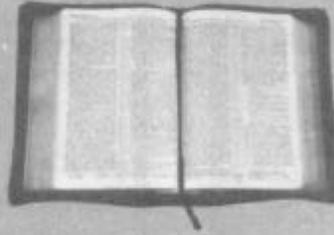


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me" — John 5:39



"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" — Acts 17:11.

VOLUME VII

SEPTEMBER, 1966

NUMBER 9

WHY DENOMINATIONALISM IS WRONG

J. T. Smith, Oklahoma City, Okla.

There are several reasons why denominationalism is wrong; but we want to consider in this article that the main reason why denominationalism is wrong is that it violates the prayer of Jesus for unity in John 17:30-31, and breeds division that is condemned by the apostle Paul in I Cor. 1.

If we would read and study our Bibles, we would know that there is not one whit of Scripture for the many denominations that are in existence today. You have only to turn to the pages of God's Book and read for yourself that there never was anything that looked like the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterians or over 300 other denominations that are in the world today. We need to point out to people this very fact, for those who are in these denominations that were started by men (not Jesus Christ) who have their faith in their creeds and manuals and disciplines (not in the Bible) are LOST, for faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). If we continue to "pussy-foot" around and let these people think by our SILENCE that they are all right, God will hold us responsible for their souls. The prophet of God, Ezekiel, said in Ezek. 3:18-19 "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from this wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." If we, then, expect to save our own souls, we must WARN those who are in error of their error lest we BOTH be lost.

Recently, while I was in Lakeview, Georgia in a meeting, I had opportunity to talk to a fellow who was a Presbyterian. We discussed the Bible at some length, and as I always try to do, I tried to point out that there was not a line in the word of God about the Presbyterian church. I urged him to search the *Scriptures and show from the Scriptures anything* about this denomination in the Bible, or how to become a member of it. There is no such thing in the word of God. There is nothing that resembles the

hundreds of denominations in the Bible. You couldn't find out how to become a member of the Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran or many others if your life depended on it. Your life doesn't — but your SOUL does. Souls are going to be lost unless you come back to the Bible and determine not to do anything in becoming a member of the body of Christ — the Church of Christ except you can read it from the Bible.

It is really quite pathetic that people will BLINDLY follow father or mother, attend the services of some congregation (denomination) because of their fine buildings, because of social position, etc. The Bible was written that we might have SALVATION OF OUR SOULS — not that we might have a higher SOCIAL standing in the community. The Bible was written that we might be RECONCILED TO GOD — not in an attempt to reconcile us with all the religious world.

We would to God that there be **unity** in the religious world. However, there can never be such UNLESS people are willing to follow the only rule book that is in existence from God today — THE BIBLE. It seems to me such a useless waste of time for people to say they want to be saved and yet IGNORE the plain and simple commands in the Bible on what to do in becoming a Christian.

Jesus said one must BELIEVE (John 8:24), REPENT OF SINS (Luke 13:3), CONFESS HIS NAME before men (Matt. 10:32) and be BAPTIZED (Mark 16:16) to be SAVED. If we will do that the Lord will add us (the saved) to His Church (Acts 2:47). If people would only follow that pattern that God has set forth in becoming Christians and quit this "foolishness" of **signing** cards, kneeling at a "mourner's bench" and a hundred other things and ways of TRYING to be saved; and just simply accept what the Lord said, we would not have all this division and religious confusion.

If you have not done these things in becoming a Christian, why not contact a gospel preacher today and get him to assist you in doing this and in helping you to become a Christian so you can be added by the Lord to HIS church. Then you can continue your study of the Bible (not some creed book) and learn your responsibility in living the Christian life and working for the cause of Jesus Christ. You can learn from the Word of God what you need to do in the work and worship as God has directed—doing things God's way.

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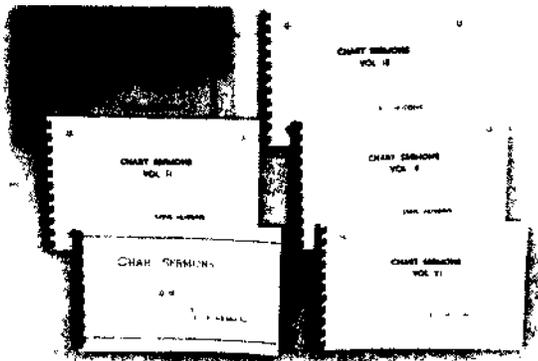
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Editorial . . . **H. E. PHILLIPS**

Most preachers with whom I talk express deep concern for the growing lack of interest for the church of our Lord and for the work of preaching the gospel to every creature. We have today some of the greatest opportunities for reaching people with God's truth than ever before. We are living in a day of great prosperity; the funds are available for supporting the preaching of the gospel. We have the best means of communication today that the world has ever known. Since Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15), and Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also the Greek" (Rom. 1:16); also, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21), we are going to be lost ourselves if we do not make some effort according to our abilities to carry the gospel to the lost.

Publishing a paper like Searching the Scriptures is an expensive and laborious task. It requires long hours every day. The only motivating force that drives brother Miller and me to continue this work is the possible good that may be done to some lost soul and to encourage those who are trying to stand for the faith once delivered to the saints. At times we almost feel physically unable to continue, but we fear to discontinue this effort to teach God's truth because of the great need.

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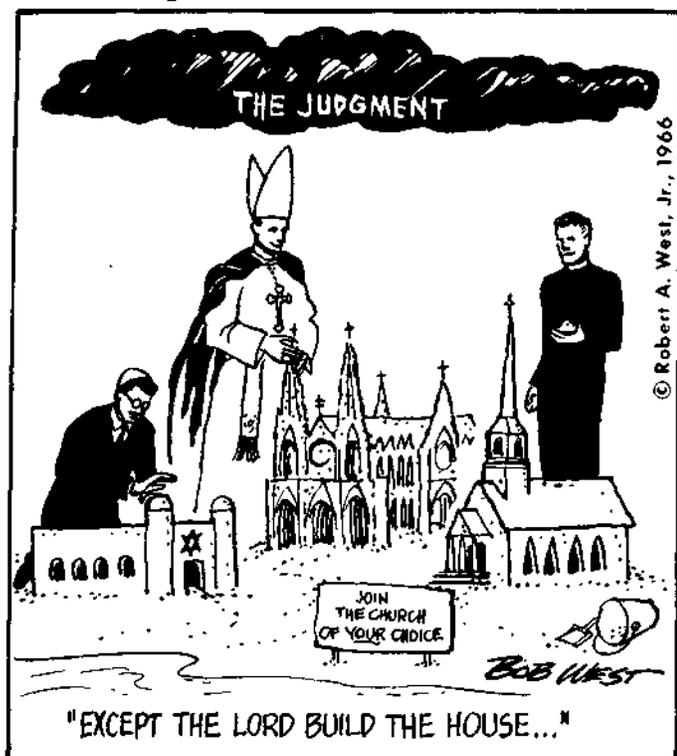
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Our Religious World



ANSWERS

1 Peter 3:15

FOR OUR HOPE

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QUESTION —I have been told that since the exception for divorce and remarriage as made by Jesus (Matt. 19:9) was made while the law of Moses was yet in effect, it does not apply today; that it must be "confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb. 2:3), and that such confirmation is not to be found after the New Testament became effective (Heb. 9:16,17). Will you please comment on this? — B.L.

