace, could well be directed to brethren who are involved in the restoration process, in such places: "Fight on, brother, fight on, till the battle is over and the victory is won."

The News Letter Reports

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

DEBATE NOTICE

Guy N. Woods and **James P. Miller** will debate the current issues before the church in the city auditorium in Montgomery, Alabama, August 29-September 1. The first two nights, August 29 and 30 will be on this question:

"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."

Guy N. Woods, Affirms
James P. Miller, Denies

The second two nights August 31 and September 1 will be on this proposition:

"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."

Caroll Puckett, business man and gospel preacher, has made all arrangements for the sound brethren in Montgomery. His address is 3024 Vaughn Road, Montgomery, Alabama 36106. He will be glad to assist the brethren in every possible way. The city auditorium will seat 3,000 people and it is expected that it will be filled every night. This debate will have a telling effect on the church in the years to come. Make your plans now to attend. The debate will be recorded and the tapes can be secured from Phillips Publications, P. O. Box 17244, Tampa, Fla. 33612.

Vaughn Green, Route 10, Gainesville, Ga. — The Enota Drive church here in Gainesville, Georgia is in need of a good preacher. **Roland Warren** has been with us for one year now and is leaving for Cookeville, Tennessee. We are in need of a man that is really interested in trying to reach as many people as possible rather than being a professional preacher. We are looking for a middle-aged man with experience in making personal contacts. The church here is rather small, about an average of 30 on Sunday mornings, with a contribution of around \$100.00 per week. We have our building paid for and our preacher's house is almost paid for. We also have a liberal group to contend with as most every one does. If you are interested, please contact us.

Derrell Starling, 627 Glamis, San Antonio, Texas, 78223 — After two years' work with the Westside church in Wichita Falls, I began work on July 1st with the South Flores Street church in San Antonio. Would appreciate receiving your church bulletins.

LETTER FROM FLORIDA COLLEGE

Dear Elwood:

From time to time we might employ a retired person who has had elementary school experience in our

Academy. If there is a person who is in your acquaintance who might be interested in the opportunities here, I would be glad for them to contact me at Florida College, Temple Terrace, Florida, 33617.

James R. Cope,
President

Morris D. Norman, 877 E. Archwood Ave., Akron, Ohio 44306 — The work at Southeast in Akron goes fine. The brethren are at peace, sound, talented and working. I was in a meeting at Hermiston, Oregon where **Ben Shropshire** labors, June 19-24. I will be with the Riverview church where **Thurston Kimbrell** preaches in Pasco, Washington, June 26-July 3. Both places are struggling financially and against the present digression.

Franklin Williams, Columbia, Tenn. — The Jackson Heights church, Columbia, Tennessee, has just finished its first gospel meeting in the new building. Brother **Ward Hogland** of Greenville, Texas did an outstanding job preaching the gospel. Seven were baptized, one restored, one identified and one came out of liberalism. The church here continues to grow both numerically as well as spiritually."

L. L. Stout, Oxnard, Calif. — I am happy to announce that a loyal congregation will have its beginning in the city of Oxnard, California, on July 3rd, 1966. This new congregation will be known as the Northside church of Christ. It will be meeting in a store building at 1031 South Ventura Road, just off of Ninth Street. This work will start with a gospel meeting, and I will do the preaching. This meeting will continue through July 10th with services each evening at 8:00 p.m., except on Lord's Day evening when the services will begin at 6:00 p.m. I am being fully supported in this endeavor by the Rose Avenue congregation in Bellflower, California. If you know of anyone in this area that might be interested in the truth, and you would like for me to contact them, please send me their names and addresses.

Major Wallace H. Little, FV 804008, 6200 Materiel Wing (PACAF), APO, San Francisco, Calif. 96274 — After nearly three and a half years of being stationed at Williams Air Force Base, Arizona, and preaching for the South Mesa church of Christ, I received orders yesterday transferring me to Clark Air Base, Philippine Islands. I depart this country on 18 July, 1966. Brother **Bob Nichols** will replace me here, arriving from Japan approximately 1 August, 1966.

