

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.

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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CONGREGATIONAL COMPETITION

H. E. Phillips

I recently read a report of the growth of churches of Christ in America. How authentic or accurate it was I do not know, but the figures were impressive. Only one sour note appeared in the otherwise perfect progress report: there were nearly seven congregations for every preacher. This suggested the all out effort to educate more preachers. The most exciting part of the report was the tremendous growth of congregations in various cities. One city had only one small church in 1960, but now there are five (small) churches. This is an example of growth!

The unscriptural and anti-scriptural views of Charles Holt and Harold Spurlock and associates in **Sentinel of Truth** on the functional entity of local congregations of Christ are fertilized by the greedy competitive maneuvering of some congregations in some areas. Of course, one position does not justify another any more than violence is justified by passive indifference.

To deny the existence of local churches with scriptural organization, is to deny such scriptures as Philippians 1:1, Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5 and others.

No informed person would deny our responsibility of teaching the gospel to every creature and baptizing those who believe and repent (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16). No one would deny that the church should make increase unto the edifying of itself in love (Eph. 4:16). Every honest Christian desires scriptural growth of both himself as an individual and the body of Christ.

Growth may refer to different things. Growth may be in number, in knowledge, in respect from others, or growth in financial power. The usual measurements by which brethren today tell of their growth is in the number in attendance and in the contribution. This is a false measurement of true growth because it does not take into account all or the most important factors. Some congregations may have many members who are wealthy and give more than others but sacrifice far less. The number of dollars per week does not tell of strength or growth. They may be like the Laodiceans who

thought themselves rich, but the Lord said they were poor (Rev. 3:14-19). Others may gauge their success or failure on the number they can get to attend the various public assemblies for worship. Great meetings are planned with well-known speakers with a view of drawing members from neighboring congregations, and little thought is given to those of the world. Gimmicks are used by some to draw the crowds and then that congregation is on the march.

The great harm done by the congregational competition growing out of these false measurements of true growth is the internal decay in spiritual things, and the friction created between brethren. We forget that we are marching under one Leader against a common enemy: the Devil. Brethren become competitors for large numbers on the congregational level and forget the lost world. An example or two of the competition between congregations that hinders the true growth of the kingdom will serve to illustrate the dangers.

An eager, zealous, young preacher wants to demonstrate his ability to make a congregation grow, so he begins to canvass the community to get all the "strays" (wayward members) back to the assemblies. This is commendable and he receives encouragement from the brethren. Soon he must turn to other fields for numerical growth, so he begins to campaign in other congregations with various appeals to individuals to "transfer membership" to the church where he preaches. He has no difficulty in persuading the zealous "personal workers" of his congregation to assist him in moving in as many from other churches as possible. This proves his ability to make a church grow and convinces most in that congregation that this is the way to enlarge the kingdom of Christ.

Now when several churches in the same city begin this campaign you can imagine what the results will be. Brethren will become alienated because of pressures put upon them by some to move their membership from one place to another. Congregations in the same city develop the feeling of being competitors instead of working toward the same goal of saving souls.

Another example is to build as many churches (buildings) as possible in a community. The prize goes to the church that is responsible for the most

churches being started in the community. Usually the pattern followed is to quietly divide over personalities or issues in doctrine and establish another church in a nearby community and declare it to be an effort to spread the borders of the kingdom. In reality the second group started with full intention of all to draw members from other churches nearby and then boast of their efforts for growth. If not, why will they usually select a site in the very heart of a section in which are a half dozen congregations? Why will they not go to some area where there is no congregation within miles and begin the work? It is impossible for scriptural discipline to be exercised because the competing congregations will eagerly take the wicked brethren in, since number is the important goal. Those who tend to be rebellious or indifferent will not repent because they know they will be welcomed without condition by some competing congregations.

We must destroy this attitude of being in competition with others and begin to look at the fields white unto harvest. The world is full of unconverted sinners and every congregation in the world can develop a healthy growth if each will labor to preach the word to the lost and exhort the unfaithful and weak. We do not need to use every trick and lure devised by man to entice Christians from one congregation to another under any pretense.

In some cases false reports have been invented about elders or some members of one congregation in order to make it easier to proselyte members from it. I know of three cities in which this has been and is being done. Others use the beauty of buildings, distinguished persons who are members and all forms of entertainment to draw from the membership of neighboring congregations.

The elders or bishops are to "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof ..." (II Pet. 5:2). Whether this be one congregation in the midst of two or three small cities or a small congregation in the midst of several congregations in a large city. Wherever the flock and whatever its size, the bishops are to exercise oversight and feed that flock.