ANSWER: While the exception made by Jesus in Matt. 19:9 was made while the law of Moses was yet in effect, it was made in anticipation of His kingdom or the gospel dispensation. Much of what Jesus taught during His personal ministry was preparatory to the beginning of the new order of things under His power and authority. The context and the rule of harmony (examining a thing in the light of all else that is revealed) will determine whether or not reference is made to the law then in force (the law of Moses) or the law of Christ.

It is true that the law of Christ — His last will and testament — did not become effective until after His death (Heb. 9:16,17). Consequently, what was taught by His authority did not become effective till after the inauguration of the new order under His reign as king. Furthermore, this power was not wrought in Him until after His resurrection: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; 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" (Eph. 1:19-23). It should be remembered that Jesus was born under the law of Moses (Gal. 4:4); that He not only kept it perfectly, but taught others that "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:18). He did not violate it, and He would not allow others to do so, but rather urged them to keep all that was in it as long as it was in force (Matt. 23:1-3).

In view of the above, read again our text in the light of its context, and it will be observed that the contrast is between that authorized by Moses and that authorized by Christ.

"The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made

them male and female. And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away. He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. 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 which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:3-9). Since the authority of Moses extended to the cross, it follows that the authority of Christ did not begin until afterwards. To bind what was taught by the authority of Christ, that was in contrast to the law of Moses, while the law of Moses was yet in effect is to have Jesus at variance with His own teaching, e.g., Matt. 5:17,18; 23:1-3.

Heb. 2:3 as used in the question under study is misused. The word "confirm" means "to make firm, establish, make secure" (W. E. Vines). Thus, it conveys the idea of a guarantee. It does not mean just writing a thing down again once it has been revealed or taught. The "great salvation" was "confirmed unto us by them that heard him" by the signs, miracles, and wonders which they did (Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:4). It is also a fact that the exception taught by Jesus (Matt. 19:9) was written by Matthew, an apostle, after the law ended at the cross (Col. 2:14), and after the establishment of the church (Acts 2). Matthew wrote in the gospel dispensation of things that happened prior to its beginning. Much of what he wrote involved what Jesus taught in anticipation of His kingdom. Thus, the exception of Matt. 19:9 can apply only under the reign of Christ and, hence, in the gospel dispensation.



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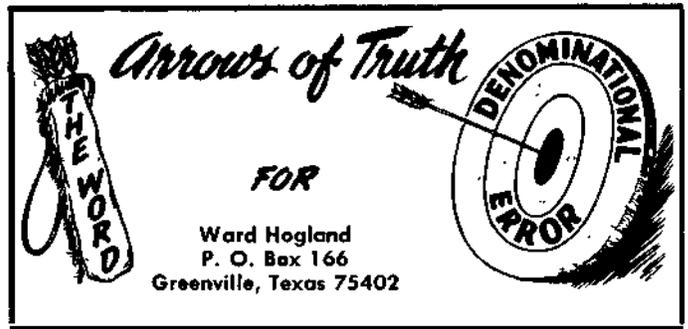
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"EMBELLISH OR EDIFY"

Several years ago a Baptist champion, by the name of J. N. Hall, met W. J. Howe, in a public debate. One of the propositions was the establishment of the church. As usual, they got off into a discussion on the Greek verb in Matt, sixteen. Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." Mr. Hall, said that "I will build" means to enlarge, strengthen, increase, embellish or edify a church already built. Brother Howe, denied this and maintained that the verb meant to build from the ground up, such as building a house. The controversy waxed hot so they both agreed to appoint a committee, and permit the committee to write to three of the best Greek scholars in the United States and report their reply in various church papers. Professor Thayer was one of the men approached and here is the reply they received from all three of the scholars:

1. Professor Shaller Matthews, of Chicago said: "The verb in Matthew 16:18 means 'to build,' in the sense one would speak of building a house. He certainly did not mean by the word enlarge, embellish, edify his church."

2. Professor Gross Alexander, of Vanderbilt University, said: "You ask for an answer quite independent of all theological creeds and prepossessions. It does not mean to enlarge, embellish, or strengthen a house already built; it simply means 'I will build;' and, so far as the mere word is concerned, it implies that the building was not yet done, but was to be done."

3. Professor Thayer, of Cambridge, Mass, said: "You ask whether the word in Matthew 16:18, translated 'I will build' means also to enlarge, embellish, etc., and whether one would be justified in putting either of these definitions in that language of Christ. I feel constrained to reply in the negative. To translate the term 'build' in this connection by 'enlarge' or 'embellish' would mar the metaphor and dilute the thought."

This, of course, was enough evidence from scholars to rout a ten acre field of men like J. N. Hall! When our Lord made this statement his church had not been built. The text shows that at some future date it would be built. Some will argue that the church had already been built because Jesus said in Matthew eighteen, "Tell it to the church." However, it must be remembered that the Lord was giving advice for the future government of his church. If the Lord had already established his church he wouldn't have said, "Tell it to the church." He would have said, "Tell it to me because I am still here on earth and can settle your problems." He would have been the court of final appeal. But knowing that he would die

before the church came into existence, and also knowing that he would ascend to heaven before the church was built he said, "Tell it to the church." In one sense, Jesus was laying the lumber or material for the church which was to be built on Pentecost in Acts two. It cannot be denied that our Lord was preparing the people for the church which was "at hand" while he was on the earth.

COMMENTS TO EDITORS

"Sorry to be late in sending in for my renewal to your excellent paper." — A. A. Stone, Miami, Fla.

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"NOTHING EVER SEEMS TO GO OVER"

Jimmy Tuten, Jr.
6316 Pernod Avenue, St. Louis, Mo. 63139

How many times it has been said, "nothing ever goes over where I worship." Unfortunately, every church has its bearer of sad tidings who find it easier to complain than to do anything constructive. This can be expected because it requires no special gift to demonstrate critical hindsight. The mutters, grumblers and murmurers of our present generation of "respectable church members" see only the failures within the flock of God of which they are affiliated. They cannot see through the veneer of "members moving out of the city," of indifference on the part of some, of failures in the cottage meeting program and poorly attended classes. These are the Elijahs of our generation who feel that "I, even I only, am left," when in reality there are several thousands in spiritual Israel who are steadfastly working out their salvation (I Kings 19:9-18; Phil. 2:12).