The latest information I had concerning the church at Clark Air Base was that it was liberal concerning the "present issues." For this reason, there is every chance I will not be welcomed by these brethren when I arrive. I am seeking the names and addresses of any members of the Lord's body who are presently or will be stationed in or around Clark Air Base, Philippine Islands. If any of your readers can assist me in this, it would be greatly appreciated.

Guthrie Dean, 1900 Jenny Lind Ave., Fort Smith, Ark. — I am now in my second year of work with the Park Hill church. Attendance and membership have increased by about thirty-nine; the weekly contribution has increased by \$100.00. The work is going well and the brethren are working. Sunday we had 192 present.

Maurice W. Jackson, Jr., Huntsville, Ala. — We enjoyed a fine meeting May 16-22 with brother Ferrell Jenkins of Indianapolis, Indiana. Brother Jenkins did a fine job of preaching the gospel. The church was strengthened in the faith and one was baptized into Christ. We feel that much and lasting good was accomplished.

Thomas A. Thornhill, Tampa, Fla. — From July 25-29 MacDill Avenue church is having a series of gospel meetings with a different speaker each night. The services will be 7:30 p.m. nightly Monday through Friday. We believe this series to be a very important one and the topics to be discussed will be primarily for members of the church. Its purpose is to inspire the members to greater zeal and work in the Lord's church. It will be directed to the central theme: Seeking The Lord, and all in this area are invited to attend each night. All the men are dedicated gospel preachers and even though each has a different style, they all speak the same truth. The subjects and speakers are as follows:

Monday — "The Tragedy of Being Lost." Melvin Curry, Dunedin church, is the speaker. Tuesday — "Showing Concern For The Lord." Thomas Butler, Lakewire church in Lakeland, Florida.

Wednesday — "The Church's Responsibility to The Lord." C. L. Overturf, Nebraska Avenue church, Tampa, Florida.

Thursday — "The Individual's Responsibility to The Lord." Fred Liggin, 9th Avenue church, St. Petersburg, Florida.

Friday — "Keeping The Saved Saved." Paul Andrews, North Street congregation, Tampa, Florida.

J. T. Smith, Oklahoma City, Okla. — I am having a debate in the fall with Mr. Carol Christian (Baptist). Anyone having met Mr. Christian in a debate, would you please send me the tapes if you have them available. Send them to J. T. Smith, 920 North Rockwell Avenue, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73127.

COMMENTS TO EDITORS

"Searching the Scriptures continues to be a fine publication. We appreciate the effort of all who contribute to the publication of the paper, and look forward to each issue." — Maurice W. Jackson, Jr., Huntsville, Ala.

"Searching the Scriptures is a very effective way of teaching the truth and I might add you are doing a wonderful job in doing just that. I shall be looking forward to another year of this fine paper. May many souls be saved as a result of your efforts is our

prayer." — Ramey C. Vetter, Tigrett, Tenn.

"We know that your efforts and that of brother Phillips in publishing Search the Scriptures have done much and lasting good . . . May God's richest blessings continue to be with both of you." — Mr. and Mrs. T. O. Smith, Miami, Fla.

"Keep up the good work." — Wm. T. Vickers, Jr., Owensboro, Ky.

"We really enjoy reading the wonderful articles in your paper." — Bill McJunkins, Texarkana, Arkansas.

"Mr. Eckols passed from this life in '63 . . . We always enjoyed this paper very much." — Mrs. Geneva Eckols, Webster Groves, Mo.

"We continue to enjoy your very excellent magazine and derive much good from it. Good health and long life to both of you so you may continue to bring us things good for the soul." — Charles and June Lloyd, Melbourne, Fla.

"I continue to be appreciative of the paper. The material presented is of highest quality and fills an ever present need. Your dealing with the 'Hall position' has been capable and thorough. May the Lord continue to bless the efforts." — J. R. Snell, Grenada, Miss.

"We enjoy reading the paper and feel that much good has been done through your efforts and we trust that much more can and will be done in the future." — Wayne Sullivan, Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

"I enjoy Searching the Scriptures very much." — Dorval L. McClister, Middathian, Ill.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE STEWART AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST - SEDAUA, MO.

