

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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BACK to the SCRIPTURES

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JEROBOAM'S ARGUMENTS FOR INNOVATIONS

Psychiatrists tell us that most people who are deceived wanted to be deceived. At least they had their minds set to try to believe a certain type of message. This is the tremendous advantage the medical quack has with the seriously or incurably ill — they want to believe him. The false teacher enjoys exactly the same advantage when he says what is pleasant and desirable to his hearers. These purveyors of false hope are not without ability and usually exercise themselves to develop a smooth, reasonable and credible presentation. But the real element of deception is not ordinarily so much the ability to intellectually confuse as it is the ability to understand and pander to peoples' wants and weaknesses. This is the key to successful religious innovation, ancient and modern.

Jeroboam's arguments in leading Israel into tragic apostasy is a vivid case in point. Notwithstanding his position as king, his success is astonishing in bringing about a drastic and popular change in the religious devotions of a nation in a single generation. His own appointed places stood as rivals with Jerusalem as seats of worship (Deut. 12:14; I Kings 12:28,29), and the people have three holy places instead of one. He instituted his own distinctive features, such as images and non-Levitical priests (I Kings 12:28, 31). He changed the dates of the feast days according as "he had devised of his own heart" (Lev. 23:34, 39; I Kings 12:33). So instead of religious loyalty and unity among the people, we have a deep division: three holy places

instead of one, two orders of worship instead of one, utterly unauthorized imagery, rival priesthoods and competitive feasts. And one of Jeroboam's establishments was in Bethel, a scant twelve miles from Jerusalem, a brazen declaration of the division and disregard for true worship. For a man to accomplish so much, even for the wrong, requires ability and an insight into the wants and weaknesses of a people. The arguments of Jeroboam reflect his possession of this insight.

1. He appealed to comfort, convenience and self-indulgence: "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem" (I Kings 12:28). Jerusalem was indeed a long way away for those who had no problem of pollution from automobile exhaust. It was a trip that consumed considerable time and expense. No doubt many of the less zealous were glad to hear a man of Jeroboam's prominence and personal vitality and force say it was 'too much' to expect. He understands. And who would be so narrow-minded as to say that God would condemn worship in Dan but accept it in Jerusalem?

2. He appealed to their sense of piety and worship: "Behold they gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (12:28). Do not underestimate Jeroboam's cleverness by charging him here with trying to tell Jews that Jehovah is not God. This would likely have so offended a point of fact and faith so basic that it would have been nearly impossible to believe. But the people did delight in having a tangible representation of deity. Perhaps it was patterned somewhat after the cherubim, as some suggest, which would have augured well for Jeroboam in appealing to the people to identify God with his calves and to seek him therein.

3. He appealed to pride: The Israelites had already bolted from Judah in a huff upon hearing the rash words of Rehoboam. They had rebelled, saying "What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel" (I Kings 12:16). Yes, Judah offers us nothing! Let's go home! Jeroboam offered them holy places in their homeland! Israel is as good as Judah. Dan and Bethel are as satisfactory as Jerusalem. Sectional pride can run strong.

4. He appealed to nostalgic and precious memories by the very selections of Dan and Bethel as holy

places, and Shechem as capital. Aside from its convenience to the people in the north, Dan would be associated with the worship of God through the teraphim covered with silver (Jud. 18:15-31). Jeroboam devised a calf of **gold**. Bethel was strongly associated with Jacob and Samuel and thus was tender in their sentimentalities historically, and became the site of a pretentious temple. Shechem recalls the days of Abraham, and was a priestly city. These are "our" cities.

5. He implied that all is well: it is simply the old worship for those who have no portion in Judah and no desire to support her establishments. It was a religious revolution, but it is doubtful that most of the people really knew it. What he said, they liked, and wanted to believe, and did believe. Deceived, and in error, all the while thinking all is well and we serve God!

All successful innovations more or less possess the same ties to popular taste, convenience, pride, apparent reasonableness and innocence, and piety. Howbeit all were not deceived. Some stubbornly resisted the innovations, preferring God's authority for man's "just as good as ..." Though to all appearances and for his purposes Jeroboam succeeded, he never had the authority or approval of God, and his apparent success not only led Israel to its downfall but wrested the kingdom from Jeroboam and destroyed his posterity from off the face of the earth. And still some say, "You can't argue with success." You'd better argue with it, my friend, and go all the way back to Jerusalem.

SACRIFICE

Ps. 51:17

A broken and a contrite heart,
Our God will not despise.
For meekness and humility,
Are pleasing in his eyes.
The blood of bulls and blood of goats
Today will not suffice.
Our bodies now we must present,
A living sacrifice.
The blood of Christ does now atone
For all our sins today.
His was the greatest offering,
And is the better way.
Then give to God your faith and trust,
And give your service, too.
It is so little then to do,
For all He's done for you.

By Ray Harris

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"I WANT TO BE FREE"

Freedom is one of the most universal and cherished desires of the human race. Like **love**, freedom has been misunderstood, misused and abused so that many who think they are free are really deep in bondage. Some who have enjoyed freedom have lost it because they did not properly use it.

The political slogan all over the world is "freedom" and peace. The chief representatives from most nations of the world assemble in the chambers of the United Nations, each with a political philosophy guaranteeing **freedom** to those who accept it. But freedom does not mean the same to all. The Communist speaks of freedom as the pressure upon people to abandon all political ideology and embrace Communism. The dictator identifies freedom as the opportunity to obey his every demand without question. The wild, rebellious demonstrators in the streets and public buildings identify **freedom** as their permission to engage in the destruction, burning, looting, and injuring of innocent people, all for the purpose of defying properly constructed authority and getting public attention. They call this their "civil rights."

The angry and rebellious youth of this decade who have no parental care or control think of freedom as the license to disrobe and insult the self-respecting public by emphasizing nudity, the unashamedly practice illicit sex and incredible orgies, drunkenness and drug addiction. Why? because they have "freedom" to do with their lives what they want to do. To these unloved, untaught, undisciplined drop-outs of society, freedom means their right to sink lower than brute beasts in thought, speech and action.