Since murmuring is "moral rebellion against God" (Vincent, **Word Studies in the New Testament**, Vol. 3, P. 439), it is grave and serious error to allow these persistent pessimists to set the mode in the local church. Furthermore, continued indignant displeasure and complaining not only retards our spiritual growth, it hampers the work and downgrades the

moral of the corporate body. "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer" is just as serious an admonition for us today as it was for the Corinthian brethren (I Cor. 10:10). Let the vocal minority who are heard saying, "I can tell you right now it won't work. We've tried it before," take note of this one fact: The desire for accomplishment is an imperative ingredient for any active group of saints. Growth and prosperity are contingent upon the desire to work while it is day (Jno. 9:4). To a great extent, the individual members of the local church are masters of their group. Failure to support the functional arrangements and activities designed to edify saints and propagate Truth is to this extent retardation. Instead of knocking and criticizing the efforts of the faithful, give the church where you worship a break! Why not go to bat for it? It is no doubt a good church, made up of some fine people who are zealous and enthusiastic. They may be in the minority, but they desire to work and serve the Master to the extent of their ability. Those creatures of little faith who sit back and complain are not experts as to what should and should not be done. Sure, there are problems. But these are eliminated by Scriptural, positive, aggressive action on the part of the faithful.

There is a door of service open for you! Will you serve Him? Paul said in II Corinthians 2:12, "... when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord." God constantly opens doors for service, but too many of us are like the man who said he never answered the door when opportunity knocked, because it always turned out to be **hard work!** Cicero said, "I criticize by creation; not by finding fault." May we suggest that you analyze yourself before you criticize?

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"beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

— II Pet. 3:17

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THE NEED TO BE INFORMED

Abraham Lincoln is credited with saying, "Let the country be informed and the country is safe." Whether he said it or not, I do not know, but one thing I know and that is if any people can be informed properly they will be safe provided they have any concern for their welfare. People can not act properly without proper knowledge. One reason why a person can not perform a particular task is often that he does not have the knowledge to do so. An individual working on a broken machine could fix it without any trouble, but often he has difficulty in locating the trouble, thus, he is hindered by a lack of knowledge.

The prophet Hosea said of Israel in 4:6 of the book bearing his name, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:" Destruction was upon Israel because they were ignorant of God's will. Jesus, upon one occasion, said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Christ said this to some Jews which believed on him. Their knowing the truth was conditioned upon their continuing in the words of Christ. They could not know the truth without continuing in the words of Christ. This shows us the necessity of not only knowing the truth but also that we must continue in the truth.

What is truth? In John 17:17 Jesus said, "Thy word is truth." Truth is determined by the word of God. Truth has already been determined. In Psm. 119:89, the Psalmist said, "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Truth is not relative, changing with the passing of time. What was religious truth one hundred years ago is still truth. What is truth today will be truth one hundred years from now. Since truth does not change, there is the need to study the truth, the word of God, so that we might be made free in any age.

The reason we need to always study the truth is two fold. (1) The word of the Lord points out to us certain problems that will confront us, and (2) the answers to those problems will be found contained in the word of God. In any age there are problems that confront the people of God and the only solution to these will be found in the word of the Lord. These problems will be the same that Satan used on the preceding generation, but he will have changed the outward dress so as to deceive us and get us to succumb to them.

(1) **Elders Have Problems.** Satan is after all the elders of the church in an effort to catch them in his trap. Satan wants them to disregard their work and fail to carry out the will of the Lord. Satan will present ways to lead the congregation away from the Bible and if elders are not alert to what is happening and studious in the Word they will not be able to recognize the efforts of Satan to draw away

disciples. One of the needs of this hour is for elders to be informed of what the word of God teaches and also to know what is happening in the church. If elders do not keep up with what is taking place, how can they teach the portion of the word of God that applies to the situation? If a false doctrine is taught in the church this week in Maine, the elders of the churches in California will have to deal with it next week. How can elders be prepared to handle the situation if they do not keep themselves informed.

(2) Evangelists **Have Problems**. Gospel preachers are charged with preaching Christ. Mark 16:15, Acts 8:5, 12, 25. They are charged to reprove, rebuke, and to exhort. II Tim. 4:1-4. Preachers need to study the word of the Lord in order to adequately be prepared to meet the efforts of the evil one to seduce souls. Satan will not be the same stumbling stone in the path of a preacher that he will in the life of an elder. There is a need for preachers to watch for the snares of Satan lest he capture them.

(3) Deacons **Have Their Problems**. Satan has a trap designed for everyone. He leaves no stone unturned in order to get men to serve him. There are problems that deacons will have that the evangelist will not have and if Satan can get the deacon to yield to the snares put to him, he has him in his control just like he has the elder that obeyed him.

(4) Parents **Have Their Problems**. God has ordained certain things for parents to do toward their children. There are things that parents are not to do. From time to time there are certain questions and problems that come up that face the parent. Shall we permit our children to do a certain thing? Parents, keep in mind that you need to know what is going on about your children so that you can adequately meet their needs and assist them over the rough spots in their early years.

(5) **Children Have Their Problems**. Satan wants children in his hand just like he wants their parents. So he places certain problems or temptations in their path so as to ensnare them. The problems that the children face are not the same problems that the elders of the church have, but all of these problems are designed with one thing in mind — to get every soul possible to serve Satan.

In some articles to follow I want to notice with our readers some of these problems and what the Bible teaches about them. Of course, space is always limited and the writer can never take the space to say everything that could be said on the subject. This being so, I trust that our study will be suggestive to you too and that you will in your own private study think of other problems and search the Scriptures for the scriptural solution to those problems.

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The Errors of Catholicism

II Thessalonians 2:3,4

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Rolla, Mo.

"FREEDOM" AND "CENSORSHIP" AS DEFINED BY ROMAN CATHOLICISM

The history of the Roman Catholic Church is replete with cases wherein the freedom of thought, freedom of expression and freedom of worship have been denied even forcibly, to those who dared to think, speak and worship in a fashion other than that decreed by the Popes.

In our modern day, we are told that the strictness of Catholic censorship was required during the Middle Ages, but that the progress of civilization has modified such a need. However, the fact remains that Catholic thought-control exists in a very real sense, and if circumstances permitted, such thought-control and regimented religion would once again become the order of the day. The 'circumstances permitting' such a condition are simply those of shifting the Roman Catholic population from a minority to a majority in any given Nation or State.