We have a real work in trying to convert the lost to Christ from the world and those who are caught in the jaws of denominational chaos. This would also include those who have turned away from the faith to the false doctrine of institutionalism and related false positions, whose philosophy is liberal and digressive with regard to the authority of Christ.

At the close of the letter to the Colossians Paul instructed that the epistle be read in the church of the Laodiceans and that the epistle to the Laodiceans be read by the church at Colosse (Col. 4:16). This shows recognition of one congregation by another in respect to common divine instruction, yet they are recognized as distinct groups which function autonomously. Why should we work as competitors when we have the same work to do? We have the same standard of authority. When elders, preachers and Christians in general learn the difference between spiritual growth of congregations and the moving of people from one group to another, we will stop this nonsense of competing for the attention of the crowds and the shifting of brethren from one congregation to another and start converting the lost to Christ.

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EDITORIAL

H. E. Phillips, Post Office Box 17244, Tampa, Florida 33612

In recent months several have written to inquire about the "Editorial Policy" of this magazine. Two to three thousand new subscribers have been added since last we said something about the general guidelines for articles and news notes, and it seems expedient to restate them to clear any misunderstanding and make our policy clear.

In the first issue (January, 1960) James P. Miller and I stated that "We have no policy but to be scriptural, fair, sincere, and faithful to our work as editors of this paper. We know nothing more that could be asked of us in presenting this paper for your edification." We have tried to stay with this rule since that first issue. I am sure that some believe we have departed from it, but we believe we have kept it and we cannot change colors to please every man.

We also stated in that first issue that the pages of Searching The Scriptures will be open to men of good faith. "We will allow anyone who has something worthwhile to say to speak his mind. We will not, however, allow propagandists to sow seeds of discord. This paper will not be devoted to unfair controversy and personal sarcasm. That does not mean that controversial matters will not be discussed; on the contrary, they will be freely discussed."

Near the end of eleven years I see no reason to retract anything we said at the beginning. I have, however, learned many things about the editorial policy of a magazine such as this since those words appeared in that first issue. I have learned that it is not as easy to **keep** rules as it is to **make** them. Inevitably, in the course of time, the situation will arise when you sincerely believe that fairness "demands space be given to some radical, rebellious renegade who causes more trouble among brethren than any good he could do. This may arise because of some personal attack made by some brother in an article or news item which cannot be proved. The real problem arises when this person wants about half of the paper for three or four months to set the brotherhood straight in answering the charge against him. If one word is taken out of his original manuscript, he cries that a dishonest editor is trying to pervert his position. If his articles (and he seldom stops with one) are not given space, he cries: Unfair! Closed-door Policy! If his articles are given space, readers by the hundreds will complain. This is only one example of the difficulty of trying to keep the policy of being fair open to all men of good will.

I shall restate the editorial position of Searching The Scriptures that we try to follow even in situations such as I have mentioned. It may be divided into three parts:

First, this magazine will not be the battleground for personal feuds between brethren or churches. I will not knowingly give space to anything that will

make an unfounded personal attack upon another. I mean by personal attack, a charge against his person that cannot be proved and has nothing to do with exposing false doctrine edifying the readers. Calling a man a "horse thief" does not prove the truth or falsity of your position on any Bible or moral subject. It only serves to inflame prejudice and opposition and never teaches men to be stronger in the faith. Let brethren use their bulletins and pulpits if they must engage in such work. I am neither a fight promoter nor a referee. Why should I insult the readers with name calling contests that help no one but the Devil's Cause?

Lest someone misunderstand this, let me plainly state that I have absolutely no intention to compromise with error on any level. Error, and those involved in error, will be quickly, sharply and plainly rebuked without hesitation. There is a distinct difference between the caustic, sarcastic personal reflections that show the personal anger of the writer, and the plain and strong language of rebuke that identifies the sinner and the sin.

There are many brethren for whom I have no respect as Christians or gentlemen because of their false doctrine and practice. There are other brethren holding the same views for whom I have the highest regard as gentlemen. The difference is in the integrity and fairness of the man. I can discuss the false positions of both groups to the edification of all, but who is helped when I vent my personal feeling against another?

Second, this magazine will give space to the discussion of any Bible subject. We will have no "closed-door" policy, in the accepted sense of this expression. Any person may disagree with any article appearing in this paper, and may state his case in strongest terms. He may make any charge against me or any writer as long as he can prove it. I invite any review of anything I may write and I guarantee you the opportunity to be heard. I do request that you be reasonable in the length of articles, because other writers have been allocated space for their material.

This must not be interpreted to mean that any and all manuscripts will be published in *Searching The Scriptures*. Some say almost nothing. Others try to promote some unscriptural project or incredible doctrine, and no good would come from that. Some are far too long and wordy for the lesson intended. And some wage their vendetta against all brethren who oppose their unscriptural cause and practice.