There are as many movements and organizations promising and promoting "freedom" as there are groups of people, minorities, or majorities. The black people want freedom; the white people want freedom; the women want freedom; youth wants freedom; the employers want freedom; the laborer wants freedom. Everybody wants freedom, but hardly anyone knows what it really means and how to use it.

Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). These two statements from the word of God confine genuine **freedom** to one source and one agency. It is the Son of God who makes one really free, and the word of God (truth — John 17:17) is the only agency that will really

make one free. If you really want to be free, obey the word of truth and the Son will make you free indeed.

Freedom is a great blessing, but it carries a great responsibility. Absolute freedom without regard for the obligations of that freedom is not possible in our society. This kind of "freedom" would allow one to kill any person he wanted to kill. He could take another's property without payment because he had this "freedom."

All genuine freedom is subject to two conditions. It must consider from what one is made free and to what he is made free.

To be made free from sin does not allow us to do anything we please. If we have been made free from sin by obeying the truth, we cannot continue to live in sin (Rom. 6:18, 22).

By the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" we have been made free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2) and enjoy the "glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21). It is in obedience of the law of liberty that we are made free (James 1:25) and by the law of liberty that we be judged (James 2:12). Consequently we must "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

The Holy Spirit said, "For, brethren, we have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). Some would spy out our liberty which we have in Christ in order to bring us unto bondage (Gal. 2:4).

The freedom of which I speak — the freedom that is granted by the Son in obeying the truth — has two characteristics by which it may always be identified.

First, it frees from the consequences of sin, the bondage of the law, and the hopelessness in death. We should no longer practice sin (Rom. 6). We should not return to live under the bondage of the law of Moses (Gal. 2:4, 5; 4:1-11; 5:1-4). We are free because of the hope in death (Heb. 2:14, 15).

Second, the freedom from sin makes us bond servants of Christ. We have been redeemed by his blood (Eph. 1:7), we have been bought with a price (I Cor. 6:19, 20; I Peter 1:18, 19). This kind of servant is really free under the law of liberty (James 1:25). Those who disregard this law of liberty become unfaithful servants and are brought back into bondage (II Peter 2:19-22).

I want to be free in the only real sense of the word: separated from sin and a faithful servant of Christ to obey his will and not that of man. I must please Christ to be his servant (Gal. 1:10).

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ANSWERS for our hope



Send Bible questions to:

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QUESTION: How can church discipline, as taught in I Cor. 5 and II Thess. 3:6 be justified in the light of our Lord's teaching in the parable of the tares (Matt. 13:24-30) ? He said for the good and bad to remain together until the end of the world. — A.M.

ANSWER: Any time verses of Scripture appear to contradict, one may be assured that the contradiction is not in the Scriptures, but rather in his own mind. He simply does not understand the truth concerning one or both passages under study. When he does come to an understanding of truth concerning both passages, harmony will always be apparent.

When Jesus explained the meaning of this parable (verses 34-43) he pointed out carefully the application to be made of it and what each thing represented. Everything, then, must be understood in the light of His explanation.

There is nothing in our Lord's explanation to indicate church action of any kind — discipline or otherwise. The concerned ones (the servants of verse 27) are the angels of verse 39, who are explained further to be the reapers who gather the harvest at the end of the world. They are the ones who are told not to separate the tares from the wheat, i.e., right now, but wait until the end of the world. They were to "let both grow together until the harvest."

Jesus further explains that the field in which both the good seed and the tares are found growing together is the world — not the church (verse 38), and that the good seed are children of God and the tares are children of the devil. The obvious lesson is that Christians must live "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15), not being taken out of the world, but keeping themselves from it (John 17:15). Paul also wrote in recognition of this situation when dealing with the very matter of church discipline (I Cor. 5:10). If the angels were to destroy or gather out of the world all evil men right now, it would result in severe and detrimental consequences to the welfare of the saints and the benevolent design of God in behalf of His children. Hence, children of God and children of the devil are to remain in the world together until the end of time.

The expression "gather out of his kingdom" in verse 41 cannot mean that the tares are gathered out of a spiritual relationship once sustained in His kingdom, but rather it must be understood in the

light of its context and the above explanation. Furthermore, a study of the Greek preposition "ek," which is translated "out of" in this particular phrase, confirms this, and brings to light truth that harmonizes this phrase wonderfully with all else in the parable.

Scholars show that the Greek "ek" may be translated "out of," "from the midst of," or "from." Therefore, the phrase "gather out of his kingdom" must mean, in the light of its context, that His angels will gather the tares not "out of" His kingdom (a spiritual relationship), but "from the midst of" His children (those who make up His kingdom) among whom they are permitted to dwell until the end of the world. Thus, the word "kingdom" in this instance is used to identify not a spiritual relationship, but rather the children of God among whom the tares have been scattered and are permitted to grow until the harvest. Both the tares and the wheat are gathered out of the field which is the world. But also, the tares are gathered "from the midst of" the wheat. Hence, the **gathering** of verse 41 refers not to the removing of some from a spiritual relationship, but to the separating of the good and the bad at the harvest time. This separation demands gathering the tares from among the children who make up the kingdom, both of which have grown together during their time in the world.

Consider the following:

"41. **Out of his kingdom (ek tes basileias autou).** Out from the midst of the kingdom, because in every city the good and the bad are scattered and mixed together. Cf. Matt. 13:49 "from the midst of the righteous." What this means is that, just as the wheat and the darnel are mixed together in the field till the separation at harvest, so the evil are mixed with the good in the world (the field). Jesus does not mean to say that these "stumblingblocks" (**ta skandala**) are actually in the Kingdom of heaven and really members of the Kingdom. They are simply mixed in the field with the wheat and God leaves them in the world till the separation comes. Their destiny is "the furnace of fire" ... (Word Pictures in the New Testament by A. T. Robertson, Vol., p. 110)

"The preposition **ek** (or **ex**) which frequently signifies 'out of or 'from the midst of,' has a variety of meanings, among which is 'from,' as virtually equivalent to **apo**, away from, e.g., II Cor. 1:10, 'who delivered us out of so great a death, and will deliver;' since death was not actually experienced, but was impending, **ek** here does not signify 'out of the midst of.' In Acts 12:7 it is used in the statement 'his chains fell off from his hands.' In Matt. 17:9 it is used of descending from a mountain, not 'out of;' 'We are not to suppose that they had been in a cave' (Dr. A. T. Robertson, **Gram, of the Greek N.T.**)" (An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words By W. E. Vine)

The above scholarly notes help further to confirm the conclusions reached in this article. Hence, what Jesus taught in this parable and what is taught elsewhere in the word of the Lord concerning church discipline is harmonious.