QUOTATIONS FROM CATHOLIC PUBLICATIONS

Pope Leo XIII published an encyclical on 'Human Liberty' in the year 1888 which contains the following statement: ". . . IT IS QUITE UNLAWFUL TO DEMAND, TO DEFEND, OR TO GRANT UNCONDITIONAL FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, OF SPEECH, OF WRITING, OR OF WORSHIP, AS IF THESE WERE SO MANY RIGHTS GIVEN BY NATURE TO MAN . . ."

This same Leo XIII considered the 'Index of Forbidden Books' to be of such a desirable use that in 1897, he instituted new general decrees concerning the placing of publications on the Index. The Index was reformed by him in the year 1900.

The Catholic Encyclopedia states: "In our own days (The 20th century. LWM.) the danger caused by bad books has risen to a degree never thought of before. Unrestraint of intellect and will is the real cause of this increase. THE SO-CALLED FREEDOM OF THE PRESS OR THE ABOLITION OF PUBLIC CENSORSHIP IS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS UNRESTRAINT (Emphasis mine. LWM). All the more the Church (Catholic Church. LWM.) is bound to put an end to the evil by wise and just laws. The highest ecclesiastical authority, Leo XIII himself, has done so in the most solemn way by the aforesaid Bull "Officiorum ac Munerum" (25 an., 1897) which obliges very strictly all the faithful" (Vol. III, page 523).

"It is, of course, absolutely impossible for both the pope and the Congregation of the Index to watch over the press of all countries in order to SUPPRESS AT ONCE EACH AND EVERY PERNICIOUS WRITING..." (Emphasis mine. LWM., Vol. III, page 524).

"It is universally granted that especially in our days there exists hardly a greater danger to faith and morals than that which we may call the literary danger. From the greatness or rather indispensableness of the good at stake, the opportuneness and even necessity of preventive and strictly binding measures undoubtedly follow. In other words, the object in view of the law, that of safeguarding and keeping pure religion and morality (As denned by Catholicism. LWM.), is absolutely necessary; now this object is at the present time more than ever endangered by a bad press; consequently those authorities whose principal office it is to protect the faith and morals of their subjects, must needs make suitable provisions against that press. Hence the moral necessity of such laws . . ." (Cath. Encyc, Vol. III, page 526.)

"IT MAY BE ADDED THAT PROHIBITION OF BOOKS AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST A BAD PRESS ARE INDISPENSABLE EVEN WHERE IN APPEARANCE, AND ACCORDING TO THE LETTER OF THE LAW, ABSOLUTE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS PREVAILS. (Emphasis mine. LWM.) The truth of this is established by the political history of the last century no less than by the civil legislation of more recent years. During the past decades the freedom of the press, sanctioned by the laws, has degenerated in so many places into absolute lawlessness, that on all sides and from all parties has arisen a demand for legal protection. The Catholic Church was therefore bound to adhere all the more firmly to her system, (of censorship. LWM.) though in its practical application she was able to introduce many opportune mitigations" (Cath. Encyc. Vol. III, page 527).

Let us summarize the foregoing statements: (1) Catholicism teaches that it is **QUITE UNLAWFUL** to demand, defend or grant unconditionally, the **FOUR FREEDOMS . . . FREEDOMS THAT AMERICAN CITIZENS HOLD SO DEAR!**

(2) Catholicism teaches that **FREEDOM OF THE PRESS** and the **ABOLITION OF PUBLIC CENSORSHIP** is very **EVIL!**

(3) Catholicism would **IF SHE COULD . . . in ALL NATIONS . . . SUPPRESS AT ONCE, EACH AND EVERY WRITING . . .** that SHE considers to be 'pernicious'.

(4) The "**BAD PRESS**" of our Nation is dangerous to "faith and morals" according to the Catholic Church, due to its enjoyment of **FREEDOM!**

And (5) Catholicism teaches that "**PROHIBITION OF BOOKS**" and "**PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST A 'BAD PRESS'**" are **INDISPENSABLE** even where according to the **LETTER OF THE LAW . . . absolute freedom of the press prevails.** Thus, even in the United States where freedom of the press does prevail, Catholicism claims that **CENSORSHIP** is **INDISPENSABLE** in the accomplishment of her aims and intentions!

CONCLUSION

Although our feelings are in sympathy with the Hungarian peoples who are being mis-treated by the Communists, yet we must not lose sight of the fact that over 70% of the Hungarians admitted to this Country, are sincere but deceived members of the Roman Catholic Church.

It is a known fact, that wherever Catholicism is in the majority, freedom of worship disappears. Both Communism and Catholicism are philosophies that thrive upon thought-control and denial of freedoms. The principle is the same, whether it originates in Rome or Moscow, the Kremlin or the Vatican.

The Errors of Baptist Doctrine

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PRIMITIVE BAPTIST DOCTRINE

Here is a statement from Mr. Cayce, Primitive Baptist preacher, in Confession page 143; "Sufficient provision was not made in the death of Christ for the salvation of all the race, because he did not die for all the race." If this is so, and it is not, let us notice the logical results.

1. It makes God a tyrant, for if the doctrine of a limited atonement be true, then God provided for a few leaving others unprovided for, and then consigning the millions to hell for that which they could not prevent. "I have no delight (pleasure), in the death of the wicked" (Ezek. 33:11).

2. Unbelief cannot be a cause of the damnation of those for whom Christ did not die. Unbelief on their part cannot be a sin, for,

a. Christ did not die for them — Cayce says he did not — and for them to believe Christ is their Savior is not true.

b. They cannot believe without Divine aid, says Primitive Baptist preachers, and it is therefore not a sin to fail to do that which one cannot do.

c. If Christ did not make provisions for those who will be damned, their belief or disbelief will make no change in their destiny.

3. No possibility of them for whom Christ did not die to escape damnation.

a. Christ did not die for all — Page 143.

b. Only those for whom he died can be saved.

c. Then those for whom he did not die come into this world with the necessity of damnation; for before their birth, before they were "babies a span long" arrangement was made for the salvation of a definite number; and those who are lost were not provided for in the arrangement; it was settled that Christ was not to die for them, then and there it was settled they must be damned. For them there is no escape, and there has never been.

4. If Christ died for a part of the human family, then the devil is the biggest fool I have ever heard of, for,

a. What has the devil to do? Why should he walk through the earth seeking whom he may devour? Why should he hunt for the souls of men? He has, secured to him by Jehovah, sanctioned by Christ, and sealed by the Holy Spirit, his portion of human souls. They are counted out, numbered. The names and number are designated. He could not get one more even though he move heaven and earth. They

are secured to him — not one of them will he lose. Let the devil rest and hell hold high carnival for God has given them a large portion of the human family — for his own pleasure and glory.

b. Why should children of God be exercised? All for whom Christ died will be brought in. Not one will fail. Why should you labor, you cannot make one hair white or black. Why take unto yourself trouble about those whom the Lord has left for the devil? Would you rob the devil? It is not possible! None can perish for whom Christ died; none can be saved for whom he did not die. Let the devil and Christians cease from their foolish warfare, let the world have peace; the devil can't lose one of his, nor can he get one of the Lord's.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

Richard Porter, Tampa, Florida

The inspiration of the Scriptures is a vitally important subject, but the truth about it can be understood by anyone who has the proper disposition (Matthew 13:23). The plainness of Bible teaching is plainly stated in II Corinthians 3:12 which says: "Seeing that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech." It is reassuring to know that "when ye read, ye may understand" (Ephesians 3:4), like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily" (Acts 17:10-11), and like those who were told to read what Apostle Paul had written (Colossians 4:16). "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of God is." "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (Eph. 5:17, II Tim. 2:15). (All Scripture emphasis mine, RKP.)