Third, material that has or does appear in other religious journals will not be given space in *Searching The Scriptures*. News items, announcements and ads are exceptions to this rule. Since many of the readers of this magazine also read other magazines of like nature, there appears no reason for duplication of the material. Many may not agree with this rule, but it will be observed nevertheless. This may encourage you to take more than one magazine, you should.

We shall strive to provide food for the mind, stimulate each of you to search the scriptures for the truth on all subjects, exhort and encourage all to be more faithful to the Lord, reprove and rebuke

all who teach and practice that which is contrary to the word of Christ, and impartially challenge any doctrine we believe contrary to the truth of God and do so plainly and pointedly so that all may understand exactly what we say.

We shall make every effort to bring a variety of material, some for the young in Christ, some for the unlearned in the word of truth, and some for the mature in Christ. There will appear subject matter with which many will want to take issue. Controversy always does good just so long as the spirit of Christ prevails and brethren are sincerely seeking the truth. If otherwise, we waste our time and energy.

One additional note on this "Editorial Policy": From the beginning we have said that we are not obligated to endorse every article that may appear in **Searching The Scriptures**. If you keep in mind that we are seeking truth, not someone to parrot our preconceived views of a given subject, you will understand why all are not required to endorse every article that appears.

Divine Truth is not determined by any man or group of men. No editor, paper, college, board of directors or eldership can decide what is truth or change the truth in any way and it remain the truth. Since that is true, we have no obligation to any man, editor, paper, college, board, eldership more than to any other person on earth. We are not under the control of any man. We are free to teach truth and only truth. We owe allegiance only to the King of Kings, Jesus Christ the Son of God. We seek to please God, not man.

I am thoroughly convinced that more time and money must be spent by each of us in learning the gospel of Christ ourselves and then use all available means of communication to teach it to others. We must awake out of sleep and begin to do something toward our own salvation.

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I MARVEL Galatians 1:6



James P. Miller, 213 E. 12th St., Bowling Green, Ky. 42101

HOW FAR CAN WE GO?

The question above is asked in an editorial by Reuel Lemmons in last week's issue of the Firm Foundation (July 27, 1970). He is concerned about the direction the young intellectuals are taking and what it will do to the church of the Lord. Brother Lemmons is not alone in this, for it is a matter of the gravest consequence to the liberal wing of the church.

My brethren several years ago decided, in the light of the scriptures, "How far can we go?" We refused to move without authority in the word of God. The support of human institutions from the treasury of the church, the spending of the Lord's money for recreation halls and the centralizing of authority in any group of men to do a work the local church should do was where we stopped. We have been criticized, laughed at, and ridiculed for our stand, but we have weathered it all and this is where we said it had gone far enough.

Now our institutional brethren are faced with a real problem. It is simply this, where are they going to draw the line? The young thinkers among them, as the editor of the Firm Foundation points out, want them to join the main stream of religious thought. This admits Christians in other churches and all that this problem involves.

The sad truth of the matter is simply this: they have no place to draw the line. They cannot draw it at inspiration for every preacher will say he believes in the inspiration of the Bible. There are a score of different ideas about inspiration and they could not possibly investigate every man and every phase of the matter of inspiration.

The work of the Holy Spirit is an issue with the liberal brethren, but again they are helpless. This is too complex a subject for firm lines to be known. I heard brother Wesley Jones speak on the Holy Spirit this past week. I am sure he represents the very best they have to offer. He made it very clear that the Holy Spirit did not influence any man contrary to the revealed word, but at the same time he labored to show that there were things the Spirit did without the word.

I have debated the sects for thirty years on the work of the Spirit and this is exactly the position they always affirmed. Brother Jones pointed out that the Holy Spirit and the word were not the same. No man who knows the truth has ever taught they were, but the word is the means used by the Spirit. If the Spirit does one thing without the word then he can do other things without the word. Romans

5:5 was used to show the Spirit "shed the love of God" in our hearts without the word. Just how he does this brother Jones did not tell us. How we will know when it is done, how it will be administered, and what will be accomplished is all a mystery. There is only one consequence to this teaching, and that is that there is a recognition of influences apart and separate from the word of God. This may seem harmless at first but will lead, as they have with the denominations around us, to a new fount of truth that will mean a book, chapter and verse is no longer necessary, and this is the destruction of God's people. Who is willing to affirm that in this age God worked without Christ, that Christ works without the Holy Spirit and that the Holy Spirit works without the word. Paul tells us that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, in Ephesians 3:17. No one denies that the Spirit, Christ and even God dwells in the Christian. It is when we add the term "in person" or "personally" that it becomes a false theory. I am truly sorry for my liberal brethren, for now they are faced with the question "HOW FAR CAN IT GO?" and have no answer. Why not just come back to the Bible, and that will be far enough.

