

# 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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## OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD

Irven Lee

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). All of us are aware that this principle of conduct is in the word of God, but is it put to use? From the context it is made clear that we are not to "get even" or take vengeance ourselves. We are not taught to do evil that good may come. We are to do good that good may come. From the example of our Savior we learn that "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (I Pet. 2:23). We are not to be found "rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing" (I Pet. 3:9). The teaching is clear. Let us apply it.

The Christian wife may have an unbelieving husband. He may be far from what he ought to be. What should she do? How could she go about improving his heart and life? "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Pet. 3:1-4). Bible suggestions are good suggestions, and this is one to the wife who would seek to convert and improve her husband.

In seeking to improve him, the wife should exemplify before the husband the chastity and purity of behavior that is absolutely above reproach. This is as opposite as can be to the idea that since he does wrong she can "show him" by being just as ungodly as he. This evil for evil approach has been tried many times, but it is not the counsel of God. The wife should be pure if she would purify her husband. She should win his respect by being as near perfection in character as possible.

What about the husband who seems to care less and less about being at home? Will nagging help? Will it help to lose interest in keeping the house? If

he can be won at all, and likely he can, it can be done by well prepared meals, a clean house, work well done, a pleasant attitude of a neat wife, and other such exemplary things. People are led more easily than they can be driven.

The winning influence of the well ordered house and well ordered life of the wife must be consistent. If she is a model wife seven days per week and four weeks per month throughout the four seasons year after year this power for good continues. Laziness is repulsive. So are selfishness and unkindness. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." A good attitude, good meals, and a well kept house are on the subject. Neatness and cleanliness are in order. These are in harmony with Peter's comments. Extravagance and gaudy display are not.

The evil for evil approach is never right. The good for evil approach is always proper. The wife who diligently tries to improve her husband by being the model wife may not win him. (If he cannot be won by this behavior, he is far gone.) If she consistently keeps a good house and prepares good meals, along with purity, kindness, and neatness of person she can win much even if she does not win her husband. She can keep her own self respect, and have a clear conscience in the knowledge that she is doing her part. This is a precious contribution to peace of mind. Her children may rise up and call her blessed. Neighbors and others who know her can approve. The Lord will be pleased, and this is the most important goal of all. She, then, accomplishes very much by her good life, her good attitude, and by her work well done, even if she does not improve her husband. And, thanks to the power of a good life, she is likely to convert and save her husband.

If he is not behaving properly, she can see that he is not, but can she see if she is not? He has less attraction for the home, but is the home attractive? He was once attracted to her. Let her look in the mirror and at the house and see if she should say, "No wonder that he has lost interest."

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). This is another way to state the rule about overcoming evil with good. We should practice what we preach. We

should do good to others whether they are good to us or not. We may heap coals of fire on their heads by the kindness, purity, and exemplified conviction.

The rule of good for evil, or successfully overcoming evil, may be found in the good measure rule of Luke 6:38: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Would you be pleased if people returned to you the measure you give? If you give good measure keep it up for only good can come of this. This same measure shall be measured to you again. If all the world would learn this and practice it, this world would become much more like heaven. If we could replace the bitter hate, selfishness, and greed with the golden rule, the good measure rule, and the rule for overcoming evil we would have a garden of Eden on earth.

Compromise with sin, or sharing the bad habits of others will not help others improve. The power of a good life adorns the doctrine of God and helps improve many lives. These rules applied would lead to fewer divorces. These rules apply in other relationships beyond the home, also.

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**SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**

October, 1968

**Hiram O. Hutto**

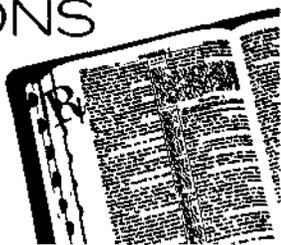
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# PRESCRIPTIONS

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Dr. W. P. McElwain, 696 Providence Rd., Lexington, Kentucky 40504

(Brother William P. McElwain has prepared some excellent material for **Searching The Scriptures**. Part 1 of his article on "The Bible And Sex Behaviour" appeared in the June issue. The second part appears in this issue. As a preacher of truth and a medical doctor, brother McElwain is prepared to provide helpful material in fields of moral and physical problems that threaten our spiritual health. If you have some subject you would like for him to discuss, write to him. — Editor.)

NOTE: I would appreciate any comment or questions regarding the material on sexual matters. It is difficult to know what would be most helpful to the readers, so your help would be of assistance in keeping our efforts practical and pertinent. — Wm. P. McElwain.

## THE BIBLE AND SEX BEHAVIOUR

### No. 2

Chastity is good because it is commanded by God. Chastity in the past has been accepted as the normal behaviour of our culture. However, lately, chastity and its desirability has been challenged. At the same time many of its advocates have been moving farther from their belief in the Holy Scriptures. They do not defend chastity on the basis of a "thus saith the Lord" but attempt to find something inherently good in it. Recently in a medical journal there was an article entitled **The Case For Chastity**.\* The author regards chastity as a tradition to be questioned and a decision made regarding one's indulgence as a result of the consideration of the pro's and con's. He concluded that there are still social, moral, sexual, legal, and public health reasons for respecting chastity. He was honest enough to admit and list many arguments against chastity but he doesn't accept them.

The truth of the matter is that the advantage chastity has is the result of its being God's will. Remove that and there is nothing to be gained by chastity that cannot be gained without chastity. The avoidance of pregnancy is often cited as an advantage of chastity. This says nothing to the male except as he is involved in causing hardship to another. However, contraceptive methods are reliable enough today that one can be very promiscuous with hardly any danger of pregnancy. The avoidance of venereal disease is also cited as an advantage. Here again the treatment of these diseases is very effective and

transmission can be stopped without chastity. Unfortunate sexual experiences sometime accompany illicit affairs but these are also known to occur in marriage.