The Bible consists of the recorded words of God, expressing in God's own words, all things pertaining to life and godliness, and does not consist of man's interpretations, and/or ideas of God, and/or God's wisdom expressed in words of man's wisdom according to what the Bible itself teaches. One only has to examine a few Bible passages in an objective manner in order to substantiate the above proposition.

Almighty God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being (Acts 17:28) used earthen vessels as instruments in revealing the treasure of His gospel (II Cor. 4:1-7), His only power to save weak and sinful mankind (Rom. 1:16).

All style variation and personal experiences in the Holy Scriptures are all part of God's wisdom that teaches His will to man. God did not change the styles or personalities of the inspired writers but used them as they were to communicate what He wanted the way He wanted it communicated. God's inspired writers or spokesmen "spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:20-21). In I Corinthians 2:12-13, the Apostle Paul said, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that

are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." In other words, the apostles "... spoke the things of God in the words of God." Commenting upon this same passage, Jinks said.

"V. 13 the Spirit of God not only gave the knowledge of these things, but gave them utterance. The truths of God need no garnishing over by human skill or eloquence, but look best in the words which the Holy Ghost teaches. . . The language of the Spirit of God is the most proper to convey His meaning."

II Timothy 3:16-17 says that all Scripture (all Scripture includes the New Testament as well as the Old, see II Peter 3:15-16 also) is inspired of God. The International Standard Encyclopedia says:

"'inspiration'; that is to say, the action of the spirit of God in so 'bearing' its human authors in their work of producing the Scripture, as that in the Scriptures they speak, not out of themselves, but 'from God.' It is this act by virtue of which the Scriptures may be properly called 'God-breathed.'"

The inspired (God breathed) Scriptures are a complete and sufficient guide for the man of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect (complete — Revised Version), thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17). Today the inspired Scriptures thoroughly ("Painstaking, complete, overlooking no detail" — 1964 Webster's New American Dictionary, "in everything" — W. E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words) furnish the man of God through the knowledge of them (the Bible); in them he learns all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Tim. 3:16-17, and II Pet. 1:3).

From these Bible verses and from others that could be mentioned to illustrate the theme of this discussion further, it is very obvious to the unbiased mind that the Bible itself teaches that it is an inspired book. It teaches that it is inspired in the sense that the influence exerted by the Holy Spirit upon the minds of its writers was such that what has been written by them contains no error but expresses solely and only God's mind.

Searching The Scriptures

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The News Letter Reports

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

MILLER-WOODS DEBATE

The debate between James P. Miller and Guy N. Woods held in Montgomery, Alabama, August 29, 30, 31, and September 1 was well attended and orderly conducted. We believe much good was done. This will be an outstanding debate in the years to come. Clear and complete tapes of the debate are available to any who want them. The full set of four tapes — one for each night — may be purchased from Phillips Publications, P.O. Box 17244, Tampa, Florida 33612. A full report with some charts used will be in the November issue of this paper. Watch for it. — H. E. P.

Larry Bunch, Palmetto, Fla. — Grover Stevens from Louisville, Kentucky will do the preaching in a gospel meeting in Palmetto, Florida, October 16-25. Plan to attend as many services as possible.

Kenneth E. Thomas, Kirkland, III. — In the month of August we have had five responses to the gospel of Christ here at Kirkland. Two of them were young people who had been taught, and were active in the Baptist church until they learned of their error. They took this step in much fear of one grandparent and also in fear of the man who preaches for the Baptist church as he is aggressive to the point that their fears, especially for young people, were well founded. One grandparent of these young people had been an active Baptist for about 60 years in Arkansas, and she obeyed the Lord in baptism about one year ago.

Also in a recent meeting in Amberg, Wisconsin, near Iron Mountain, Michigan, this writer held an eight day meeting resulting in the conversion of an elderly lady 77 years of age who was raised in the Lutheran faith. The church there is small but they are determined to walk according to the faith.

Also we had a meeting here in June with brother Ferrell Jenkins on "The Evidences of Christianity" which was well attended, and much spiritual good was accomplished. I am to be in a meeting in northern Florida between Jennings and Jasper September 11 through 18 or longer if interest prevails. I formerly preached for two years there.

Walter N. Henderson, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. — There has been one baptized here at First Street since I moved here July 19th.

John A. Humphries, Harrisburg, Pa. — As of October 1, 1966 I will be working with the Rivermont church of Christ in Hopewell, Virginia. My address will be: John Humphries, Route 2, Box 669, Chester, Va. 23831.

Conway Skinner, Beaufort, S. C. — For the first time in the history of Paris Island Recruit Training Depot, services are now being held on base each Lord's day for the benefit of Christians who are confined to the base. Please inform any parent who may have a son just entered into the corps.

Progress is being made by the new church recently established in Charleston, S. C. They now have a regular meeting place that is plenty commodious to provide for their needs for sometime to come. Their urgent need now is support for a preacher that they might have a man on the field and at work daily making contacts for the Cause. If the church where you worship may be able to help financially, please contact me.

My next meeting is with the E. Gordon Street church in Valdosta, Georgia, August 14-19. This church is small and we urge all brethren in the area to attend. The work goes well here at Beaufort.

Thomas G. Butler, P.O. Box 1713, Lakeland, Fla. — Robert Jackson of Nashville, Tenn., will be with the Lake Wire church in Lakeland, Florida, October 23-30. Services nightly at 7:30 except Sunday which will be at 6:00 p.m. This good church continues to grow and remain strong in the Lord. The first report I made for this church was thirty-four years ago. I tell young preachers that if I had my life to live over, I would pick out a good congregation and settle down for life.

E. Paul Price, Tyler, Texas — On September 5, 6, 7, 8 brother Elmer Moore will be in a debate with brother Ronnie Wade in Fredrick, Okla. This debate will cover classes, Women teachers, and the cup (container) question. This debate will be the result of a meeting that I conducted in Fredrick this past March for the brethren who meet at 19th and Calla streets.