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

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"I NEEDED MIRACLES ... NOW !"

On a recent visit to the campus of Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, I was given a package of literature. In a little book called "Daily Blessing" which is described as "a guide to seed-faith living," there is an article by Pat Boone entitled "I Needed Miracles... NOW!"

I shall give the article in its entirety, then offer some comments which I trust will be interesting and informative. The article follows:

"I've always been a faithful churchgoer. But I went through some really tough periods in spite of the fact that I was regularly attending church. My whole life was disintegrating. People didn't know about it, but my marriage had just about dissipated. Shirley and I really felt we didn't love each other anymore. This was only four years ago. My four daughters, who were coming into teen-age years, had already seen three or four Pat Boones. They weren't sure which one was really their daddy — the Pat Boone on TV, the Pat Boone at church, or the Pat Boone they saw at home. When they needed the strong guidance of their father, I realized I had lost a lot of their respect for me. In addition, I felt my career and business life had lost its meaning.

I NEEDED MIRACLES!!

"I'd always been taught that miracles don't happen anymore. Frankly, I used to listen to people talk about miracles (including Oral Roberts) and I thought they were deluded. But here I was needing a miracle in my life TODAY... NOW! So I began to cry out to God, Lord, if there is a way to put my marriage back together, to bring my family back together, and to put my career back together, please do it!

"I knew it would take some miracles ... and miracles happened. But they didn't 'just happen.' They came only as I committed my life to Jesus again, and I came to know Him not only as my Savior but as LORD of my life. There is such a big difference at this point. As I came to know Jesus as Lord through the Holy Spirit dwelling in me, my life changed. And God put my marriage back together. Shirley and I love each other now more than we ever thought we could. And I have four bright-eyed teen-aged girls who love their daddy and who know he is just **one** guy all the time. And, boy! Those are miracles!

"I believe strongly in the church. But I've learned that after I've gone to church I still haven't won the battle. The most important thing in life for me

is being a Christian — having not only my own personal relationship with Jesus but also having a **daily** avenue of communication with God through the Holy Spirit. This new understanding has brought **miracles** into my life!!"

What Pat here states is a condensed version of the message in his book "A New Song." After reading his book, I reached the following conclusions: Like so many others, Pat was "raised in the church" and more or less inherited his religion and "convictions." Consequently, there was much truth that he never knew or understood from a personal standpoint. Then it is obvious that he did not practice much of the truth which he knew. He made the mistake of going to Hollywood and becoming associated with the worldly people of the movie, television and entertainment industry. This led him further from the truth, his responsibilities to his family, and his financial obligations. Under such deteriorating circumstances, and with still enough remembrance of truth and right to desire a better way, he convinced himself that it would take a miracle to correct his troubled life. About that time, he became associated with some misguided religious fanatics who convinced him that miracles were possible and had influenced his life.

But did he need miracles? Were miracles performed in his life? I think not. Every correction and improvement in his life came as a result of his obedience to truth which had already been revealed by the Holy Spirit.

Take a look at his problems and needs: (1) He needed to BE a Christian, rather than simply "going to church." (2) He needed to love his wife and direct his children. (3) He needed to be honest and successful in his career and business life. (4) He needed a real, meaningful, daily relationship with the Lord and an avenue of communication with God. I maintain that he could have had all of these without a single miracle, and if he now has them, they came as a result of obedience to the revealed will of God. Instead of furnishing miraculous guidance and revelation today, the Holy Spirit has already guided us into all truth (John 16:13) which may be learned from the scriptures which furnish the man of God "unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16,17).

Here are the scriptures (listed to correspond to his four needs) which offer the guidance and influence which he needed: (1) James 1:27; Titus 2:11,12; Rom. 12:1,2; 1 Peter 4:14-16. (2) Ephesians 5:25, 28; 6:4. (3) Matt. 6:33; Eph. 4:28; Rom. 12:17. (4) I Cor. 2:10-13; I John 1:7; Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:11-14; I John 2:1-6.

We must conclude, therefore, that Pat did not need nor receive miracles. He, like all of us, needed only to be guided by that message which was miraculously revealed by the Holy Spirit — the New Testament. In spite of his unsupported claims, there are at least three reasons why we must deny that he has received any miraculous guidance or indwelling of the Holy Spirit: (1) The Spirit has revealed all truth and guides us through the written word (John 16:13; Acts 1:8; 2:4; Eph. 3:1-5). (2) The Spirit would not lead one to compromise the truth and associate with denominational error (Gal. 1:7-9; II John 9-11). (3) The Spirit would not lead one to look, act or speak as I have observed in Pat on

several television programs.

Those who think that they must rely upon miracles and miraculous revelation today, deny the power and purpose of the written account of true miracles (John 20:30,31), the promise of Christ to the apostles (John 16:13), and the completeness of the Spirit's work.

THE PONTIFICAL SPIRIT

Larry Ray Hafley

Webster's third definition of "pontifical" reads thusly, "having the pomp, dignity or dogmatism of a pontiff: often used to imply arrogance or haughtiness." Such a spirit doubtless ruled Diotrephes, and those it rules it ruins. God warns against the pontifical spirit in words that manifest his scorn and contempt for it. In like manner does the word of the Lord show God's grace and favor toward the meek, quiet, and condescending heart (Rom. 12:3, 16).