One can defend chastity as being the accepted thing in our culture but if he does consistency will demand that he relinquish his defense when our culture no longer accepts it.

In the final analysis chastity is right and good because it is the will of our God. I Timothy 5:22 . . . "Keep thyself pure." Our obedience to Him for the joy of His approval will demand that we be chaste.

The subject of the pill comes up frequently in our age in regard to the subject of premarital sexual activity. The morality of the pill and such topics are increasingly seen in the popular press. This illustrates the erroneous approach to the condemnation of premarital sexual activity common in the past.

Girls were warned against giving in to temptation and engaging in sexual intercourse because of the danger of becoming pregnant. The stigma of illegitimacy was stressed with attention to the shame that would be borne for life by the child and the mother not to mention the girl's family. These dire consequences so amply stressed undoubtedly had a deterring effect.

The problem increases though when the pill comes on the scene with the ability to prevent the overt consequences of this act. The pill is very effective at preventing pregnancy. If the girl is taking the pill she may indulge in premarital sexual activity with hardly any chance of bearing an illegitimate child.

If one has the concept that the severe consequences of illegitimacy are the reasons for abstaining from premarital sexual activity then if you remove the consequences you remove the reason for abstaining.

But this is not the case. We noted above that fornication is sin. Fornication is sin because God's law forbids it. It is sin regardless of whether other men know of one's indulgence, regardless of whether one suffers any immediate consequences of the act. The pill has changed nothing regarding premarital sexual activity. Fornication will be sin as long as God's law stands. Even though one may be able to avoid suffering any immediate consequences of her act she will some day answer before the judgment bar and this is the reason for abstaining.

\* Mead, B. The Case for Chastity, Med. Aspects of Human Sexuality, 3: 8. 1970.

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# BIBLE LANDS AND CUSTOMS



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## THE JORDAN VALLEY

The Jordan Valley is one of the most interesting geological regions in the world. It is part of "The Great Rift" that extends all the way down to Lake Tanganyika in Africa. In Palestine this rift is divided into two parts: above the Dead Sea it is named the Ghor; but south of the Dead Sea, the Arabah.

### THE RIVER JORDAN

The river that flows through this valley is properly called the Jordan, meaning "the descender." Its remotest and highest source is 1,700 feet above sea level. Forty miles down stream it enters the Huleh basin that is 230 feet above sea level. Just fifteen miles to the south the Sea of Galilee lies 682 feet below sea level. Finally, sixty-five miles from Galilee, where the Jordan enters the Dead Sea, its surface has dropped to 1,292 feet below sea level. The depth of the Sea itself plunges another 1300 feet lower. The Jordan River is from five to twelve feet deep and varies in width from 80 to 180 feet. It is a small river by our standards.

### LAKE HULEH

Lake Huleh is a marshy area three miles long and two miles wide that recently has been drained and converted into farmland by the government of Israel. It used to be associated with the waters of Merom (Joshua 11:5), but this identification is rejected by modern geographers. It is interesting that all three settlements around the Huleh basin were pagan cultic centers: Abel (II Samuel 20:18), Dan (Judges 18:31; I Kings 12:30), and Paneas (sacred to the Hellenistic world).

### THE SEA OF GALILEE

This part of the geography of Palestine helps one understand the words of a beautiful song.

There is a sea which day by day  
Receives the rippling rills,  
And streams that spring from wells of God,  
Or fall from cedared hills;  
But what it thus receives it gives  
With glad unsparing hand:  
A stream more wide, with deeper tide,  
Flows on to lower land.

The Sea of Galilee is fourteen miles long and nine miles wide. It is called Chinnereth in the Old Testament and the lake of Gennesaret or the Sea of Tiberius in the time of Christ. The lake is clear and

sweet and fish abound in its waters. Only when the Jordan River is joined by the Yarmuk south of Galilee does it become dark and muddy. On the western shore of the lake is the fertile and productive plain of Gennesaret that is about one mile wide and four miles long. Its produce is sometimes harvested for ten months out of the year.

### THE SERPENT'S PATH

Actually the Jordan Valley between Galilee and the Dead Sea has two levels: the upper level is the Ghor ("depression"), and the lower level is the Zor ("thicket"). At places there is some 150 feet difference in height between them. The Zor was called "the pride of the Jordan" in the Old Testament (Zech. 11:3) and was a haunt for wild animals (Jer. 49:19). The River Jordan winds back and forth like a huge snake for 200 miles through the Zor (remember it is only 65 miles from Galilee to the Dead Sea). This deep valley that widens out to at least 14 miles at the Plain of Jericho is a veritable hotbed and its eastern side is very fertile, especially where the Yarmuk and Jabbok rivers break through.

### THE DEAD SEA

The second verse of the song mentioned above goes:

There is a sea which day by day  
Receives a fuller tide;  
But all its store it keeps, nor gives  
To shore nor sea beside;  
It's Jordan stream, now turned to brine,  
Lies heavy as molten lead;  
Its dreadful name Joth e'er proclaim  
That sea is waste and dead.

The Dead Sea is 48 miles long and 10 miles wide. Some scholars estimate that six and a half million tons of water enter it daily from the Jordan and Arnon rivers and evaporate at a comparable rate. The Dead Sea contains 25% mineral salts that are worth fabulous sums to those who mine them. Below the "tongue" of the sea is the probable location of the Vale of Siddim (Gen. 14:3) where the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by Jehovah.

### THE ARABAH

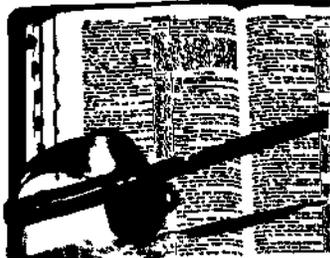
The Arabah south of the Dead Sea reaches down to the Gulf of Aqabah (spelled in various ways) and is mostly uninhabited. It is, as the name implies, "a desert plain." Its sandstone hills, however, were occupied by the Edomites in the Old Testament times.