We moved to Tyler, Texas in June to work with the church meeting at 3117 Garden Valley Road. Things look good for a good growth in the future. We are following brother Robert L. McDonald in the work here. Would bulletin exchanges please notice new address: E. Paul Price, 404 Bandera Drive, Tyler, Texas 75701.

Robert M. Atkinson, Monticello, Ky. — I was with the Oil Valley church in Wayne County, Ky., in a tent meeting July 20-29. Ten were baptized into Christ during the meeting and the great interest in the Word of God which was manifested throughout the meeting was truly exceptional. The Oil Valley church has been encouraged to launch the plans for a much needed new building. This is the home county of "Raccoon" John Smith. The people of God here have a rich heritage and bright prospects. All five of the congregations in the county are faithful to the Lord.

A MEETING AT HAYNES ST. IN DAYTON — and some results —

Dudley R. Spears, Oklahoma City, Okla.

It was my privilege to preach in a meeting at the Haynes & Parrott Sts. church of Christ in Dayton, Ohio. The congregation is one of the oldest in the Ohio Valley. Through the years she has suffered abuse and misrepresentation. She has done much

good for the cause in assisting smaller congregations and establishing other churches in that area. Back in 1958 or 1959 she had to withdraw from a disorderly member who had abandoned the church and refused to worship with the saints. Everything had been done to try to restore the erring one, but to no avail. The person then went to another congregation and was accepted into full membership without repenting of her sins. The Haynes St. brethren, in their effort to do what was right and to show these brethren that they were wrong in accepting this withdrawn from members, made a statement to the effect that they were "withdrawing fellowship" from that congregation. This was a poor choice of words and has been the occasion for much misunderstanding, misrepresentation and heartache in that area since.

During our meeting, I spoke on the subject of "fellowship" which was followed by a "question and answer period" and the brethren concurred in the lack of wisdom and judgment in making such a statement, which had been twisted and perverted by her enemies. Thus, they made public their withdrawal of such a statement. A letter had already been sent to all congregations involved, asking that all previous letters on the subject of fellowship be disregarded. They also fortified this withdrawal or retraction of the statement in an open meeting at Haynes St. on Wednesday night following our gospel meeting. The Haynes St. brethren have been able to take the misrepresentations and "smear campaigns" without retaliation in kind. They are a good group of God's children with a bright future.

Some months ago, some agitators within the church at Haynes St. began a movement to split the church. They were aided by the local preacher who charged the Haynes St. church with erroneous teaching, viz., "Haynes St. has become a **little** Vatican" in the Dayton area. A group formed after withholding their contributions for several weeks and then went out as a group to form a congregation. There was no need to form a faction as they did, for there are a number of good sound churches in that area where they would have been welcomed.

During the open meeting on last Wednesday evening, both congregations were present. The statement "withdraw fellowship from another congregation" was discussed and **retracted**. At the conclusion of the service, the preacher for the faction, repented of the false charges he had leveled against Haynes St. Several of them made vain efforts to justify the division over "bad attitudes" or "minor skirmishes" and the like. They did not answer the question put to them on why they did not simply identify with another sound church, rather than form a faction.

Haynes St. is filled with God-fearing people who face the future with great opportunities before them. The State of Ohio purchased their present location for a "clover-leaf" approach to the new super-highway which passes through Dayton. They have purchased lots on which to build an accommodative and attractive building. They need a good preacher soon. May God bless them and their kind because they are among some of God's finest.

Jerry Parker, Centralia, Mo. — Beginning September 4th I will be working full time with the church in Centralia, Mo. I would like to receive bulletins from other congregations. My address is: Jerry Parker, 113 So. Jefferson Ave., Centralia, Mo.

Brent Lewis, Culver City, Calif. — After two years work with the church in Culver City, California, I shall be moving to Eau Gallie, Florida, to take up the work with the good church there. My new address will be: 1189 Firthview Drive, Eau Gallie, Fla. 32935. We look forward to returning to Florida. I held a meeting in August with the church in Sacramento, California, where **Don Bassett** preaches. Through the many efforts of the members there (52 strong), there were 28 non-members present during the meeting.

J. Frank Ingram, Blue Ash, Ohio — I recently closed a meeting in Plattsburgh, New York with five responses, three of which were baptized. This congregation is made up entirely by servicemen who worship *in town and who are doing a good job* in this virgin field. I also just finished preaching in a meeting at Bagdad, Florida where brother **Al Watkins** is preaching. They have made wonderful progress in the last few years and I firmly believe will even do a great deal more in this area for the cause of the Lord. Several of the congregations in the Pensacola area supported the meeting and other nearby places which was appreciated. There were two responses, one baptized.

Ralph W. Lewis, Albany, Ga. — It was recently brought to my attention that many brethren seem not to know that a sound congregation now meets at Albany, Georgia. The Central church of Christ now meets, temporarily, at 231 North Jackson Street, and has for the past thirteen months. The Valley View congregation of Athens, Alabama furnishes my support with assistance from the **Rose Hill** church of Columbus, Georgia. This enables us to devote our full time to the work. We are small in number but are of good courage. Brother **Glenn Pye**, who is exceptionally well versed in the Scriptures, recently took a stand with us.

R. D. Simmons, Sr., P. O. Box 1973, Victoria, Texas — The church formerly known as the North Street church here in Victoria is not worshipping in their new building located on Glasgow Street, in the Northcrest addition, just three blocks off the Hallettsville Highway 77. The new building is located just outside the present city limits, in a new Real Estate development; but will be taken into the city limits within a few months. Our building is in a good location and is in the growing part of the city. **H. H. Webb** of Sinton, Texas was the contractor. From the beginning of my work here in January, 1964, the church in Edna, Texas has contributed almost half of my support, and continues to do so. During this time the churches at Spring Branch in Houston, Refugio, and Seadrift, Texas also contributed to my support. In the past two years we have lost over 40 and faithful members by moving away, which hindered our numerical growth. However, we do have a strong group of saints with which to work, and our future looks bright.

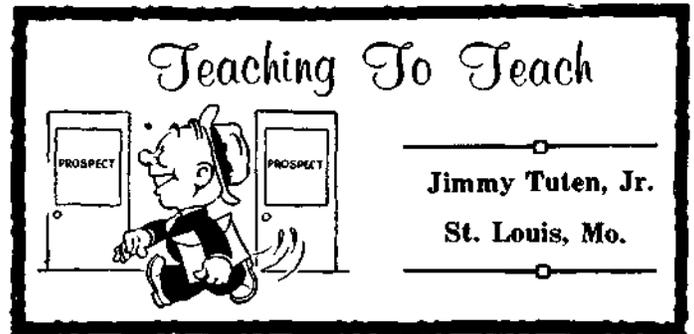
Larry Devore, Wooster, Ohio — A church patterned after the New Testament order is meeting in Charleston, West Virginia and is in need of a gospel preacher. I have agreed to move there on or before October 1st. These brethren are not able to furnish all of my support. If any are able and willing to help, please let me know. Opposition from the liberal churches in the Charleston area is great. Please remember us in your prayers. For more information contact me at 569 Skylark Ave., Wooster, Ohio 44691.