SOWING THE SEED of the KINGDOM



J. T. Smith, 1320 Gardiner Lane, Louisville, Kentucky 40213

THINGS BAPTISM WILL NOT DO

In previous lessons we noted that baptism is for — in order to—the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). It puts one into Christ (Rom. 6:3-4) where we have all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3). It is in the likeness of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:5-6). We are quickened or made alive while we are buried in baptism (Col. 2:12-13). And, the body of sin is "cut off" in spiritual circumcision according to Col. 2:11 and Rom. 6:5-6. Hence, the blood of Christ is WHAT washes away sins (Rev. 1:5), and baptism is WHEN they are washed away (Acts 22:16).

BAPTISM WILL NOT SAVE AN INFANT

Many in the denominational world seem to think that if "we dedicate" our children to the Lord and have them "baptized" (sprinkled) they will be saved. Of course, as we have already learned in a previous lesson, the action of baptism is NOT sprinkling, but immersion in water. But not only is the action of sprinkling without scriptural foundation, but the fact that an infant is an unbeliever also presents a problem. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ___" (Mark 16:16). The "penitent believer" is the person that is a subject for

baptism. An infant is not a believer.

BAPTISM NO SUBSTITUTE FOR FAITH

Though some may believe there is some magical power in water, let me assure you that it is not so. If a person is immersed in water —the Bible action and the scriptural element — who is an unbeliever, he goes into the water a dry sinner and comes out a wet one. Only as we obey "from the heart the form of doctrine" (Rom. 6:17) are we "then made free from sin and become the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18).

NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR REPENTANCE

Repentance, which is a changing of one's mind which leads to a change of actions in that person's life, is necessary on the part of every person who is to receive scriptural baptism. There is no way we can be saved without repenting of our wrong-doings.

ALL ARE NECESSARY

Both faith and repentance are necessary prerequisites to salvation. A subject cannot be properly baptized until he has believed that Jesus Christ is Lord, and he has repented of past sins. This is exactly what happened in Acts 2:37-38. "Now when they heard this (that is how faith comes — by hearing the word of God, Rom. 10:17), they were pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

CONCLUSION

We subscribe to the same plan of salvation that Peter proclaimed in Acts 2. Faith in the crucified Savior, repentance from past sins, and baptism for the remission of sins. If you have not met these requirements of God, you are not saved. Why not do them today that you might be saved?

WORD STUDIES
in the Greek
New Testament



E. V. Srygley, Jr., Route 6, Box 420, Tampa, Florida 33610

HEAUTON, "HIMSELF," No. 21

COR. 11:28

It is sometimes asserted that I Cor. 11:28 and James 1:27 are parallel in their use of "himself." It is claimed that the word "man" in I Cor. 11:28 is translated from the Greek word **anthropos**, which can have the generic meaning "mankind." It is then.

claimed that the generic meaning could include an indefinite number, just as "himself" in James 1:27 could include an indefinite number. The conclusion reached is that this "indefinite" number could justify church action.

RESPONSE

In response to the preceding argument, it should be noted that the Greek word **anthropos** in I Cor. 11:28 is the generic word for "man" which can be used in the sense of "mankind." But it is evident that **anthropos** cannot mean "mankind" in I Cor. 11:28, for the simple reason that the passage goes on to say, "examine **himself**." It would be foolish to translate the passage "let mankind examine himself."

PARTAKE COLLECTIVELY?

Do these liberal brethren affirm that a congregation partakes of the Lord's Supper collectively? This is the logical conclusion of the position taken on "man" in I Cor. 11:28. This view gets pretty close to the Catholic dogma of communion under one kind, in which the clergy alone partakes of the cup of the Lord's Supper. Christians partake of the Lord's Supper individually, and not collectively. The **number** of persons involved makes no difference whatever. It is positively absurd and unreasonable to affirm that plurality is identical to collective action. Hence, **many** persons could partake of the Lord's Supper, and **many** persons could visit the fatherless and widows; but these **many** persons would still act **individually**.

"PURE AND UNDEFILED RELIGION"

Surely, the most unreasoned and unreasonable argument in this whole discussion of James 1:27 is the assertion that the care of widows and orphans is the absolute, sum total of pure and undefiled religion! Therefore, according to this position, such things as saving the lost, taking the Lord's Supper, praying, reading the Bible, etc., have absolutely nothing whatever to do with pure and undefiled religion!