### AN ABIDING LESSON

A fitting conclusion to this study is provided by the third verse of the song that contrasts the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. Ponder it carefully.

Which shall it be for you and me,  
Who God's good gifts obtain?  
Shall we accept for self alone,  
Or take to give again?  
For He who once was rich indeed  
Laid all His glory down;  
That by His grace, our ransomed race  
Should share His wealth and crown.

## Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT



Eugene Britnell, 8909 Mayflower Road, Little Rock, Ark 72205

### THE "UNITED FUND" CAMPAIGN

It is about time for the United Fund to make its annual appeal for millions of dollars. It is also time that someone came to the defense of those who cannot conscientiously support that work, and show why many Christians feel as they do about it.

First, the position and attitude of Christians — members of the church of Christ — should be clearly understood. We do not believe that "one church is as good as another" nor do we believe that we can scripturally support any false doctrine or religion. In this we differ from all denominations. We believe that the Lord built his church (Matt. 16:18) and that all works which a Christian may do must be done either as an individual Christian (Matt. 10:42; I Tim. 5:8, 16) or in and through the church (I Tim. 5:16; Eph. 3:21). When we speak of works which a Christian may do, of course we have in mind the works of a spiritual nature where the support and practice of truth and error are involved. Certainly there are social and civic organizations which do not support religious error and in which a Christian may consistently work as a citizen. But we cannot have fellowship with false doctrines or religions (II John 9-11).

In view of the above observation, let me say this: If you are one of those who believe that all religious doctrines and institutions are right and that there is no such thing as religious error, then of course you can consistently support any organization and this message would not be applicable to you.

Not too long ago, I received a letter from a gentleman who was connected with the United Fund. I quote from his letter:

"It has been brought to my attention that the Church of Christ ministers of Pulaski County have not been participating in the United Fund Campaigns. At the request of one of the ministers, they have not been solicited for this important community appeal. As one who strongly endorses the United Fund program, and who has participated actively in it for years, I feel free to urge that you reconsider participation in this community effort. . .

"May I appeal to you as a man of tolerance and understanding and to your sense of civic pride to participate in this worthwhile effort by making a contribution to the United Fund? I am enclosing a pledge card for you to use and I hope that you will prayerfully consider this request."

I appreciate the gentleman's attitude and interest. If he can support and work for the United Fund, all right. I cannot support it. I am tolerant of truth and

right, but I am intolerant when it comes to error. It is because of my "understanding" of the arrangement that I cannot support it! I believe in prayer, but there is no need for me to pray about something which the Lord has already revealed to me through His word.

There are many religions and religious works supported by the United Fund which I cannot support. I shall name three — the Catholic Church, the Salvation Army, and the Jewish works involved. I believe that the Catholic Church is a false religion, and the same is true of the Salvation Army. I cannot support those who do not believe in Jesus Christ, therefore I cannot support the Jewish works.

One cannot contribute to the United Fund without contributing to the organizations which benefit from the Fund. Why should people be asked to give to a fund which will be used to promote the interest and work of religious institutions which they believe to be wrong? The majority of those who support the United Fund are inconsistent! How can a Jew give to an organization which opposes Judaism? How can a Protestant finance a Catholic organization when the word "protestant" means "in protest of Catholicism"? How can a Catholic give to organizations which oppose Catholicism? The United Fund blatantly asks Jews to help the Christ whom they deny; the Protestants to help those whom they protest against, and the Catholics to protest against themselves! The three religions stand diametrically opposed to each other, yet they all try to melt in the United Fund pot. Let the United Fund purge these religious parasites from its roll of beneficiaries and let them do their own work as many other religions do. All people could then support the Fund more consistently.

I do not appreciate nor endorse the tactics employed by those who promote the United Fund drives. One method is to develop a guilt complex. One must give to the Fund or stand convicted as some sort of scoundrel for not doing so. If he does not give, he does not "care enough to share enough" with the unfortunate. The Fund promoters set before you two alternatives — either give the "United Way" or stand condemned as a selfish, hard-hearted individual who is unconcerned about the welfare of others. Do not be pressured by such methods of propaganda! One is not limited to these alternatives. I can be concerned with and do something about the needs of the unfortunate without contributing to the United Fund.

Another method is the plea for conformity. Everybody is giving the United Way! If one does not give this way, he is considered some kind of strange character who is a reactionary to everything good. Such a person is uncooperative, narrow-minded, and unworthy of respect. This kind of propaganda tends to pressure one into contributing rather than run the risk of being stigmatized by such implications.

Through the employment of various propaganda methods, the community is pressured into organizing for the drive. Businesses, clubs, churches, and all strata of society are asked to throw their influence into the campaign. Factory workers, office personnel, city employees and church members are all instructed to back the effort wholeheartedly. They

are told: "We want 100% cooperation." Key men from every walk of life are selected to serve in the organization, and are supposed to whip their associates into line. I know of a case where an office manager approached a Christian the third time, and then finally asked for permission to give a dollar in her name in order to have one hundred per cent cooperation ! Did he not know that it was not the AMOUNT of money that was involved ? I also know of people who have been threatened with the loss of their job if they didn't give to the Fund.

Not only do I oppose the tactics which I have mentioned, but I oppose the practice of many factories, stores, and other places in their efforts to tell each employee **how much** he or she should give. Even the Lord did not do that! (II Cor. 9:7.) Many times, without knowing the financial needs or circumstances of a person, some store or factory will decide that he should give a day's salary. What right do they have to do that? On the pledge card which I received with the letter they have it all figured out as to what each person's "fair share" is. For example, if you earn \$300.00 per month your share is \$18.00. Who said so? Are the people not intelligent enough to decide how much they should give?