Jack Gibbert, Myrtle Beach, S. C. — We have just finished a meeting with Alton Elliott of Jesup, Georgia in which two were baptized and a number of contacts were made. We have exceeded the size of the "liberal" group in Myrtle Beach as of this month. The church here continues to grow and prosper both physically and spiritually. I will be in need of support for this work beginning January 1, 1967. I have the brethren's confidence and they have agreed to support me 100% for the month of December so that I can travel around the country and get my support. I will be willing to stop and talk with any individual or church that expresses an interest in this work. The church here can supply 25 A of my support. We have grown from an attendance of 9 when we first met in January of 1965 to an attendance of over 30 now. The nearest conservative group to us is 100 miles, Charleston, and I preach for them once each month.

Robert J. LaCoste, Glendale, Ariz. — On July 15th the Glendale church sent me to assist the brethren at Fairview, Jamesport, and Hallesville, Missouri in a series of mission meetings continuing through August 21st. Eight were baptized and good attendance from the local citizens prevailed at all three meetings. Brother Earl Fly of Jackson, Tennessee, will be with us in a meeting October 23-30, 1966. The work in Glendale continues to progress at a slow but steady pace. So far this year ten have been baptized, four restored and sixteen to identify themselves with us. Several faithful families moved away.

Kent Harrell, 1012 Roosevelt Drive, Camden, S.C. 29020 — The church in Camden is having a gospel meeting October 17-23 with Bob Bunting of Lafayette, N.J., doing the preaching. Bob worked with this church about sixteen years ago, and is well known and respected in this area. The church here continues to grow, and as of two and one half years ago, is completely self-supporting. I would appreciate being put on a bulletin exchange with those putting out a bulletin.

If you have moved, or if you plan to move soon, please notify us. Check your name and address and see if it is correct, and if not, let us know the correct address. It costs 10 cents for every copy returned because of change of address, and you miss that month's issue of the paper. Please notify us of your correct address.



OVERCOMING OBJECTIONS

The objections to one's becoming a personal worker runs into large proportions. Likewise, efforts to organize a systematic personal work program within the framework of the local church meets opposition. Objections have their good points and their bad points. For some, any form of opposition discourages the fulfilling of the tasks that need to be performed. For others, objections create a challenge to re-think and re-appraise the scripturalness and effectiveness of our work. Due to limitations of space, this writing will concern itself with an appraisal of some of the more serious objections, in an effort to demonstrate that organized personal evangelism within the framework of the local church is a scriptural expediency. Though we will meet obstacles in our efforts to organize personal work classes, we must not become discouraged. Many collectives of God's people are showing more and more concern for this type of work.

While emphasis is being placed upon planned personal evangelism in this series of articles, one is not to conclude that other methods are not equally important. The writer believes this area is neglected and is trying, in these writings to create interest in door to door teaching. The prayer is that this approach to evangelism will be used to the greatest extent possible. This is an effective way to reach the lost (Acts 8:4; 20:21-22).

PERSONAL WORK PROGRAMS ARE GIMMICKS

Occasionally brethren are heard expressing mistrust in organized efforts, labeling them "high pressure gimmicks" to be shunned and avoided. While there are instances where over-zealous brethren have abused this method of teaching, and have used cottage meeting training classes and visitation programs as embellishments and ornamentations, we must not conclude all efforts to organize personal evangelism within the local church have base motives behind them. The abuse of a thing does not demonstrate its scripturalness or unscripturalness. This can only be determined by the New Testament. Therefore, we should not allow these modern day Geshems to not draw us from the wall of activity by wasting our time in the "ecclesiastical" plains of Ono. We should realize that just because one raises an objection, this does not mean that these efforts are unscriptural. There are some brethren who are going to raise objections no matter what we do. For some, nothing is scriptural except what they themselves call scriptural. The needs of personal evangelism are too great, and the results too abundant and gratifying to allow ourselves to become frightened

from doing what we know "to be the will of the Lord (Matt. 28:18-19). If handled in a proper manner, efforts toward personal evangelism are not gimmicks no more than the other functional arrangements of the local church that are carried on in a collective manner.

The church is the pillar and the ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15). Individuals are under instructions from the Lord to preach the gospel to the world (Matt. 28:20). As long as the word of God is taught (I Pet. 4:11), various expedients may be used to carry out that command, whether collectively or individually. Class arrangements, classes designed to teach others to teach, cottage meetings, etc. are all aids to the teaching included in the command "teach." We should maintain good effective personal work teaching programs. All such arrangements carried on within the framework of the local church are certainly legitimate functions. It is a mistake to label all such efforts as "gimmicks."

NOTHING BUT A MEANS OF PRODDING THE BRETHREN

Another objection often heard is that "cottage meeting classes are nothing but tools for prodding the brethren into doing what they should be doing already." If brethren "have to be prodded, then they are not converted to Christ," we are told. The conclusion is then drawn that personal work classes, zoned visitation, etc. are not needed. If we strike out the prejudicial phrase, "tool," it will be admitted that organized personal work does serve to prod the brethren, but it prods them to accept their personal responsibility. Is it sinful to prod brethren? Webster defines the term as simply that of inciting to action or stirring one up. The New Testament commands us to exhort and to stir each other up (Heb. 6:1-3; 12:1-7; II Pet. 1:13 ; 3:1-2). The very fact that Peter wrote to the "elect" scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, etc. and sought to stir up their pure minds by remembrance, demonstrates that the need for such action is not necessarily a sign of non-conversion. The term "exhort" denotes the idea of urging forward, "to stimulate to the discharge of the ordinary duties of life" (Vine, Vol. 2, P. 26). Planned visitation and personal work, like other functional arrangements of the local church, present an excellent opportunity for brethren to fulfill their God-given desires to share the gospel with others.

ENCOURAGES LAXITY WITH REFERENCE TO PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Those who offer this objection are those who object to planned personal work because it is ORGANIZED. They feel it is another step "toward organized religion," and that such action causes the Christian "to feel that they have no work to do until assigned a work by the elders." Taking first things first, we raise this question: what about the matter of organizing a personal work program within the local church under the oversight of the elders? It has been demonstrated over and over that when the work of the local church is operated haphazardly, without design, direction, or aim, the inevitable result is chaos and confusion. Those who are trying to work out their salvation are filled with heartache and despair when such energies are wasted. "Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing right," is an old adage.