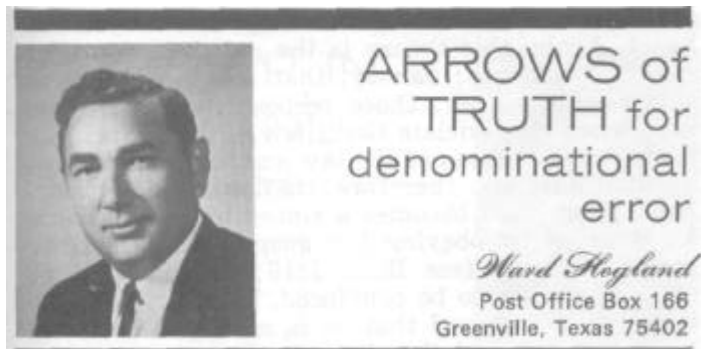
A pontifical attitude may be both audible and visible. The Pharisee of Luke 18:9-14 is an example, but we must exercise care in our judgments. Harsh and censorious surmisings are as sinful as arrogance and haughtiness. Men of God have been labeled and libeled as being possessed and obsessed with a domineering demeanor. Occasionally, the charges are founded on false standards.

THE PONTIFICAL SPIRIT IS NOT FOUND

1. Just because one cites false doctrine: The epistles of the apostles are permeated with citations of false teachers and their teachings. Hymanaeus and Philetus' doctrine, which said "that the resurrection is past already," was revealed, rebuked, and repudiated. In I Cor. 15:12 Paul asked, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection from the dead?" Was Paul a proud, prating pontiff because he named an error? No, a man should not be unjustly charged with having a pontifical spirit because he cites a particular error.

2. Just because one fights false doctrine: Some will admit that a certain doctrine is false. They will cite it, but they will not fight it, and they brand anyone who will as a dogmatic dictator. A man may be arrogant and haughty, but he is not so simply because he is willing to negate a false position or practice. Is a man to be considered suspect by reason of the fact that he is "set for the defence of the gospel?" Is a man to be castigated because he is willing to "earnestly contend for the faith?" Is a man to be likened unto a pompous pontiff because he is instant and urgent in season and out of season to reprove, rebuke, and exhort?

CONCLUSION: There is no defense or excuse to be given for those who exalt themselves. There is nothing more repulsive or repugnant than the "look at me — I know it all" attitude. But let us not allow our sympathy for error or our friendship for its proclaimers lead us to an unfair, uncharitable, and sinful condemnation of one who is standing on the firing line where we ought to be.



"THE SABBATISMOS"

In Hebrews 4:9, the writer says, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." In the margin of some bibles the word rest is rendered "Keeping of a sabbath." Because of this many Sabbatarians insist that the old testament sabbath should be observed today. This word "rest" from "Sabbatismos" is used only one time in the New Testament. The word "Sabbaton" is used in Mark 2:27 and other places in the New Testament when the Old Testament sabbath is mentioned. The words are basically the same except for one big factor and that is one is NEUTER gender and the other is MASCULINE. Both words are singular nouns, third person, nominative case and used as the subject of sentences. It must be remembered that the word sabbath always comes from "Sabbaton" and not "Sabbatismos." The "Rest" of Heb. 4:9, refers to the eternal rest which all christians anticipate and not the sabbath of the Jews.

It has been my observation through the years that most Sabbatarians are very aggressive in the doctrine they have espoused. A few of them will sign propositions for public debate. It is also amusing that many of their preachers claim they were former members of the church of Christ. When I met Burt F. Marrs in debate he boasted publicly that he had been a member of the church. He also asserted that his father before him and possibly his grandfather were all members of the church. I had no way of confirming or denying his allegation. However, I did point out that in the history of the church many had left the one body. I called his attention to Paul's statement about Demas, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world" (II Tim. 4:10). I insisted that Demas, like Mr. Marrs, had left the church; but unlike him we have no record of his bragging about his departure!

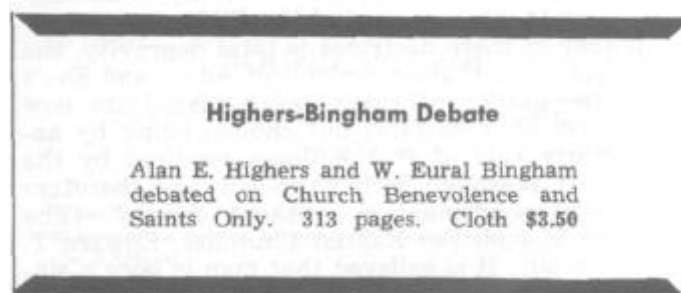
Another Sabbatarian preacher who claims he was a former member of the church is Roy B. Thurmon. Mr. Thurmon put out a little book called, "The sabbath today" in which he also makes the claim of being a former member of the church. In his introduction he tells of attending Freed-Hardeman college and other related matters. His little booklet was published largely as a reply to Brother A. G. Hobb's tract on the sabbath. It is not my purpose to enter into the discussion of these men but rather to take up the arguments of Mr. Thurmon in regard to the sabbath.

In the first chapter Mr. Thurmon attempts to show

that only the ceremonial part of the Law of Moses was abrogated. But to my surprise instead of showing this, he merely showed that some commands are MORAL and some CEREMONIAL. There is no controversy over this. I would agree that some of God's laws are Moral and other ceremonial. He said, "There is a definite distinction, positive and powerful, between the ceremonial laws and the moral laws of God's Book." To this I would agree but this is not what he claims the Bible teaches. We need the scripture which says the ceremonial laws (such as offering animal sacrifices) have all been done away but the Moral ones have not. In this he dismally failed. One can read his book and see that NO scripture was given to prove his assertion. Webster says moral means, "Relating to, dealing with or capable of making the distinction between right and wrong in conduct." Certainly no one would argue with Mr. Thurmon that some of the commands of God are moral in nature. Mr. Webster also tells us that "Ceremonial" means "An established system of rites or formal actions connected with an occasion as a religious ritual." Certainly no one would argue that some of the commands of God fall into this category. Just because Mr. Thurmon found these two types of commands proves nothing. One might as well argue that we are to have animal sacrifices in the church because one can read about "bulls and goats" in Heb. 9:13. We still need the scripture which says the ceremonial was nailed to the cross but the moral remains. This he will not find!

On page ten of his booklet Mr. Thurmon says, "God is the author of all things written in His Book, the Bible. All laws concerning both moral actions and ceremonial observances originated in the mind of God, and holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. At different places it is stated that God gave the 'law of Moses;' some scriptures, such as II Chronicles 34:14, teach that Moses gave the 'law of the Lord.' There is certainly no conflict here; neither is there any suggestion that all the ordinances of the Old Testament were included in the one term 'The law.' There is a definite distinction, positive and powerful, between the ceremonial laws and the moral laws of God's book."