Some argue that they can avoid supporting the objectionable organizations by earmarking their contribution. This is merely a bookkeeping camouflage, for such earmarking simply leaves more money in the general fund for all agencies, and they all receive the percentage previously agreed upon by the officials. If I desire to give to a particular organization, why can't I send the contribution directly to it and then be sure where it goes? Why does one have to give through the United Fund? Is that in some way better than direct support? How on earth could it be ?

The trend in America and religion today is toward group action and centralization, and against individual initiative, action, and responsibility. The United Fund is another indication of that.

Regardless of the business, professional, and social pressure, we must have the conviction to stand for what we believe to be right. Acts 5:29 says that we must obey God rather than man; Matthew 7:13,14 teaches that Christians must stand in the "narrow" way rather than the way of worldly "broad-mindedness" and Romans 3:8 and II Timothy 2:5 condemn the principle of "doing evil that good may come."

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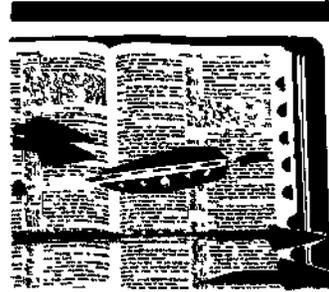
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**THE DENOMINATIONAL MIND —  
THE DRINKING CONCEPT**

Many, but not all of the people in the denominational world see no harm in social drinking. We have the same problem within the confines of the church. A man once told me that a bottle of beer wouldn't hurt a man any more than a coke. I didn't argue with him about it hurting a person because that was not the question. I don't suppose a little adultery would hurt a man physically but that is not the question. It is a matter of right or wrong.

Permit me to set the record straight about alcoholic beverages — I do not feel it is unscriptural under all circumstances to drink a beverage with alcohol content. When Paul told Timothy to drink a little wine for his stomach sake (I Tim. 5:23) he put divine approbation on drinking wine for medicinal purposes. I realize the word "wine" is used in different senses in the Bible. However, I feel that the word many times did include some alcoholic content. I doubt that many people would object to using alcoholic beverages as a medicine. Back in the old wild west about the only medicine they had was whiskey. When a man suffered snake bite and they needed to make an incision they would usually pour whiskey down the victim to kill pain. I doubt that we could class this poor victim with the cowboy who grabs his bottle, and through the lust of the flesh gets so drunk he can't find his way home.

One of the finest men I have ever known was an elder and also a medical doctor. In his older days he developed a coronary condition. As a stimulant to his heart he used a little whiskey every day. Very few people knew this because he felt it would offend some weak brother. However, when he told me in confidence that he used a little whiskey every day, it did not lower him any in my eyes because I knew WHY he used it! So the question of drinking is not so much the DRINKING but WHY one drinks.

The Bible makes it clear that no drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:21). The wise man said, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). It is made clear that a person who drinks for the lust of the flesh, which includes what is commonly called social drinking, is condemned by the scriptures. I believe it is foolish for one to try to justify social, lustful drinking by calling attention to wine at the feast of Cana in Galilee or Timothy's wine for his stomach. Albert Barnes says in his commentary on the turning of water to wine in

John 2, "Nor can an argument be drawn from this case in favor of drinking wine such as we have. The common wine of Judea was the pure juice of the grape, without any mixtures of alcohol, and was harmless. It was the common drink of the people, and did not tend to produce intoxication. Our wines are the mixture of the juice of the grape and of brandy, and often of infusions of various substances to give it color and taste, and the appearance of wine. These wines are little less injurious than brandy, and the habit of drinking them should be classed with the drinking of all other liquid fires."

I shall not at this time go into a study of words "gleukos" and "oinos" from which we get our word translated wine. I have always felt that the context helps us understand what the word means. For example, when Jesus turned the water to wine he put no restriction on the amount of this wine the guests drank. Since he made several gallons, it isn't likely it had any alcoholic content. I can't feature the Lord in one breath condemning drunkenness and in the next making 55 gallons or more of potent drink and taming everyone at the party loose to drink all they want!

One man argued that being drunk is a relative term and that the Bible condemned only getting "dog" drunk. I doubt that he could sustain such a position from the Bible. I have never felt that a man could get a little drunk any more than he could commit a little adultery. I feel the Bible condemns both.

o

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### THE ACTION OF BAPTISM

Mr. Webster defines baptism as "the application of water to a person . . . This is usually performed by sprinkling, pouring or immersion." However, we need to understand that Mr. Webster's definition of this word is according to the present day usage, as it is commonly used by the world, and does not even pretend to be a Bible definition of what baptism really is.

### WORD AND DEFINITION

The word that is translated "baptism" in the New Testament comes from the Greek word baptisma (noun form), "consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion and emergence (from bapto, to dip)" (W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, Vol. 1, Page 96). The verb form comes from the Greek baptizo, "to baptize, primarily a frequentative form of bapto, to dip" (ibid, p.97). These words, or a form of the word, are found 109 times in the King James Version of the New Testament, and are translated by the English words, baptize (76), wash (2), baptized (1), washing (3), baptism (23), baptist (1), dip (3).

### MEANING CLEAR IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament clearly shows what is meant by the word baptism. Paul describes it as a "burial and a resurrection." "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Again, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him . . ." (Col. 2:12). Also, in Acts 8:38-39, we have a vivid description of what takes place at baptism. ". . . and they went down into the water, both Phillip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water . . ." So we learn from this that the element to be used in baptism is water. Also, that baptism involved the one assisting in the baptizing and the candidate being baptized, both going down into the water. The act of baptizing is then performed (according to the definition of the word and the New Testament explanation of the word, a dipping, a burial, a submerging) and they both come up out of the water.

### CONCLUSION

I believe you can see that the definition given by

Mr. Webster and used by the religious world in general is not a scriptural definition. Nothing in the meaning of the Greek word that is translated baptize nor the Bible explanation of what takes place would indicate that sprinkling or pouring will suffice. Next month, the purpose of baptism.