June 12, 1966 707
Salem Avenue Rolla,
Mo. 65401

Your letter headed — "Missouri For Christ. . . Through The State Fair 1966" was received by a congregation in this area. Since this church does not endorse nor participate in un-scriptural arrangements in order to underwrite the costs of such projects, your letter was loaned to me, in order that I might give it further study.

From its contents, I conclude that your goal is to move the WORLD'S FAIR EXHIBIT OF THE CHURCH to Missouri. This, I gather, includes an electronic Bible answering device, a special motion picture in color . . . and also that you plan to build a small theater in which to show this film.

You further state that eight Missouri preachers will be specially dressed in black trousers and gold jackets; and, twelve young ladies will serve as hostesses, in blue satin-like smocks. All of the personnel will possess a knowledge of the Bible, etc., and have the ability to "meet-and-teach."

You then beg for "ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS NOW?" You describe it as "The greatest campaign in the history of the Lord's church in Missouri!" Signed by Ray Mooney, whoever he may be.

REMARKS CONCERNING THE ABOVE!!

Several questions are in order: (1) Where is your Bible authority for ONE congregation deliberately undertaking a project which is totally beyond that church's financial ability? Give me ONE passage of

scripture, wherein a New Testament congregation created an artificial emergency where it was then faced with begging from numerous other churches for monetary help?

(2) Where is your Scriptural authorization for specifying that the preachers are to wear BLACK TROUSERS and GOLD JACKETS? Why not specify backward collars? And, by the way, how do you oppose Catholicism with its special costumes for priests and nuns?

(3) Do your young lady hostesses in blue smocks (satin-like), teach only younger women and children, or will they be engaged in teaching men also? If so, do you consider this public spectacle 'private teaching' or "public teaching?" Where is your BIBLE, book, chapter and verse, for the church to employ "hostesses?"

(4) To the elders of which congregation are these preachers and hostesses answerable? Or, do you look upon this extravaganza as having activated the "church provincial" or "church universal?"

(5) You assert that 4,000 will hear John Allen Clark on August 26th, and that this will "be the largest number to hear a gospel preacher in one service in the history of Missouri." So, what does that prophecy prove, even if it comes to pass? This reminds me of ... 'Many there be which go in thereat' (Matt. 7:13-14).

May I humbly suggest that you brethren give all from whom you are begging funds, BOOK, CHAPTER and VERSE, which authorizes your project, practice and procedure? Further, will you be willing to supply a debater, and underwrite one-half of the costs, of a two-night or four-night debate in Sedalia, Jefferson City, or elsewhere in Missouri, to meet a preacher of the gospel, in honorable public discussion of propositions involving your project and similar matters? I await your reply.

A servant of Christ,
Luther H. Martin

<p>The Errors of Baptist Doctrine</p>	<p>H. F. Sharp Box 376 Gordon, Georgia 3101</p>
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CAN THE DEAD ACT? -No. 4

It is contended by Mr. Cayce in his debate with Bro. Srygley that those dead in sin can no more hear the voice of the gospel preacher than the dead in their graves can hear the gospel preacher. Keeping this in mind, let us view the teaching of the scriptures.

"Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life" (John 5:40). "He that cometh to God must believe that he is" (Heb. 11:6). One can't come before he believes. One must come before he can have life. Therefore believing is necessary to life. Believing and coming are both before life. Can the dead act?

Acts 13:45-46, "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contra-

dicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed. And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." They were filled with jealousy, contradicted the things spoken by Paul, they blasphemed, thrust the word of God from them, judged themselves unworthy of eternal life. My friend, did these folk have eternal life or is this a case of dead people acting? Can the dead act?

John 5:25, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God." It is insisted that the dead can hear the voice of the Son of God, but that they cannot hear the voice of man. Jesus said, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (Matt. 10:40). "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me" (John 13:20). "He that heareth you heareth me" (Luke 10:16). Therefore when one hears a faithful preacher he hears Christ. Can the dead hear?

Acts 13:27, "For they that dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath."

1. God says the "voice" of the prophets was read every Sabbath. Is there anyone who does not know that it was the word of the prophets that was read?

2. To hear the words of the prophets is to hear the "voices" of the prophets.

3. If to hear the "word" of the prophets is to hear the 'voices" of the prophets then to hear the word of God is to hear the "voice" of Jesus.