The truth of the matter is well stated by Trench in these words: "St. James is not herein affirming, as we sometimes hear, these offices to be the sum total, nor yet the great essentials, of true religion, but declares them to be the body, the *threskeia*, of which godliness, or the love of God, is the informing soul" (**Synonyms of the New Testament, p. 176**).

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THE BAPTIST TEMPLE-CHURCH ARGUMENT

If my memory serves me correctly the Temple-Church argument was first made by D. N. Jackson, well-known Baptist debater. Baptists use this argument to support their theory that the church was established during the personal ministry of the Lord. The outline I have on the matter looks like this:

TEMPLE	CHURCH
1. God ordered temple built I Chron. 17:2	1. God ordered church built John 4:34
2. Patterned by the tabernacle Chron. 28:11-21	2. Typified by the temple I Heb. 3:5-6
3. David prepared the material Chron. 22:1-5	3. John prepared the material I Luke 1:16-17
4. Erected by Solomon I Chron. 22:10-11	4. Organized by Christ
5. Had a consecrated priesthood 8:1-13	5. Had an ordained ministry Lev. Mark 3:13-14
6. Finished before Solomon died II Chron. 5:1	6. Finished before Jesus died
7. Law placed in temple	7. Great commission given to II Chron. 5:7-10 church Matt. 28:19
8. 120 trumpeters sounded	8. 120 saints prayed Acts 1:15 II Chron. 5:12
9. Dedicated with blood	9. Dedicated with blood II Chron. 7:5 Heb. 9:16-22
10. Prayer of dedication	10. Prayer of intercession II Chron. 6:14-42 John 17
11. Fire came down on finished Chron. 7:1-3	11. Holy Spirit came down on building II finished church Acts 2:1-4

The outline is self-explanatory. Baptists will argue that the temple of Solomon is a type of the church. It wouldn't take a Solomon to see that the pivot point of this Baptist argument is number six. They desire to get the church established during the personal ministry of Christ. They will argue that the death of Solomon was a type of the death of Christ. As usual they give no scripture to vindicate such an affirmation. I have never understood where Baptists get the idea that the death of Solomon typified the death of Christ. It is argued by Baptists that the temple was completed before the death of Solomon and therefore the church was completed before the death of Christ. I insist that such an argument is without foundation and completely antagonistic to the scriptures. In Acts 10:28, we are told that Christ purchased the church with his blood. Solomon did not shed his blood for the temple, therefore, the parallel breaks down and the argument is ruined. Furthermore, since Christ shed his blood to purchase the church it couldn't have existed before the price was paid for it; unless one wants to argue it was bought on a credit and without blood! Actually, it was the sacrificial lamb which typified the death of Christ and this lamb was slain before the temple was built.

About thirty years ago the late W. Curtis Porter met D. N. Jackson in a debate at Rush Springs, Oklahoma. It was during this debate that D. N. Jackson introduced his Temple argument. Someone has said that W. Curtis Porter could see an argument ten miles down the road. This is true and he gave me much help and advice during my first few debates. He completely routed this argument and later wrote these words about it:

"The principle involved in the argument is this: 'Whatever occurred concerning the temple before Solomon died must find its parallel concerning the church before Jesus died.' If this is not true, the argument is not worth anything. It insists that the church must be finished before Jesus died because the temple was finished before Solomon died. That same 'because' must run throughout the argument, and a number of other things concerning the church must have occurred before Jesus died because parallel things respecting the temple occurred before Solomon died. So let us look at some other points involved.

"Consider point No. 5. There was a consecrated priesthood for the temple before Solomon died; and for its parallel there was an ordained ministry for the church before Jesus died. But the text given is Lev. 8:1-13. This tells of the consecration of the Aaronic priesthood under the direction of Moses. This was an unfortunate text from Jackson for it not only shows a consecrated priesthood before Solomon died, but the priesthood was consecrated before the temple was ever built, or before the building of it ever began. His cases on No. 6 are therefore not parallel. Furthermore, the priesthood was consecrated **more than 400 years before Solomon was born**. To get his parallel to work here, the "ordained ministry" for the church would **have to exist before Jesus was born**. If not, why not? If the church had to be finished before Jesus died because the temple was finished before Solomon died why would not the ministry have to be ordained before Jesus was born because the priesthood was consecrated before Solomon was born. So this parallel proves entirely too much for Jackson.