## A MISUNDERSTANDING OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY CORRECTED AND FORNICATION CONDEMNED

(A Commentary on I Cor. 6:12-20)

L. A. Mott, Jr., Post Office Box 155, Romulus, Michigan 48174

**Introductory Note:** In the following I have simply copied without any changes some mimeographed notes prepared for a Bible class. Let that be my plea for generosity from the reader in judging such lapses of grammar as incomplete sentences. **6:12 "All things are lawful for me."**

Understand this statement in the light of its context. Obviously it is not to be understood in the absolute sense. Paul, in vv. 9, 10, has just given a list of sins condemned by God (cf. 5:11). He has dealt with two special sins in detail — fornication (5:1-13) and litigation between brethren (6:1-8). Immediately after these passages he says, "All things are lawful for me." Obviously "all things" must be understood in a restricted sense.

The context following gives the limitation. Paul immediately discusses "meat." Some things are wrong and can never be lawful. Some things are right and are bound upon us as Christians. But there is a third category consisting of matters of **indifference** such as eating meats. In this area we have liberty. We can act or not act, as we please. In this area we may say, "All things are lawful."

It seems most likely to me that this principle of Christian liberty was used by the Corinthians to justify immoral acts. Here is a principle that is good **in its field**. But it cannot be applied outside this area.

Paul deals with two matters in this section: meats and fornication. One could eat meat or refuse, as he pleased, for "All things are lawful for me." But evidently the Corinthians were committing fornication and justifying their actions on the ground of this principle. Paul teaches them that this is a perversion of the principle — an application of it to something to which it was never intended to apply.

But before he discusses fornication he first deals with the proper way of understanding the principle of Christian liberty (v. 12). **6:12 "but not all things are expedient."**

The word **sumphero** (are expedient) means **to help, to benefit, to be profitable, to be an advantage**.

Here is a limitation on the principle of liberty. An activity may be lawful, but are we to do everything which we are allowed to do? It may be lawful to eat a certain food, but if that food makes us sick we would be foolish to eat it just because we have the right.

After we find that an activity is lawful then we must ask, What good will it do? What benefit will it

be — either to me or others? Will it help me live a Christian life and go to heaven? Or will it be harmful? How will it influence my neighbor? **6:12 "but I will not be brought under the power of any."**

That is, "I will not allow any of these things to rule or dominate me." Here is another limitation on liberty. A thing must not be allowed to **rule** the Christian. Otherwise it is wrong. If a Christian allows such a thing to become his **master**, then in the very exercise of his liberty he loses it, for he lets something get such a hold on him that he no longer has the power to either do it or leave it undone.

**6:13f. Introduction to the thought:**

The Corinthians were evidently putting meats and fornication on the same plane. They would justify both on the ground that "All things are lawful for me." Paul shows that the two are fundamentally different in character and nature. **6:13 "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats:"** That is, this is what these are designed for. Meats are intended for the stomach; the stomach is de-signed to receive and digest food. So, when we eat meat we are using meats and our stomachs accord-ing to their purpose and God's intention. We must use care, however, that (1) the food is such in quality and quantity, as will be profitable (expedient) to us, and (2) we do not become slaves of our appetites like a drunkard or a glutton, thus falling under the power of something. This is the way Christian liberty works. **6:13 "but God shall bring to nought both it and them."**

That is, the time will come when we will have no need for either food or a stomach to digest food. This relation between food and the stomach is one that obtains only during this life. Hence, eating is a matter of indifference so far as a person's spiritual standing is concerned.

As we shall see, it is far otherwise with the body and its relation to Christ. **6:13 "But the body is not for fornication, but for**

**the Lord; and the Lord for the body:"** That is, the body is not designed for fornication — that is not its purpose. The belly is designed to receive and digest meats; when a person eats meat he is using his belly according to its purpose. But the fornicator "uses his body in a way for which it was never designed" (Stanley). He is thus guilty of a perversion of his body.

The body is for the Lord; it is designed to honor and obey him. The Lord is for the body; his function is "to rule and use the body as His member" (Meyer).

**6:14 "and God both raised the Lord, and will raise up us through his power."**

So this relation between the Lord and the body is far different from the relation between meats and the belly. The latter will be brought to nought — it is a temporal relation. The former is eternal. **6:15-17 Introduction to the thought:**

Paul, in vv. 13, 14, has shown the **sinfulness** of fornication as a misuse of the body. Now he shows the **abominableness** of fornication — how much it deserves to be abhorred by Christians (Meyer; followed by Lenski).

**6:15 "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?"**

Paul returns to the thought of v. 13, "the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body," and elaborates it, showing more fully what is involved.

**Lenski:** "Just as we ourselves possess our own members and use them as our own for our own purpose, so my entire body and your entire body are members of Christ to be used by him alone for his own purposes."

**6:15 "shall I then take away the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot?"**

This shows what fornication does. It is a "daring misappropriation" of the Christian's body. "Since the Christian's body is among the members of Christ, (fornication) is a deed whereby a man takes away the members of Christ from Him whose property they are, and makes them a harlot's members" (Meyer).

Paul intends to make the Corinthians recoil with horror from the thought, even as he does: "God forbid."

**6:16 "Or know ye not that he that is joined to a harlot is one body?"**

The thought is: If the abominableness of fornication does not appear to you, is it because you do not realize what it really is — i.e., that it in fact does take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? The **proof** that it does this is given in the quotation from Gen. 2:24.

Before the act of fornication two separate and distinct bodies exist; but in the act the two are joined and become one body.