4. Since the word of the prophets is the "voice" of the prophets today, it follows that the word of Jesus is the voice of Jesus today; and as the dead two thousand years ago could and did hear his word when spoken, so, if you speak his word today the dead can hear it — for it is the "voice of Jesus."



Brent Lewis

It was the happy privilege of this writer to hear brother Ed Harrell speak a few years ago in his extraordinarily fine lecture at Florida College on "The Social Gospel." This lecture was of such import and stature that it was put in written form immediately and subsequently printed in some of the religious periodicals published by our brethren (see **Gospel Guardian**, Vol. 12, p. 225; **The Preceptor**, Vol. 9, p. 115, 132).

For some time I have been aware that brother Harrell has been preparing a book on the social history of the Disciples of Christ (the fruit of work done for his doctor's degree dissertation), and I have looked forward with eager anticipation to the completion of it. **QUEST FOR A CHRISTIAN AMERICA: The Disciples of Christ and American Society to 1866** (Vol. 1) by David Edwin Harrell, Jr., was

published in May, 1966, by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1101 Nineteenth Ave., South, Nashville, Tennessee. The price of the book is \$5.95, and it contains 224 pages.

For those who are students of American religious history, and in particular those who are interested in Restoration Movement literature — this book is a must. For those who are interested in understanding the roots of the social gospel philosophy of today, this fine work sheds much light upon this phase of interest.

It might be explained that brother Harrell uses the term "Disciples of Christ" in a broad sense to refer simply to those disciples of that time who were deeply concerned about the restoration of New Testament Christianity. He explains that this group "has never had an exclusive name; Alexander Campbell preferred 'Disciples of Christ,' Barton Stone's followers preserved the popularity of the name 'Christian,' while in many localities the name 'Church of Christ' was most widely used" (p. 5).

In the "Preface" to the book, brother Harrell states:

The proclivity of the 'restoration movement' to proliferate has not weakened since the separation of the Disciples of Christ and the Churches of Christ around the turn of the century. Two distinct religious bodies have grown out of the Disciples of Christ by mid-twentieth century — one ecumenical in outlook and theologically sophisticated; the other largely sectarian. In the Churches of Christ the same pattern has been followed. The more cultured element of the group is well on its way to denominationalism (or at least to a position much nearer to the mainstream of American Protestantism), while a smaller segment of the church remains committed to the most legalistic implications of the restoration plea (p. vii). The fundamental approach of the book, as has been stated, is a social one. Brother Harrell shows how that sociological factors, to a great extent, shaped the thinking of the Disciples; yet, on the other hand, the thinking of the Disciples many times had a great effect on society. To state this in brother Harrell's words:

But the most intriguing facet of this study involves interpretations of impact and motivation. The hard facts which tell the story of what men did and thought on a specific social issue are coherent and meaningful in terms of Disciples history and American history only if they are put into the context of people being molded by a vital, creative Christian message and in turn being shaped by the turbulent society of nineteenth-century America. In short, the problem of interpretation is two-fold: a study of the contribution of Disciples to the social consciousness of the nation and an analysis of the sociological impact on the church's social thought (p. 21). This work has been limited to cover the time period of 1800-1865. A second volume is already in preparation, covering the period 1866-1900.

Fully discussed are the attitudes of the early disciples toward premillennialism, slavery, war, liquor, tobacco, worldly allurements, the "Christian Sabbath," marriage and divorce, capital punishment, etc.

To sum up, it is an excellent work, thoroughly documented, yet vibrantly alive with the story of the nineteenth-century pioneers of Christianity and what made them do what they did.