"Next, let us examine parallel No. 7. The law was placed in the temple, and the commission was given to the church.' But II Chron. 5:7-10 tells of an incident before Solomon died. Before the death of Solomon the law was placed in the temple. The argument requires that the commission be given to the church before his death. Yet the passage introduced misses the point entirely. The great commission given in Matt. 28:19, which Jackson-uses as his proof-text, was not given before the death of Jesus. It was given **after** his resurrection from the dead. I insisted that Jackson find his commission before the death of Jesus, for the one he introduced was given at the wrong time. The same fault is found in his parallel No. 8. The 120 trumpeters who sounded their trumpets, according to II Chron. 5:12, did so before the death of Solomon. This would require its parallel to take place before the death of Jesus, but the parallel given by Jackson did not occur before Jesus died. The praying of the 120 saints, according to Acts 1:15, occurred **after** the ascension of Jesus to heaven. This ruins another link in his chain of evidence."

WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH



T. G. O'Neal, P.O. Box 606, Murfreesboro, Tenn. 37130

THE PROPER PLACE OF WORSHIP

In our study of worship, we need to note the place where God has authorized us to worship Him, if any specific place has been so authorized.

There are many people that believe that they must be in certain places in order to worship God. They know that they can offer worship to God but believe that if they are in some certain place that God will accept their worship more than if they were in some other place. Such an attitude prompts one to desire to make a trip to some city with the idea of offering worship unto the Lord. We need to concern ourselves with the question is this what the Bible teaches?

ABRAHAM'S ALTARS

It has been said that the path of Abraham could be traced by the smoke of his altars. Abraham worshiped where he was. Upon one occasion God commanded Abraham' to go to one of the mountains in the Land of Moriah and there to offer a sacrifice (Gen. 22).

ISRAEL IN EGYPT

When Moses and Aaron stood among the children of Israel in Egypt and delivered unto them the word of God, the record states that in Egypt the children of Israel "bowed their heads and worshiped" (Ex. 4:31).

GOD'S NAME RECORDED

When Israel had been delivered from Egypt, God told them, through Moses, "But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your free will offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: And there ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee" (Deut. 12:5-7). God recorded His name in the tabernacle built by the pattern given Moses and here Israel worshiped Jehovah.

When Solomon built the temple God said, "I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for

ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually" (I Kgs. 9:3). Again to Solomon God said, "I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice. . . . Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attend unto the prayer that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually" (II Ch. 7:12,15,16).

JEROBOAM'S REVOLT

Upon the death of Solomon when Rehoboam came to the throne, Jeroboam led a revolt against God's established order and set up altars in Dan and Bethel and told Israel "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem" (I Kg. 12:28). Omri reigned from Samaria, having changed the seat of government and worship (I Kgs. 16:30).

JESUS SPEAKS

At Jacob's Well, recorded in John 4, Jesus talked with a woman of Samaria. Her question was, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Christ replied that "the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." The location of where the worshiper is when he worships was loosed by our Lord. Geographic location is not bound. Jesus bound this about worship: "the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him" (v. 23).

Our worship is pleasing to God if we worship "in spirit and in truth." Whether one is in Rome, Jerusalem, Mecca or Nashville, Abilene or Memphis has nothing to do with his worship being acceptable to the Lord. Worship "in spirit and in truth" is accepted from any place on earth. Worship that is not "in spirit and in truth" is displeasing to the Lord, regardless from where it may be offered.

Paul said, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (I Tim. 2:8).

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THE CHURCH IN BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA

Kenneth E. Thomas

I have been asked to write a progress report concerning the work of the Lord's church here in Brooksville. This we are happy to do, and in the process we hope to dispel some of the rumors that seem to be around this area concerning our congregation.

The church here is at peace and is growing both spiritually and numerically. I could not ask for better cooperation in the work of the Lord than we have received since our move here last November 7th. The brethren here have been most encouraging in holding up our hands to declare the whole council of God. We have a personal work program in progress in which many are taking part in setting up home studies and encouraging the weak to faithful service. We have one Wednesday evening each month set aside for an open discussion of any Bible related subject in which we request either written or oral questions to be submitted for discussion. This is the period in which all members of the congregation are requested to bring someone with them, thereby encouraging all to take part in the personal work program. Then we have a young men's training class now in progress each of the other Wednesday evenings of the month for an unspecified duration. It is presently progressing in fine fashion and much good is being accomplished. All of the men and boys of the congregation are being used

in this class, and if nothing else, they are requested to memorize a few passages of scripture and make appropriate comments on those passages.

If our records are correct we have had the good fortune of seeing **twenty-two** precious souls obey Christ in baptism for the remission of sins. Of this number the majority are adults who were formerly active members in some of the denominations of this area. There have been **three** restorations through public confession of sins and seven have placed membership. Of those seven one couple departed from the faith and now attends with the faction which meets on the north side of town. Also one of those who had attended mostly only on Lord's day mornings also went to the "Liberals."