It is rather strange that Mr. Thurmon would admit so much in one paragraph. He fully admitted that the terms "law of Moses" and "Law of the Lord" are used interchangeably. This is some admission for a Sabbatarian. He tried to soften the impact by saying ALL ordinances were not included in the term "the law" but gave no proof for his denial, (more to follow)



DO WE REALLY NEED THE BIBLE? (2)

Hoyt M. Hauchon

12528 E. Alaska Place
Aurora, Colo. 80010



We now consider the question, "Do We Really Need the Bible?", from another point of view other than those whose notions and superstitions convey that they do not even know what the Bible truly is, and therefore improperly use it, as we have pointed out in our previous article. Let us examine this question now from the standpoint of those who acknowledge that the Bible is the word of God, but who demonstrate by their doctrines (if they be true), that they do not really need the Bible.

One of the doctrines, Universalism, is a system which avows "the final harmony of all souls with God" (Statement of Faith, 1899). The belief that all men will ultimately be saved is diametrically opposed to the teaching of the Bible at every turn (see Matt. 7:13,14; Heb. 5:8,9 etc.). One thing can be deduced: if such a doctrine is true, there is no need of the Bible. If we are to be convinced that all will be saved anyway, then why have the Bible?

Predestination, another of these doctrines, is the theory that "God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own free will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass" (Presbyterian Confession of Faith, ch. 3, sec. 1). It is known as the doctrine of unconditional election and is stated in the creed: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death. These angels and men thus predestined and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished ..." (Ibid, ch. 3, sees. 3,4,5). This doctrine, too, is a contradiction of the Bible which teaches that all mentally capable and morally responsible men may come to God for salvation (Matt. 11:28-30; II Pet. 3:9; Rev. 22:17 etc.). This much can be concluded: if God chooses or elects to save some and predestines others to be lost unconditionally, man's destiny is already settled and there is no need of the Bible.

Another of these doctrines is total depravity, the Calvinistic view that as a result of Adam and Eve's sin in the garden of Eden, "all mankind are now sinners not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation, without excuse" (The Standard Manual For Baptist Churches, Edward T. Hiscox, p. 60). It is believed that man is born a sinner, and being dead in sin, he cannot act until there

is a direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon his heart. Again, this theory is the antithesis of what the Bible teaches; namely, that men are not born sinners, but rather, those responsible become sinners when they violate God's law (I John 3:4). Sin is the transgression of the law and infants have not violated any law; therefore, they are not born sinners. When man becomes a sinner because he sins, he is saved by obeying the gospel which is God's remedy for sin (see Rom. 1:16; 6:17; Acts 2:38 etc.). If we are to be convinced, however, that one is born a sinner and that he is so dead in sin that he cannot act, and that he is nothing more than a passive recipient in salvation — only a checker in God's hand to be moved by God's impulses, then why have the Bible which teaches man how to act? There would be no need for the Bible.

The above are but a few of the doctrines of men which have been considered, but obviously if these doctrines be true, there would be no need for the Bible and our answer to the question at the head of this document would have to be in the negative. On the other hand, if definite things are true, then we do really need the Bible. Please note that if the following conditions be true, then we do really need the Bible: (1) if we desire to know God's will (Matt. 28:19,20; Eph. 5:17), (2) if we expect to have faith (Rom 10:17), (3) if we are to please God (Heb. 11:6), (4) if we are to come into relationship with God (Rom. 5:1; Acts 17:30,31; Rom. 10:10; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27; II Cor. 5:17, etc.), (5) if we are to become a part of God's family (Eph. 5:23), and (6) if we eventually go to heaven (Matt. 7:13,14). The Bible reveals two ways: the way of life and the way of death. Salvation is obtained through Christ and His church and this truth is revealed in the Bible, the word of God.

We have viewed our question, "Do We Really Need the Bible?" circumspcctly; and in spite of what people think of the Bible, regardless of how they may use it, and in disregard of all man-devised doctrines which contradict it, we really do need the Bible. We need to respect its teaching, obey it, and live by it in order that we may someday live with God eternally in heaven.

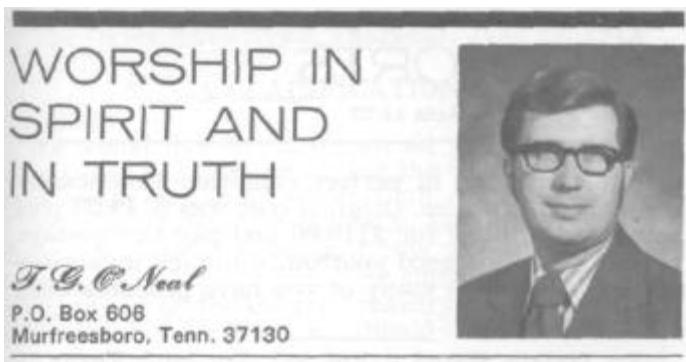
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MAY WE WORSHIP TOGETHER

While Christians meet to worship God, there is a need always to check our attitude toward those with whom we worship. There are some questions that should be considered and my attitude toward them and others in order to worship God properly.

NO REVELATION

There are some matters that we do not have any revelation on from God. What kind of a bush was the burning bush? (Ex. 3:1-5) Why was it Nicodemus came to Jesus by night? (John 3:1-2) What was Paul's thorn in the flesh? (II Cor. 12:7) These questions and others the Bible does not answer. Therefore, I have no attitude about them.

REVELATION

Then there are matters that God has revealed, in fact in some instances even in specific language. God specified "gopher wood" for the ark (Gen. 6:14). Faith before baptism is specified (Mark 16:16). A plurality of elders in every church is specified (Acts 14:23). Singing is the kind of music God has specified in the worship of the church (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Men have no choice to obey God but accept such specific instructions. To these most brethren would agree.

REVELATION NOT SPECIFIED

There are matters that God has revealed but which He did not specify. Whatever is involved in obeying God in these matters inheres in the very command of God. The Lord's Day (Acts 20:7) is the day specified, but the time on the Lord's Day to eat the Lord's Supper is not revealed specifically. The time of day is authorized since the time inheres in the day.