**6:17 "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."**

A **spiritual** union, unlike the purely **fleshly** union with the harlot (v. 16). No longer is there a diversity of thought, desire, and will between the spirit of the man and the spirit of Christ. Rather is there a unity between the two. As no one can serve two masters (Matt. 6:24; Rom. 6:16), so no one can be joined to a harlot and at the same time maintain this union with Christ. He who is joined to a harlot must have first been taken away from Christ (v. 15). **6:18 "Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sin-neth against his own body."**

I believe Meyer is right: Other sins (suicide, gluttony, drug addiction, drunkenness) may affect the body, but the sinner in each case uses an instrument (food, drugs, drink) outside the body to commit the sin, and in fact the sin actually takes place outside the body. But in the case of fornication the body is itself the instrument of the sin. The fornicator turns his body away from its holy purpose and perverts it unto a base use for which it was never intended. **6:19 "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you?"**

"Paul states why the statement just made by him is true" (Lenski). If anyone doubts what Paul has just said, it must be because he does not know that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. If he realized that, he would know that to use the body for fornication is a sin against his body. It is a perversion of the body; it is a desecration of what is holy.

**6:20 "glorify God therefore in your body."**

Since your body belongs to the Lord, not to you, you are not free to use it as you please, but must use it as a member of Christ to do his will.

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## THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

"... They rehearsed all that God had done with them..." — Acts 14:27

**Gale Cummings**, P. O. Box 955, Altus, Okla. 73521 — The Southeast church in Altus, Okla., is interested in locating a man to labor full time in preaching the gospel beginning Sept. 1, 1970. Write to the church of Christ at the above address. I am moving to Phoenix, Ariz., in about a month to preach in that area.

**R. A. Sturdy**, Denver, Colo. — Recently Bro. **Richard Holloway** of McAlister, Okla., conducted a series of meetings for the University Hills congregation. Although there were no visible results of his efforts, the truth was presented forcefully; and, we feel that the members were strengthened. We did have several visitors during this series, and we hope and trust they received as much benefit as we did. Bro. **Henry Smith** of Spencer, Ind., will be with us Sept. 13-20 for a series of meetings, and we are looking forward to that joint effort.

Bro. **Raford Petty** is working with us and doing a creditable job. We are currently attempting to reach those outside the body of Christ, as well as members who have not remained faithful, through a mailing list to those who live near our location. We have high hopes for this effort, and any other opportunity that may be presented to us. If you know of someone who should be receiving these monthly bulletins, please let us know of them.

The University Hills congregation is less than two years old and is still fairly small in number — nine families in all. We appreciate visits from travelers and/or anyone moving into this area. The next time you are in Denver, please call on us. Our services are at 11:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. on the Lord's Day, with classes at 10:00 a.m. We meet on Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. for more study of the scriptures. To reach our meeting place, turn off 1-25 (Valley Highway in Denver) at exit 92. Turn west on Yale one block to Glencoe; then south on Glencoe to 3098 South Glencoe. To contact us by phone, call 798-0580 or 343-2102.

**Larry R. DeVore**, 1802 Caroline St., South Bend, Ind. 46613 — June 28-30, we had **Leo Rogol** of Greensburg, Ky., with us for a short meeting. Caroline St. has been partially supporting brother Rogol for the past year. June 29-30 brother Rogol preached on Seventh Day Adventist doctrine, and we invited the Adventist preacher to attend, but he decided to "observe the passover" and not show up. On June 24 I began my second year here at Caroline St.

**Roy L. Foutz**, 2301 Franklin Drive, Texarkana, Arkansas — Our work here continues to be pleasant and encouraging. **W. L. Wharton** preached for us in a good meeting in early May. I have preached in meetings in Cleveland, Texas and Spicewood, Texas recently; and my next meeting will be August 17-26 with the Blue Ash church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Worship with us at Franklin Drive when you can.

**Robert E. Herndon**, Lumberton, N. C. — My family and I have recently moved here, in the southeastern part of North Carolina, where the "progressives" have a congregation. The nearest faithful group is in Bolivia, some 80 miles distant. Please let me know of individuals who reside in this area or who are familiar with the local situation. **Bob Herndon**, P. O. Box 1044, Lumberton, N. C. 28358.

**Vestal Chaffin**, 200 Carrington Way, Marietta, Georgia 30060 — On June 28, I completed four very pleasant and profitable years of work with the Shively church in Louisville, Ky. On July 1, we moved to the above address, to work with the Powers Ferry Road church, here in Marietta. The church here is less than four years old. They have a very beautiful new meeting house, and the work is self-supporting. We are looking forward to a good work with the church here. I still have time to hold another meeting this fall. If you are passing through this section, stop and worship with us.

**James L. Denison**, 3402 Henderson Blvd., Tampa, Fla. — On May 6, **H. E. Phillips** of Tampa closed a four day meeting with us. The theme of the meeting was "Duties and Responsibilities of Membership." During the meeting there was one confession of sin. In the 12 weeks since the meeting we have had a total of 10 additional responses — three baptisms, four restorations, and three to place membership. On April 26, I closed a meeting with the Marietta Congregation of Jacksonville, Fla. During the meeting there were three confessions of sin. On Wednesday night after the meeting closed a man and his wife were baptized as a result of the meeting. On July 11, I closed a meeting with the Greenhaw congregation of Newport, Ark., with two baptisms.

**Larry A. Bunch** — After 2 1/2 years at Lawton, Oklahoma, I have moved to Houston, Texas to work with the church in Northshore, meeting at 13510 Rochester. My address is 509 Evanston, 77015.

**Church of Christ**, Glendale, Ariz. — We here at 7161 North 55th Drive have just completed a good meeting with brother **Garreth L. Clair** from Brawley, Ca.

Brother Clair has done an excellent job of proclaiming the truth. There were three souls added to the body of Christ through immersion.

The work here is progressing very well. We have recently improved our building facilities and repainted the outside of our structure.

Brother Clair has worked with us two years regularly before he returned to help us in the meeting. We heartily recommend Garreth as an able, as well as tireless proclaimer of the pure gospel.

When in the Phoenix area feel free to come and worship with us. We are always happy to have visiting saints stop for a while.