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ELDERS OR DIRECTORS OF THE TIPTON HOME

Dudley Ross Spears, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Every Orphanage that is supported by churches of Christ that is west of the Mississippi River claims to be under the direction and oversight of elders of a local church. It is affirmed that the operation of the Orphanage is simply a function of the local church in that city and that the elders of that local church are overseers of the Orphanage in the same way they are overseers of the Bible classes conducted by that congregation. East of the Mississippi River all the Orphanages supported by churches of Christ claim they are under a board of Directors and not under elders. If they happen to be elders of some local church and are on the board, they serve as directors only and not as elders. The position taken by **Gospel Advocate** writers is that it would be unscriptural for the elders of a congregation to be the ones directing the affairs of the Orphanage "as elders" for that would make them elders over two institutions, which they admit would be unscriptural. However, **Firm Foundation** writers generally would not admit that the elders of such an Orphanage as Tipton Home are over another institution. They do not believe it would be scriptural for churches to manage and support separate organizations for benevolent purposes. Neither position is right, but they are divided over how the Orphanages should be managed and supported.

Concerning the **Firm Foundation** view, it should be noted that if the elders of the Tipton church of Christ oversee the operation of Tipton Home (an Orphanage) in the same way they oversee Bible classes, then they oversee every function of that **Home** for dependent children. The Tipton Home has a large farm, they provide schooling for the inmates of the Home, they rear children and even bodily punish the children by whipping them. Is this a function God has authorized His church to perform? If so, what scripture would be cited as proof? However, if they are not serving as directors of the Orphanage, they are operating the Tipton Home illegally. Just recently I debated a brother who claimed that "the law regards them (men who serve as elders of Tipton church) as directors, we regard them as elders." The law does regard them as directors because in the charter granted to them by the State of Oklahoma there is this statement: "To Secretary of State of the State of Oklahoma: We, the undersigned trustees or directors, Earl Todd, Tipton, Oklahoma, Lee Owens, Tipton, Oklahoma, W. E. Lemmons, Tipton, Oklahoma, S. D. Jackson, Tipton, Oklahoma being persons legally competent to enter into contracts, for the purpose of forming a corporation under the laws of the State of Oklahoma, do hereby adopt the following Articles of Incorporation . . ." These men appealed to the State as directors or trustees over an Orphanage, not as elders over a local church. If, then, they serve as elders over the Orphanage, they have involved the church in farming, schooling, raising children and beating of children. If, on the other

hand, they serve as directors, they serve over two institutions, a local church and a benevolent organization.

The **Gospel Advocate** position is likewise an unscriptural position because they admit to having a separate benevolent organization which does the work of a home and not the church. They claim that caring for children is a work of the home, "as a home" and not the work of the church, "as the church." This being true, there could be no scriptural way that local churches could make donations to these benevolent organizations when they admit and claim that they are not doing the work of the church at all. What scriptural precedent or principle would be cited to justify the local churches sending their money to something that is not doing the work of the church at all? Can the money collected into the church treasury be spent to further anything but the work of the church? P so what? But on the other hand, if the Orphanages under directors, not elders "as elders," are doing the work of the churches, this impeaches and denies the all-sufficiency of the organization of local churches of Christ, for if benevolent organizations, separate and apart from the church are needed to care for the needy, of what use (other than raising and contributing money) is the local church?

The truth is always between extremes and it is in this case. The truth of the matter is that God has assigned benevolent obligations to local churches. Such words as "parted to" (Acts 2:44-45), "distributed to" (Acts 4:34,35), "serve tables" (Acts 6:1-4), "sent relief" (Acts 11:27-30), or "ministered to" (II Cor. 9:1), describe congregational action in benevolence. The local congregation is the only organization ever authorized to control and do the work of the local church. To affirm that churches may build and maintain separate benevolent organizations denies the truth of God's word and constitutes a "going beyond" the doctrine of Christ (II John 9). It also involves those who so affirm in such dilemmas as are noted in the first three paragraphs of this article.

Several years ago when the "college-in-the-budget" issue was hot, some affirmed churches could and should scripturally contribute to colleges on the basis of their being parallel to orphanages. Lately, the same argument (?) is being made. While they "stand or fall together" there is no scriptural authority that can be produced from the Bible justifying either of them being supported financially by churches of Christ. But in this area, there is a spot we could all occupy in unity and harmony. Put the colleges and orphanages on an individual basis as far as financial support is concerned and the church would be the church and the orphanages and colleges would be well supported. I believe such would work. It did with the colleges — why not with orphanages? This is one area that has not been explored as fervently as it should have been. Churches have been split asunder and more are in the process of being split. Brethren are dividing further and further apart and I believe this is a possible solution to the question.