Among the recent baptisms of the number mentioned there are some interesting facts to be related. Mr. Charles Henry and his wife Lois were in a home Bible discussion class to which we were invited by our neighbor across the street. The next evening after we came home from the mid-week Bible study at the church building, we received a phone call from Mr. Henry asking if we may further study the Bible at our house, to which we quickly agreed. After several hours of study, at 3:05 a.m. I was privileged to baptize Mr. Henry into Christ upon his confession of faith. After a few short hours of sleep we went to his house where we engaged in Bible study with his wife Lois and that afternoon she also put on the Lord in baptism. They have three lovely children.

Before baptism into Christ brother Henry was preaching for two congregations of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. One congregation was called "Christ Lutheran Church" here in Brooksville; the other was "Holy Trinity Lutheran Church" at MARYKETTOWN, Florida, just about eight miles south of Brooksville. For him it meant giving up a substantial income of something over \$200.00 weekly. The Brooksville church is presently helping with his support, and the brethren at Trilby where brother Jim Daniel preaches are also helping him. Brother Henry is also now driving a school bus for the income which that provides. He is studying daily and taking part in the training class, and hopefully before too long will be able to preach the gospel. We intend to use him on some occasions for the good we may do him in this respect as he learns how to apply the principles of New Testament "Christianity." Brother Henry has an outstanding education and is well founded in the Greek language. He will, by the grace of God, and with the help and prayers of the brethren, soon be a fine gospel preacher and able defender of the faith once delivered. He has already been instrumental in the obedience to Christ of his mother and one brother, and also played a significant role in the conversion of one of his former students in the Lutheran Church. Also we are presently working with another couple from among the same group of which the man has admitted the truth and says he

wants to obey but is as yet waiting, trying to get his wife to make the step at the same time.

It is my humble opinion that the time is right at present for the greatest growth of the Lord's church that has been seen for many years. In my opinion the drastic changes in the Catholic Church and the protestant denominations have caused many to take a second look and search the scriptures more than they were prone to do in times past. May we who call ourselves servants of 'Christ take advantage of this time in history to work the works of God while time and opportunity are yet with us.

I do so enjoy the fine paper Searching the Scriptures and hope that you are able to continue with its publication for many years to come. God bless you and yours.

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WILBUR E. MURRAY

On September 22, 1970, my father, Wilbur Murray, closed his eyes in death. On Friday, September 25, services were conducted for him at the Antioch church building, where he had labored as the minister and where he had stood only three weeks before and presented his last sermon on "The Burdens Of Life."

After the singing of three songs by the congregation, Jerry Eubanks, from Plant City, and Paul Andrews, from Northstreet in Tampa, conducted the services using 2 Timothy chapter 4 as a text. The building was filled to capacity with no standing room left, and with as many people standing outside the building as were inside. No greater tribute could have been paid than that which was paid by the comments made concerning his life and by the many friends who sent flowers and came to pay their last respects.

About ten years ago he moved back to Antioch to work and worship with the church there. He had a dream of seeing the old meeting house (the one in which he heard the gospel and had been obedient) that had been built in the late 1890's, replaced with a new building. Now a comfortable, attractive, air-conditioned building stands on old "Antioch Hill" as a memorial to his untiring effort and work.

The last years of his life were spent in the work of the church and in the preaching of the Gospel. The smile on his face, even in death, gave assurance that death had no holds on him and of the Hope which he possessed.

Even though his mortal life is over, his works do follow him. He will be missed not only as a husband, and a father, and a friend to many, but as one who truly was a fighter of the good fight, a finisher of the course, and a keeper of the faith.

—Charles E. Murray P. O.
Box 653 Lake Wales,
Fla. 33853

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Edgar J. Dye, 4516 W. 28th Ave., Pine Bluff, Ark. 71601 — The church of Christ meeting at 4700 West 28th Avenue here in Pine Bluff met for its first service on Sept. 6, 1970, with 172 in attendance at Bible study and 196 for the worship service. The next Sunday we had 170 for Bible study and 186

for worship. We have now been meeting for one month and the Sunday morning Bible study attendance has averaged 166. The contribution is averaging (roughly) \$500.00 per week.

The meeting house is designed to seat 320. But with chairs properly placed we could accommodate about 400 if we were ever forced to do so. Four good men, **Garlan Brown, Bob Henderson, Arthur Mounts, and George Pruett**, have served the church on the building committee and are to be commended for an outstanding job.

On the spiritual side we are blessed with a fine spirit on the part of all and interest is running high. Since our beginning three adults have been restored and identified. Also, two teen-agers have obeyed the gospel. We plan a gospel meeting as soon as arrangements can be made. Come and visit us.