Those who seek to carry out the plan of God in personal evangelism should do so in an orderly fashion, "for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (I Cor. 14:33). Systematizing the personal work as a functional arrangement within the church or collective of God's people conforms to the principle of decency and order (I Cor. 14:4). Poorly arranged efforts encourages idleness and haphazardness (Rom. 13:14; I Thess. 3:12). Carelessly organized work is the result of slothfulness on the part of many preachers, teachers and elders. The Lord commands us not to be "slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Rom. 12:11). There are entirely too many haphazard, hit-or-miss approaches to our personal evangelistic efforts. This accounts for the ineffectiveness of so many.

The fact remains, individual Christians do have a responsibility apart from joint or collective action. They should seek to carry out that function without having to be told what to do by the elders. However, a greater portion of the brethren are not lazy and indifferent. They simply lack know-how. With a little guidance and instruction, these brethren overcome their feelings of inadequacy. Well planned personal work does not encourage laxity. It is a guarantee of success.

CONCLUSION

Other objections could be taken into consideration, but these are sufficient for the time being. Let us recognize the urgent need in the church today, namely, the need for brethren who can and will talk to others about their need to obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30).

WHAT SCIENTIST TEACH

A. W. Dicus, Tampa, Florida

In the recent issue of the Tampa Tribune, (July 30) is an article on Religion and Science by Dr. Wernher von Braun. I consider Dr. Braun one of our leading scientists if not the leading. He is to be highly commended for some of his statements, such as: "Through science, men strive to learn more of the mysteries of creation. Through Religion, he seeks to know the Creator — Neither operates independently." Many other wonderful statements were made which this space will not permit mentioning.

I write this article not to criticize but to warn those who might be inclined to accept Dr. Braun's scientific views as a basis for Religion. Webster's Dictionary defines religion as, "The service and adoration of God, or a God as expressed in forms of worship." This Dr. Braun has expressed very emphatically.

False religions may come under, at least, two types: Atheism and Deism. Webster's Dictionary defines Atheism: "The belief that there is no God," Deism: "The belief that God exists — that reason is sufficient to prove the existence of God with the consequent rejection of revelation and authority." Both of these

forms of religion are highly prevalent as well as evident in our Educational systems. Not once, to my observation, did Dr. Braun mention the Bible (The revelation). He accepts religion through faith but does not state the source of that faith. "I find assurance in the concept of the fatherhood of God. For ethical (moral) guidance, I rely on the corollary concept of the brotherhood of man." To those familiar with Ancient history, the brotherhood of man was taught by the Stoics, prior to the Christian era. "Virtue, said the Stoics, consists in living according to nature." They exalted reason as a guide to conduct. (Webster's Ancient History, page 299).

The ethical concepts in religion today come from the teachings of Jesus, recorded in the New Testament although many refuse to accept the origin. "— it is one of the greatest tragedies of our times that science and religion have been cast as antagonists" (Braun) Thanks, Dr. Braun, for this wonderful statement. David postulated the same concepts, ages ago, Psalm 19.

We believe in two Realms, Natural and Spiritual. Both are of Divine origin. God provided the Natural Laws and left man to discover their operations. However, the spiritual laws are found in the Bible. It is true we must accept our spiritual life by faith. The origin of this faith is not in Physical laws nor scientific achievements but in the Word of God, Rom. 10:17. Not many scientists will admit such.

All Religion is not Christianity. Deism is as far from the Truth as Atheism. The only hope for immortality is found in the Word of God, the Bible. We must accept it by faith. Nature does not teach God. It just reveals the glories of God. We know God from the Bible. We accept this knowledge by faith.

IT ISN'T RIGHT FOR WOMEN TO SPEAK IN THE ASSEMBLY

G. D. Dean, Fort Smith, Ark.

In the August 1966 issue of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES, brother J. T. Smith asked, "Is It Right For Women To Speak In The Assembly?" I appreciate brother Smith, and commend his work, but I feel compelled to answer his question with a resounding: NO! It isn't right for women to speak in the assembly. Brother Smith wrote that I Cor. 14:34-35 does not apply to Christian women today. He further states:

"You will note that in the chapter, Paul is talking about spiritual gifts. I believe the context will bear out the fact that just SOME of the women were to keep silent in the assemblies, for the following reasons.

1. These were women who had husbands (I Cor. 14:35). It would not, then, apply to women who did not have husbands.
2. It would prohibit women from speaking in song as Paul instructed (Eph. 5:19).
3. It would prohibit women from making a public confession of Christ in the assembly even

though Christ commanded that it be before other people (Matt. 10:32).

Thus, if this prohibition for women to speak in the assemblies, the above things that all people are to do would be meaningless."

In No. 1 above brother Smith concludes that I Cor. 14:34-35 applies only to married women because "husbands" are mentioned in the text. Later in his article he seems to indicate that only the prophets' wives are under consideration. If we are to conclude that I Cor. 14:34-35 applies only to married women, then I Tim. 2:11-15 would also have to apply only to married women because it mentions the Adam-Eve arrangement and further says that the woman would be saved by her child-bearing. Brother Smith commented on I Tim. 2:12 and says that "man cannot allow her to do something GOD HAS FORBIDDEN." I fear **that** is just what brother Smith has done in his explanation of I Cor. 14:34-35. God has forbidden that women speak in assemblies." God has said that it "is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." Brother Smith says that she may "ask questions or speak after the lesson in the assembly." (See the last paragraph of his article in SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.)

In No. 2 and No. 3 above, brother Smith uses a type of reasoning that seems to forbid married women to sing or make a confession in the assembly. If that isn't his point of contrast, as he compares these women with other women, then I fail to understand what his point is. I personally believe that I Cor. 14:34-35 applied to all women in the assembly in the first century, and still applies to all women in the assembly in the twentieth century.

All women may sing or make a public confession in the assembly BECAUSE the Bible says so. Eph. 5:19 and Matt. 10:32. But where is the authority for any woman to ask questions or otherwise speak in the assembly? I Cor. 14:34-45 doesn't offer it. And that I Cor. 14 applies to all women is evident from the following two statements: "But let them be in subjection, as also saith the law" . . . "For it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." Prophets' wives, other Christians' wives, and unmarried women alike. It is a shame for them to speak in the church; they are to be in subjection, as also saith the law. **All women are to be in subjection.** I Tim. 2:11 "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection."

Brother Smith said that I Cor. 14:34-35 "would not, then, apply to women who did not have husbands." So according to this, the passage doesn't mean anything to an unmarried woman. Furthermore, it would have the opposite meaning to unmarried women. It would read thusly, "As in all the churches of the saints, let the unmarried women speak in the churches: for it is permitted unto them to speak; for they are not in subjection, as the law teaches. And if they would learn anything, let them ask in the church assembly, since they have no husband at home: for it is not shameful for an unmarried woman to speak in the church."

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