**H. L. Bruce**, P. O. Box 9071, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80909. I have recently moved here from Mt. Pleasant, Texas and have purchased a house at 1099 Wakita Drive. The local congregation is small, zealous, and at peace. We are now in a new location, having moved from the Holiday Inn to an office building at 6323 East Platte, in the Eastgate Shopping Center. Brethren are constantly being attracted to this resort area. Some are tourists, some are military men or college students. Yet others are interested in the employment advantages here. (Colorado Springs has over 400 industries in the area.) If you know of brethren who are coming our way, be sure to put us in touch. We want them to know about us, and us them. Also, Pueblo, Colorado, a city with an estimated 95,000 population is just 45 miles from here. Pueblo, Colo, should have some conservative brethren there. However, if any are meeting there, I haven't talked with anyone who knows about it. If any of you know of loyal brethren in the Pueblo, Colorado area, would you please put me in touch with them? This seems to me to be a very good field and I am definitely interested in seeing the gospel preached there after the New Testament order.

I am to begin a gospel meeting August 2 with the Woodlawn congregation, near Steens, Miss. Brother **Hoyt Houchen** is to be with us in a meeting here in late August. Things really look good in this area. Opportunities are unlimited; there are so few loyal Christians. When visiting, vacationing or moving to our area be sure to worship with us. Pray for our efforts in the Lord's work here. I really enjoy "Searching The Scriptures."

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## MODEST APPAREL

**Bobby Graham**

The problem of which Christians are probably more conscious now than any other is that of dress. Most recognize it to be an issue, but few are really aware of the principles involved. Many who once decried such wanton disregard for the will of the Lord and the consciences of others apparently now have little concern. The violations sometimes result from a lack of teaching, but more often they are the fruit of an unwillingness to accept what the Book teaches. Many who claim to be the Lord's people hearken more willingly to the call of style than to the voice of the Good Shepherd. Instead of setting examples to enlighten a sin-darkened world, most follow the trends that lead into darkness. Surely the Lord has spoken on this subject that attracts us: will we not listen?

This writer recognizes his is a delicate and an unpopular subject, but he at the same time seeks to please God — not men. In efforts to please God, in fact, we should be willing to displease men. The writer also recognizes that styles vary and alter modes of dress; but when styles are such that they involve people in violations of Bible teaching, God's will should be supreme.

Let it be understood that God has placed in every man all desires that are good and proper avenues of fulfillment. For these reasons, adultery and fornication are sin; furthermore, any incitement or invitation to such is equally sinful. The concerned Christian would do well to consider these thoughts.

When the Bible uses the term **modest**, the meaning is orderly, well-arranged, decent. When Jesus used the word **lust** in the passage that we shall consider, he meant a strong desire to do evil. Then when Paul classified lasciviousness a work of the flesh, he was describing an absence of restraint, a situation of indecency.

The word of God sets forth several principles to guide us in our efforts to please God and to benefit man. A sound understanding of these principles renders the modern mode of dress utterly defenseless — without justification. God teaches us that we are to be consecrated. Paul points out that consecration or sanctification will help us know how to possess our vessels honorably (I Thes. 4:3-7). Sanctification and devotion, moreover, demand separateness and distinction in our lives. Christians will outwardly bear the mark of belonging to the Lord (I Pet. 2:9). If we belong to the Lord, we will therefore disdain the world (James 4) and help others know the Lord. For the man or woman who hinders others from doing right by producing lust in their hearts, better were it that he drown in the deep (Matt. 18).

Paul likewise teaches in I Tim. 2:9 that Christian women should possess shamefastness and sobriety. The former, in context, refers to a character that produces shame and blushing when immodest clothing is worn, and the latter depicts the good judg-

ment that we should use in dressing. Peter writes in I Peter 3 that a woman concerned about converting her husband must manifest her chastity in her adorning. Although immodest apparel does not always evidence impure thinking on the part of the wearer, let it be remembered that immodest attire never reveals chaste thinking. Finally, the woman concerned about doing good and not evil will emphasize the inner man, not her outward adorning. If need require, she will change her emphasis and concentrate on that which can be renewed and which in God's sight is greatly prized.

Now in view of these Bible principles, how can the Lord's people seek to justify the rising hemlines, plunging necklines, and the revealingly tight attire that is so prevalent? Can we not see that today's fashion trend and philosophy violates and opposes every one of these eternal principles. Let God be true, and let guilty men and women repent!

The remedy to the existing problem first involves an acceptance of God's way and affections directed toward Christ rather than the passing vogue of fashion. It also demands courage to be different and to stand rather than to be lulled into a drowsy acceptance of worldly standards. The remedy, most of all, however, calls for parents who are willing to show their children what modest is and to tell them why God desires modesty. Bible teaching and examples that conflict only create disrespect for man and God. Will parents recognize that their little girls have grown up and insist that they dress accordingly? Better yet, will they impress an attitude of modesty upon their little girls? God forbid that we do otherwise!

Ours are perilous times that seek to steal our souls by making us one with the world. "The masses in the church and out of it are going to hell on the pleasure route ... Neon signs flicker, 'Welcome,' where red lanterns should swing, 'Danger here — keep out.' " Will Christians respond to that call to prepare for that other world wherein dwelleth righteousness — even to the point of dressing as God bids us?

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**THE FIGHT OF OUR LIVES**

Ron Halbrook, Athens, Ala.

... is not looming upon the horizon, but is upon us! Was there ever a time when Satan relented in the grueling fray for souls?

Abraham Lincoln expressed his earnest hope that "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." He felt such a resolve was justified in the light of the outcome of the fiery trial of carnal combat just concluded in 1865. The contest had entailed almost super-human sacrifices and privation on the one side, suffering and agony beyond the scope of tongue or pen on both sides.