Teaching is authorized of God (Matt. 28:18-20; I Thess. 1:8), but while we have revelation we have no specific means or methods the church must use.

The church has revelation that it is to relieve certain need (I Tim. 5:8; Acts 6, 11:27-30), but since the New Testament has not specified any method or means that the church must use in doing this, we understand that whatever means the church uses inhere in the revelation to relieve. We have revelation that the local church is the organization specified (Acts 6) to do the work and gospel preachers have contended for that specific organization doing its work. However, no gospel preacher to my knowledge has ever bound any specific means or method upon the church.

A place to come together (I Cor. 11:18-20) is necessary and revealed but not specified. Whatever provisions the church makes for such a place inheres in the revelation to "come together."

INDIVIDUALLY APPLIED REVELATION

There are also matters revealed by God that whatever the New Testament teaches about them, **they find their application with the individual before God.** Some such matters have affected the peace of some local church. Such ought not so to be.

Such questions as (1) the covering of I Cor. II. (2) Should a Christian engage in carnal war? (3) Should a Christian attend ball games? (4) What about a Christian going to a movie? (5) Is a certain posture in prayer required? (6) Should a Christian enforce capital punishment? (7) How many children should an elder have? (8) The style of dress within modesty and many more must be settled in the light of New Testament teaching.

However, what the New Testament teaches about these and other such related matters will find their application with the individual Christian. You may believe one thing on each of these questions and I believe another and each respect each other and work and worship in the same congregation. Some of these questions could also come under consideration for our wives. Each of them could believe different things and yet sit together and worship God. What one practiced would not affect the worship of another before God.

I have worked with brethren in meetings that held different views from mine on the above questions. Preachers have worked with congregations where I have preached who did not agree with my views on the above matters. If brethren could all have the attitude of being understanding of each other and not push their understanding of such matters, both they and the church would be better off.

May you worship with me? Will I push my understanding of such questions to the point that you can not worship and work with me? Not if I am making an effort to keep the "unity of the spirit" (Eph. 4:1-3). May I worship with you? Will you push your understanding of such matters to the point that I can not worship and work with you?

On such matters a difference of understanding doesn't divide people into different groups. It is the **pushing** of such matters in order to get to "agree" that divides. "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God" (Rom. 14:22).

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

A NEW PUBLICATION

We are happy to announce the beginning of a new semi-monthly periodical called **The Bible Standard**. The owner and publisher will be Kent Ellis and the editors will be Kent Ellis and R. L. (Bob) Craig. The Printer will be Bob Craig. This new paper will be published twice each month and will contain no fewer than 12 pages per issue. It is to begin November 1, 1972. The subscription price per year is \$3.00, \$5.00 for two years, \$10.00 for five years. One year subscription or extension free to anyone sending in ten subscriptions. All subscriptions should be sent to Kent Ellis, 3807 Woodmere, Bryan, Texas 77801.

Charles D. Lindsey, 553 Riverside Dr.. Ormond Beach, Fla. 32074 — We need a full time worker within the next six months, or sooner if possible. We are small in number and the only congregation in a metropolitan area of 100,000 that takes a firm stand against the support of any and all human institutions from the church treasury. We can assume most, if not all, of the financial support for the right man. If interested in a challenging work contact me at the above address or call 677-1825.

Arnold A. Granke, Jr., OSI District 42, APO San Francisco 96274 — For your information, I am currently assigned at Clark Air Base, Republic of the Philippines, and worship with the church in adjacent Angeles City. Brother Castorio F. Gamit, the regular preacher, and I have been attempting to gather information concerning the welfare of faithful brethren residing in the areas of Luzon which were heavily damaged during the recent flood. Our information is still incomplete, but insofar as we know, none suffered any serious injury. Some have been rendered needy, however. We know of about 20 souls in nearby Macabebe, Pampanga, about 75 in the vicinity of Subic, Zambales, and approximately 100 scattered about in small towns in Rizal province. These brethren need clothing and food. Many lost their crops, and due to similar damage throughout the general area, the price of food has become considerably higher than usual, causing them an extreme burden. We have not heard from any brethren in Pangasian and Tarlac provinces which were also heavily flooded. Damage here at Angeles City was relatively light. Any churches of brethren desiring to send relief to Christians in the affected areas may write me for the names of brethren to whom they should address it.

Ralph Joiner, P.O. Box 387, Clermont, Fla. 32711 — For sale: Jule Miller's "Visualized Bible Study Series" Home Bible Study equipment. Complete cottage meeting package including the "Graflex 500" projector with slide changer, 5 film-strips (1969 revision), 5 records, 30" x 40" screen, several sets of student manuals and close to 100 enrollment and

record cards. All in perfect condition functionally and appearance-wise. Original cost was \$149.50 plus shipping. Will sell for \$110.00 and pay the postage myself. This is a good opportunity to pick up a piece of good equipment many of you have probably been wanting.

Don Martin, Route 1, Box 251, Pineland, Texas — Since the last progress report in July of 1971, we have enjoyed, I believe, good, sound growth. In the past four years, the time that I have been working with the church and therefore personally know about what she is doing, the Pineland church has had one hundred percent increase in the contribution and other improvements in practically every phase of the work. The culmination of much work and planning was recently realized in the building of a nice house for the preacher located next door to the church building. This house was badly needed and will be an asset to the church here. I have mentioned the progress of the church in Pineland not trying to put a feather in my own cap but to commend the church for their good works and to let others know of her existence. When thinking about retirement or moving into the Sam Rayburn or Toledo Bend area, worship with the Pineland church of Christ.

PREACHER WANTED

D. B. Coakley, for Greensburg church, Greensburg, Ky. — The church of Christ meeting on Court Street in Greensburg, Kentucky is seeking a gospel preacher to work with them full time. We are interested in a man of about middle age, sound in the faith, who will preach with truth in love without respect of persons. We are working together towards converting the lost to Christ and strengthening the saved. We need a man to work and build with us on Christ the only foundation. If interested, write or call collect: D. B. Coakley, 123 Public Square, Greensburg, Ky. 42743; phone: (502) 932-4857 or 932-4488.