For the benefit of all concerned, we note once again that this new church was started with the blessings of 6th Ave. from whence we came. It was a planned, peaceful separation for the purpose of helping the Cause of Christ in this city. We repeat: It was not a split.

We thank God for our blessings and covet the prayers of faithful brethren everywhere.

Richard McKee, Howell Park church of Christ, Station A, P. O. Box 4013, Evansville, Ind. 47711-- The brethren of Howell Park church, Evansville, Ind., wish to secure the services of a full-time preacher. Anyone interested should contact us at the above address.

Joyner W. Adams, Rt. 2, Box 603, Chester, Va. 23831 — The Rivemont church is in need of a preacher. We have a membership of about 50. We own our building and have a nice 3-bedroom home. The closest faithful brethren are in Richmond, Va., about 25 miles to the North. There are two liberal churches close, one in Hopewell, Va. and one in Petersburg, Va., so we need a man that can stand his ground. Write to the above address if interested.

Luther W. Martin, 707 Salem Ave., Rolla, Mo. 65401 — In April 1970, I was privileged to preach in a Sunday through Sunday meeting with the Park-view church of Christ in Unionville, Mo. Two obeyed the gospel. These brethren then asked me to preach in another Sunday through Sunday meeting in September, 1970. Again, two obeyed the gospel. One was a man seventy years old who had been a Methodist since 1929. The other to be baptized was a young lady.

My next scheduled meeting will be with the Hamilton congregation near Modena, Mo., October 18th through the 25th.

Colin Williamson, 2727 N.E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, Fla. 32670 — Brother Granville Tyler was with us for a meeting. He did an outstanding job of preaching the truth. Two were restored during the week. Several have obeyed the gospel recently and the Cause seems to be making progress.

Thomas S. Keaton, Winchester Apts. No. 6, Murray, Ky. 42071 — I am writing on behalf of the Ken-

tucky Lake Road church of Christ. The building in which this church meets is located about fifteen miles east of Paris, Tennessee on U.S. highway 79.

I am a student at Murray State University. I have been preaching for these people full time since June of 1970. We have a 25 minute radio program which is broadcast from Paris, Tenn., each Sunday morning. We also have a bulletin which is published and mailed once a month. These works were just started this summer when I volunteered my services for these efforts. Even though this congregation is engaged in these works they do not have enough money to support a full time preacher. They pay me ten dollars a week, they are making payments on a small building which they have, and they are supporting the works listed above. The average attendance is about 35 people. Eighteen of this number are members of the church. Their average contribution is \$50 to \$60 a week. A number of churches have either promised support or said that they would consider giving to us support in the event that we obtain a full time man. The reason I do not continue to preach full time for these people is because I am a Math and Physics major and my studies and pursuits require a great deal of time. Also I do not have time to do the personal work that should and could be done by a full time man.

You may obtain references for this church and its work from the elders of the church of Christ in Piano, Illinois. My father is one of the elders and his name and address is as follows: **Thomas H. Keaton**, 816 E. Fifth St., Sandwich, HI. 60548.

SIMILARITY OF RELATIONSHIP

Larry Ray Hafley

The apostles of Christ sustained to the Master a relationship similar to the one which he possessed with the Father. Jesus intimated and indicated this fact when in petition and prayer he said, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (Jn. 17:18). Also to the apostles He said, "as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn. 20:21). Note parallel passages which give evidence that the ones sent of the Lord had an affiliation and association like unto the One sent of the Father.

I. A Similar Sense of Urgency **and** Duty.

1) CHRIST TO GOD: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Lk. 2:49) "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn. 9:4).

2) APOSTLES TO CHRIST: "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not" (II Cor. 4:1). "I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:29).

II. A Similar Disavowal and Denial of a Personal Doctrine.

1) CHRIST TO GOD: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (Jn. 7:16). "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (Jn. 12:49).

2) APOSTLES TO CHRIST: "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (I Cor. 14:37). "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (II Cor. 4:5). "But I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11,12).

III. A Similar Desire and Determination Not to Please Man or Self.

1) CHRIST TO GOD: "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which sent me (Jn. 5:30). "For even Christ pleased not himself" (Rom. 15:3).

2) APOSTLES TO CHRIST: "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God which trieth our hearts" (I Thess. 2:4).

CONCLUSION

Saints are fellow-heirs, fellow-members, fellow-partakers (Eph. 3:6). Does it not behoove us in our common communion to show forth the same attitudes and attributes as those characteristic of Christ to God and of the apostles to Christ? Let us share a sense of urgency "in season and out of season"; let us not propagate nor promulgate "our" doctrine; let us serve unselfishly by the grace of God unto the glory of God.

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