But quickly to our point. Shall the highway of holiness fall into decay, to be trod no more, on this our fair continent? Shall the Lord's army be strangled and squashed and finally obliterated from these United States of America? They shall!... unless God's people be vigilant on every side and sober-minded toward every threat (I Peter 5:8; II Cor. 10:4-5; 11:2-3; 2:11; Eph. 6:13-20).

Urbanization, or the spread of cities and city-life, towers and menaces the existence of Christianity. It is not the buildings, the pavement, the freeways that threaten so much; it is the experiences, the attitudes, the anxieties which occur amongst that maze of concrete and iron.

Daniel P. Moynihan, in an article entitled "The Souless City" (p. 5. ff, American Heritage, February, 1969) identifies "a half dozen persistent themes in the American urban experience which seem to evolve ... in a process that some would call growth, and others decay ... " He discusses 1. Violence, or group conflicts of all sorts and intensities. Here he notices that violence is more and more considered "legitimate" for all levels of society, including those who have traditionally been orderly and stable. 2. The great Migration of many peoples to city-life has always included a host of "dispossessed peasantry moving ... from other people's land in the country to other people's tenements in the city." Many of their children grow up "ignorant of moral principle" and "embittered at the wealth, and the luxuries, they never share." This boiler of envy and lack of principle spasmodically blows its top. 3. The wealth of cities draws many people. The resulting density results in broad government regulation and individual reserve. 4. Mobility, or change of social position and financial condition, frequently upward, is another experience of city life. Advertising and television contribute to "a near frenzy of consumer emotion." "Even those who seem to be succeeding ... feel they are not succeeding enough ... " Mr. Moynihan adds that 5. Many educated Americans disdain city-life and that cities are generally 6. Ugly due to lack of active concern. His conclusion is surprisingly refreshing (we usually get the more money-more money-more money solution). The problems science and technology have created, they cannot solve:

problems of human behavior. Thus, our author suggests we attend to these quoted lines,

Sacred Heart o' Jesus, take away our hearts o' stone, and give us hearts o' flesh!

Take away this murdherin' hate, an' give us Thine own eternal love!

In short, the city has been a symbol of security and plenty (in spite of the pressures of density, friction, and failure frequently suffered by city folk). Suburbs make up for the some-time lack of security of the city proper, and sprawling malls offer these suburbs the same plenty traditionally associated with large cities. Science and technology have graciously blessed mankind in countless ways. They have also enhanced man's opportunities and pandered to man's inclinations toward: immorality, impurity, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like (Gal. 5:17-21, Amplified Bible). Science and technology, in the hands of avaricious men, are laboring to suit the fleshly desires of those who live outside the urban areas; those in the rural areas continue to move to urban areas where acquisition and consumption are more easily facilitated.

Urban and suburban areas are spreading, not just as a passing trend, but in an aggressive pattern. The adult generation knows the process by observation and largely by participation. Thus, the present adult generation is well qualified to understand that our young are by education and aspiration becoming part of the pattern of urbanization. These young people, including Christians, will become slaves of the flesh . . . the church will die a natural death . . . unless greater vigilance is shown to give them a deep, solid foundation. The job is not glamorous, but the tools are at hand. Souls are to be saved! The faith of Christians to be preserved! We need not hope to sidetrack urbanization. We must hope and can strike with success to the saving of precious souls through the mighty weapons provided in the gospel of Jesus Christ (II Cor. 10:3-5).

Will some think to say, "Peace in my day"? In the face of a struggle not nearly so important as ours, Thomas Paine spoke well of such spineless sentiment. A Tory "after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with this unfatherly expression, 'Well! give me peace in my day.' A generous parent ought to have said, 'If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace.' . . . The heart that feels not now is dead; the blood of his children will curse his cowardice, who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole . . . 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death . . . There are cases which cannot be overdone by language, and this is one."

Others will perhaps resolve, "I must begin to fight ere long to save my children from hell." In a cause of lesser importance, Patrick Henry stirred such deluding souls. "But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British

guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of the means which the God of nature hath placed in our power."

Ah, brethren, how truly the tools are in our hands. The enemy of our souls is laboring with obvious success. Just a part of his potential to destroy us and our children is outlined above. He who speaks with authority uproots our enemy and blasts into nothing Satan's weapons when He speaks. "He that hath ears let him hear." Measure not life by physical wealth (Luke 12:15, Matt. 16:26). Avoid murder; avoid hate (Matt. 5:21-24). Avoid adultery; avoid harboring lust for such (Matt. 5:28). "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:43-48). Do not worship or do benevolence for a show to men; prostrate your heart before God (Matt. 6:1-18).

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:24-34). "Enter ye in at the strait gate . . . Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life" (Matt. 7:13-29). "Blessed are the poor in spirit." "Blessed are they that mourn." "Blessed are the meek." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." "Blessed are the merciful." "Blessed are the pure in heart." "Blessed are the peacemakers." "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake" (Matt. 5:1-12). "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:1-21). How truly he teaches with authority!

The Word of God is equipping us with all the weapons needed to save ourselves and our children **if we are using it**. Our children ought to curse us if we neglect that Word and those weapons. We deserve nothing less than to be reserved in chains of darkness unto judgment if we cry, "Peace in my day," or delay on **any** account!

The Holy Spirit of God Almighty is pleading with us, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." What is the future of the highway of holiness and army of Christ on American soil? Shall Christianity perish from these United States? How the words fail to express the meaning when we say, "The answer is in our hands —THE TASK IS OURS!" The thought at once weighs upon us and thrills us. Continuing His thoughts, the Holy Spirit tells Timothy, and us, how to pass the faith on to another generation. We must "be strong . . . endure hardness . . . strive . . . labor . . . suffer trouble . . . strive not about words to no profit. . . study to show thyself approved unto God . . . depart from iniquity . . . follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (II Tim. 2:1-26).

Let us come humbly unto Him "that is able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 2:14-21). The battle is on. The fight of our lives. Let us rally round the blood-stained banner of Christ. The glory is God's. "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 2:21).