PREACHER WANTED

Curry Lynch, 1330 Milton, Las Cruces, N. M. 88001 — The church of Christ, 1325 Panlener St., Las Cruces, New Mexico is a self supporting congregation and would like to contact a preacher of the gospel. In interested, please contact: P. R. Smith, 325 Capri Arc, Las Cruces, N. M. 88001; phone: (505) 526-9734.

L. L. Applegate, General Delivery, Okeechobee, Fla. 33472 — I began work for our Master in Okeechobee, Fla. on October 15, 1972, and would like to thank my brethren for helping me with their prayers, support and bulletins. Please print the following as our liberal brother Young has made it public:

The Okeechobee News, Thursday, June 29, 1972

A CLARIFICATION

Editor:

We would like to clarify an ad that appeared in your paper recently concerning the Church of Christ that meets in the Woman's Club. The Okeechobee Church of Christ that meets at 1401 Parrott Ave. does not endorse or support this work. The group began because the church here supports widows and orphans out of the church treasury. We believe the Bible teaches us that we should care for widows and orphans out of the church treasury. We stand upon the Bible and invite your questions at any time.

Yours truly,

William H. Young, Minister
Okeechobee Church of Christ
1401 Parrott Ave.

I have answered our brother Young in the paper that will come out next week and will send a copy to any one who may request it.

THE CHURCH AT OROVILLE, CALIFORNIA

John Wilson

The church which meets at 12th and Plumas in Oroville had its beginning with three families in the fall of 1962. In February 1963, brother Charles Limberg began with them as full time preacher, being supported by Southern California churches. He remained with them five years during which time many were added to the number, lots were paid for and a commodious building was erected by the brethren themselves. Brother Jack Adams has been preaching for the brethren there since Brother Limberg left and has done an excellent job.

Due to the fact that industry is scarce in this area, the work has fluctuated and has not as yet become self-supporting, but are able to supply a good amount of the preacher's support. Their building will be paid for in a few months and they will then be able to do more toward carrying their own load.

I will begin work with the Oroville church November 1st, other churches supplying my needed support. My hope is to be able to reach out into other counties in Northern California where there is no church.

Oroville nestles against the lower bosom of the Sierra Nevadas in North Central California where the mountains level out into the fertile plains of the Sacramento Valley. Oroville is about 65 miles north of Sacramento and 150 miles northeast of San Francisco. It is the site of the highest earth-filled dam in the United States where Lake Oroville furnishes 167 miles of beautiful shoreline. The vast wilderness of the Sierra mountains, rivers, lakes and streams furnish everything in water-mountain recreation. For those who look for a retirement paradise, here it is with a chance to work and worship... WHERE YOU ARE NEEDED.

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FAMILY PROBLEMS SERIES

I am now in process of scheduling my series on "Solving Family Problems" for 1973. At the end of 1972 I will have delivered this series 85 times, most of which have been on week ends. I now have approximately one-half of the week ends scattered through 1973 booked, and I will be glad to visit any congregation as soon as I can get to it when dates are not already requested. Several brethren across the country have spoken to me about coming sooner or later for the series. Many of these were oral contacts with scheduling left indefinite. In several of these cases I do not even remember the persons who made contact since it was not official. I will appreciate a contact at the earliest possible date from any of the churches anticipating the series in 1973. Out of all the times this particular series has been offered, about 35 of the churches have set all-time attendance records sometime during the period. This is explained not by the particular ability of the preacher but by the fact that I am talking about matters where all of us live every day. I thank God for the physical strength to carry on the rigorous schedule I have pursued for the last several years. I suspect that I will have traveled well over 100,000 miles this year, much of which has been on week ends in addition to my regular duties at Florida College.

Again, if there are those anticipating this series in 1973, I need to hear from you in the immediate future.

James R. Cope
Florida College

Temple Terrace, Florida 33617

NEW CHURCH IN VALDOSTA, GEORGIA

The North Valdosta Church of Christ was established in July 1972 with about 35 people present for the first worship service. For the first few weeks, services were held in various homes of the members. We are presently renting a large house at 104 East Force Street, Valdosta, Georgia. Our first Gospel meeting was held in October with Pete McKee doing the preaching. Bro. McKee is presently working for the Lord in Pensacola, Fla. Another meeting was conducted in December by Hollis Creel, formerly of Valdosta, and now with the church in Paragould, Arkansas. We are presently in search of a preacher to work with us and to further the cause of New Testament Christianity in a predominantly liberal community. We would appreciate any assistance in this matter, your encouragement and your prayers, on behalf of this work. For further information, please refer to the Directory in this publication.

Mike Dubose, 1144 Chickasaw, Paris, Tennessee 38242 — After two years of working with the Kentucky Lake Road Church of Christ in Buchanan, Tenn., my family and I will be moving to work with the Shacklett church out from Nashville, Tenn., the faithful brethren here in 1973. Only partial support is available. Anyone interested in this work may contact: Kentucky Lake Road church of Christ, Route 1, Buchanan, Tenn. 38222 or call J. R. Gean (901) 642-2910.



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PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION

By the time you read this article, the Lord willing, I will have completed a four night discussion with Mr. James Ivy on the following proposition: "The Scriptures teach that, before the foundation of the world, God elected or chose a definite number of people and ordained them to eternal life; that their salvation is unconditional and, therefore, certain through the death of Christ, who died for them and only them." In issues to come, I want to explore this doctrine, what men teach concerning the matter, and what the Bible teaches — or at least what I believe the Bible teaches on the subject.

In this article, I want to set forth what I understand to be the basics of this doctrine. It is commonly referred to as the doctrine of "Calvinism" because Calvin was one of the first to set forth the idea and to try to defend it as scriptural. It would be foolish, indeed, for me to say that the Bible does not teach the doctrine of Predestination; for it does, in fact, teach such a doctrine. However, the Biblical position on predestination and election and Calvin's position are as far apart as the north and south poles.