Suppose you believe churches could support Orphanages from the treasury. Many do not so believe. They would not oppose you as an individual supporting the institution of your choice, but when it is put in the budget of the local church and regular contri-

butions are sent to the Orphanage from the church, a person who opposes such on scriptural grounds is forced to either not give or violate his conscience. Why not keep the financial support of such organizations on an individual basis and have unity? Why not try it? Why not discuss the possibilities involved in it? Why not?

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Oklahoma City, Okla. 73106

"IS IT POSSIBLE TO SCRIPTUALLY DIVORCE AND REMARRY"

Vernon R. Butler
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c/o FPO N.Y., N.Y. 09523

I wrote an article with the above title, a copy of which I sent to "Searching the Scriptures" on September 19, 1965 and a copy of which I sent to bro. William H. Lewis concerning an article he had written and to which he refers in the April 1966 "Searching the Scriptures." Bro. Lewis teaches that persons can divorce and remarry (THE ONE EXCEPTION OF MATT. 19:9) and stand justified before God. I do not teach such. I am one of those who teach that persons having two or more living mates (and is presently cohabiting with one of them) is in an adulterous marriage.

If the supposed "exception" of which bro. Lewis speaks in Matt. 19:9 is supposed to be law for the church, why can we not find it in the apostles doctrine (Acts 2:42)? Why is it that all of the writers of the New Testament fail to teach an "exception" to the principle "till death do us part?" Why does our brother Paul teach in Rom. 7:1-4 that having two living mates constitutes adultery? Why does he teach in I Cor. 7:1-11 that each person is to have his/her own wife/husband that if the wife depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband? Why does he teach that the husband is **not** to put away his wife?

Why did not Paul teach the "one exception" to those elders from Ephesus in Acts 20:27? He told them that he had declared unto them the whole council of God. In the Ephesian letter, chapter 5, verses 22-33, Paul shows that the wife is to submit herself unto the husband as unto the Lord. Is that wife at liberty to divorce the Lord, and get a new Lord, and still stand guiltless before God? The husband holds the same position with the wife as Christ does with the church. They are **one** in each other. The body of Christ and the church are one. The husband the wife are one. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." The only way the church and Christ will ever be put away one from the other is for one or the other to die. The same goes for the husband and wife. A man or woman is entitled to just as many living mates as Christ is churches. Any reader who feels that Christ

sanctions more than **one** church has failed to study his New Testament.

No, brethren, you cannot find in the New Testament the doctrine of the "one exception" (divorce and remarriage for the cause of adultery or fornication) wherein God sanctions a person to have two or more living mates. That doctrine comes from a misunderstanding or a misuse and abuse of what Jesus was saying to those Pharisees in Matt. 19:9.

The length of time that a marriage is to last, as God would have it, is till the death of one of the marriage partners. It was from the beginning. The deceptive teaching that man can divorce and remarry and stand justified before God is of man and not of God. Please give this (and my article when it is printed) your conscientious consideration.

FORNICATION AND ADULTERY

D. W. H. Shelton, Tampa, Florida

The majority of people claim that married people commit adultery and others commit fornication, they say most commentaries and dictionaries state it that way. Yes, they do, but every one of them contradict the word of Christ. He said, "But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matt. 5:32).

Again, "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her that is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9).

Jesus is talking about people who are legally and Scripturally married, a marriage that God recognizes; they **can** and sometimes **do** commit fornication. If one does I suppose the innocent party can get a divorce and marry again and God will recognize that marriage, if so they too can commit fornication (Matt. 5:32, 19:9).

But if they separate for any reason except fornication, and marry again they may be legally married according to the law of the state, but they are not Scripturally married and God does not recognize that marriage, and Jesus said they are living in adultery — not fornication — **adultery**.

The apostle Paul knew there was a difference in adultery and fornication. In Gal. 5:19 he said, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, -which are these: adultery, fornication." If there were no difference Paul would never have used both terms side by side in the same verse.

Why not just forget the commentaries and dictionaries and accept Jesus as our authority? He says married people commit fornication and others commit adultery. Selah.

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