There are five major teachings set forth in Calvin's doctrine on predestination. Actually they can be remembered by recalling the letters of a very familiar word T-U-L-I-P. The thoughts expressed by the letters of this word are: (1) Total depravity; (2) Unconditional election; (3) Limited atonement; (4) Irresistible grace; (5) Perseverance of the saints. These ideas are clearly set forth in the above proposition. The difference, in a nutshell, of those who believe in Bible election and Calvin's brand of election is simply: Does God choose all who shall believe? or, does He choose his elect, and will they, as such, believe? In other words, is belief the result of God's election, or is God's election the results of man's faith or belief? I believe the Bible teaches the latter instead of the former.

In lessons to come, we will discuss what we mean by the word "predestination" and also we will discuss individually the five points of Calvinism.

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APECHO, "I HAVE"

During His earthly ministry Jesus severely rebuked the religious leaders of His day for their hypocrisy. He usually addresses these people as "scribes and Pharisees;" however, I doubt that Jesus meant to condemn every scribe and every Pharisee.

In a part of the Sermon on the Mount Jesus simply refers to these people as "the hypocrites." In Matt. 6:2, 5, 16 Jesus says that these people "have their reward." The word that is translated "have" is from the Greek apecho. In contemporary Greek this term was commonly used to describe a note that had been "paid in full." Jesus was probably saying that the hypocrites had been "paid in full;" that is, they were seeking the praises of men; they had received the praises of men; and that was all they would receive. They were "paid in full;" there would be no further reward in the eternal world after this life.

A RELIGION OF HAVING

In one sense, Christianity is a religion of having. In John 5:24 Jesus says that the true believer "has" everlasting life. In I John 1:7 we learn that by walking in the light we may "have" fellowship with God. In II John 9 we are taught that by walking in the doctrine of Christ we may "have" both God and Christ. Many other illustrations of "having" could be given.

BUT NOT IN FULL

As it has been observed, Christians are taught that they "have" many things in this life in Christ. But the great hope of the Christian is that he may "have" in the complete and full sense a continuity of life after the death of the body.

In other words, the faithful Christian does not "have in full" here and now. He has eternal life with God to look forward to. On the other hand, the "hypocrites" that Jesus described were "paid in full;" that is, they had no further reward to hope to receive from God.

WHY DO WE WORSHIP?

Undoubtedly, many motives stimulate "worship." It is simply a matter of fact that if our "worship" is prompted by ulterior motives (the pleasing of husband or wife; the seeking of social acceptance, etc.) we are certainly going to be "paid in full" in this life. The rewards of those ulterior motives are the only rewards we shall receive.

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<p>Clearwater, Fla. CHURCH OF CHRIST (Temporary Meeting) Play-Parc Nursery 1301 N. Highland Ave.</p> <p>LORD'S DAY Bible Study 9:00 a.m. Morning Worship 10:00 a.m. Evening Worship 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Evangelist: Roland Lewis Phones: 445-3752, 726-5238</p>	<p>Baton Rouge, Louisiana UNIVERSITY CHURCH OF CHRIST Interstate 10 & College Dr. South, 4270 Perkins Road</p> <p>LORD'S DAY Sunday Bible Classes 9:00 a.m. Morning Worship 10:00 a.m. Sunday Evening Worship 5:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Preacher: George T. Eldridge Phone: (504) 926-0764</p>	<p>Fairbanks, Alaska 1724 Pioneer Way</p> <p>LORD'S DAY Sunday Service 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Contact: Edgar M. Simms College, Alaska — Phone: 479-6421 or 479-2570</p>	<p>Virginia Beach, Va. HAYGOOD CHURCH OF CHRIST meets at Haygood and Ferry Plantation Rds. Schedule of Services LORD'S DAY Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Evening Worship.. 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Evening Bible Study ... 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Evangelist: Jack Gibbert Phones: 486-4932 or 460-0481</p>	<p>Pensacola, Fla. EAST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST 609 N. Alcaniz Street</p> <p>LORD'S DAY Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Evening Worship 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Evangelist: A. B. McKee Phone: 438-8912</p>
<p>Valdosta, Ga. NO. VALDOSTA CHURCH OF CHRIST 104 East Force Street</p> <p>LORD'S DAY Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Evening Worship 7:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 8:00 p.m.</p> <p>Bascom Parham 244-1574 Jack Dowling 244-4092</p>	<p>Charleston, S. C. ASHLEY HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST 2605 S. Oakridge Circle (take Ashley Phosphate Road west from I-26)</p> <p>LORD'S DAY Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Evening Worship 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Preacher: James L. Sloan Phone: 553-4970 or 556-5898</p>			

RADIO EDITORIAL ON ABORTION

(Following is a KDXI Radio Editorial as broadcast on 12-6-72, 1360 KC, Mansfield, Louisiana, Bennett Strange, General Manager. We publish it here to underscore the need for factual information on this subject — Editor.)

We are disturbed by the seeming acceptance of abortion as an answer to what is termed "unwanted pregnancies" — a term we're not too sure is a correct one.

It is our opinion that an abortion for anything except clear clinical reasons where the mother's life is in eminent danger is homicide.

We could go into a long list of reasons why we are opposed to abortions. If you want a good, short defence of our stand, we'd refer you to an item on this in the November, 1972 issue of **Searching the Scriptures**. There Clarence Johnson of Springhill presents a good brief on this topic.

The reason for this editorial at this time is the fact that we have just become aware of a group in this state to which we have no sympathy at all. It's called the "Louisiana Clergy Consultation Service on Problem Pregnancies." We don't know who these clergymen are but the literature claims that they have 40 clergy staff persons in every major city of

our state and "a number of smaller cities." If you want an abortion, they'll refer you to a New York clinic.

Anthropologists are now studying an African tribe called the Ikys. They have no love at all. Children are put out at three years of age to fend for themselves. If they try to return to their parents, the parents will lock them up, leave and return when the child has starved. The elderly are killed off as soon as they become too weak to defend themselves.

If we continue with our liberal attitude toward abortions, we're just one step away from the Ikys and that step is to terminate life for any convenient reason. We'd have terms like "unwanted aged," "unwanted teens" and "unwanted spouses." You might have an organization formed to refer you to some Chicago gangster for the deed.

In brief, we don't buy the concept of abortion for less than critical clinical reasons. We find such an organization as the "Louisiana Clergy Consultation Service on Problem Pregnancies" to be an affront to us and we hope that it has a short-lived career.

HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR EXPIRATION DATE?

RENEW TODAY