

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

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BACK to the SCRIPTURES

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THE EFFECTS OF RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

Respect for authority is the exact equivalent of respect for God. He who thinks he respects authority but does not believe in God, or professes to believe in God but despises law, declares therein a crass ignorance. God is the source of all authority and even human authorities are ultimately dependent upon him for their right to exercise rule. It is impossible to genuinely respect God without respecting to an equal degree all legitimate authority. It is impossible to respect legitimate authority without respecting God, for authority is dependent upon God and without him all authority ceases to be legitimate and is but the arbitrary exercise of power by men. Based upon such a recognition of God as the source, and the possession of humility to accept the fact by submissive compliance, respect necessarily requires and reflects an enlightenment of understanding and personal character. The effects are most wholesome and discernible.

All laws immediately become important. They are not regarded for their own individual merit. They are not dependent upon their "relevance" to current notions or needs. They are important **because** they are the law. The son who admires and respects his father does not await an explanation for everything he is told to do. He does not have to lose an argument before he admits that he should do what he has been told. Commensurate with his respect for his father, a requirement is important because it is a requirement. How much more is this true in a man's relationship to the God whose wisdom and

laws he acknowledges beforehand to be perfect? All of his words are wise and his statutes just, good and necessary.

Non-essential commands cease to exist. Denominationalism despises certain commandments (baptism for the remission of sins, for example). Unable to deny that baptism is commanded (Acts 10:48) a weak smile and shrugged shoulder often accompanies the common dodge, "It's a command; but it's a non-essential command"; "You don't have to do it!" Not even a spoiled child could speak to indulgent, permissive parents like that and be said by the excuse-making parents to respect them. This is rather the essence of impudence, the robes of piety to the contrary notwithstanding. Any denial of the necessity of the law is a denial and affront against him from whom the law came in the first place. Genuine respect does not play this self-deluding game; it esteems that there is no such thing as a non-essential word or command from God. He is God! Therefore what he says is right, good, important and necessary.

Obedience is another effect. Obedience inheres in the very nature of respect. Respect for authority consists, in part, of the humility that submits, and that is what obedience is. Thus the person who disobeys cannot correctly argue that he respects God. He may admire, but he does not respect. He has rather arrogated his own will and declared his independence. Respect submits in dutiful deference even on points that are personally unpleasant.

Character and self-discipline are produced. When a man obeys God out of a deep conviction and profound respect, purity of life in body and mind results. He learns to drive and restrain himself by a deliberate determination to obey the law. He has become, in the process, the kind of person with strength of character that it would have been impossible to become without respect for authority. This respect has in fact permitted God to remake and conform him into something according to the divine will. See Romans 12:1,2 and Col. 3:10. In a word, he really becomes somebody!

Eternal rewards should also be mentioned among the effects of respect. The riches of heaven are for those who keep his commandments, who are good

and faithful servants that did what their duty was to do (Rev. 22:14; Matt. 25:21; Luke 17:10). However, our interest in this article is upon the present practical effects in the life of a person, though the eternal reward is real and is the ultimate goal, being the dwelling place of the God whom we respect and love.

Respect for authority makes all the difference. It is the difference between purity and depravity, character and dissipation, obedience and rebellion, peace of heart and anguish of soul, life and death, and heaven and hell. Truly the believer, the selfless soul who is willing to conform himself in respectful submission to the divine will, has the best of two worlds — the world that now is, and the world that is to come.

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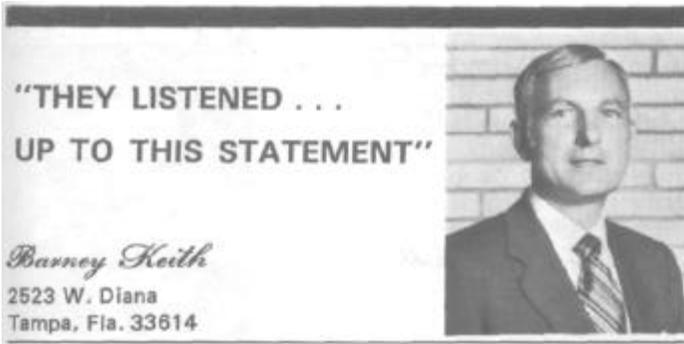
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SOME EXAMPLES

It is not uncommon for members of various denominations to appear to be quite interested in gospel preaching — that is, **until** some mention is made of the particular name or the specific doctrine in which they take such pride, and about which they have such strong prejudice. They listen, in other words, up to a point. A religious neighbor may listen to the Bible teaching about the church and the plan of salvation with seeming interest **until** "one body . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism . . ." are mentioned (Eph. 4:4,5). Though the teaching is sound and scriptural, they may insist that they want to hear no more of it. Another may listen gladly to what is said about baptism **until** it is pointed out that baptism is essential to salvation in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3,4). Pride is one's present religious condition and prejudice against something that is contrary to present belief are hard obstacles for some people to overcome.

It is almost as common for members of the Lord's church to listen in the same way — only up to a point. Some really like "brother Preacher" very fine — **until** the day he gets up and begins teaching on their own pet sins. After that they hear nothing he says. Pride is closing their ears to the need of repentance.

Then there are those in the church who have embraced the liberal practices of institutionalism and coordination of the work of many churches under a "sponsoring eldership." These people, so often, will listen to faithful brethren preach only up to a point. They willingly listen while he shows that there is no Bible authority for churches of the Lord to build and maintain a **human institution** to do the churches' **work of gospel preaching**. (Somehow they have the idea that this would be a "Missionary Society" like the Christian Church developed many years ago.) But when the same faithful brethren show that there is no Bible authority for churches of the Lord to build and maintain a **human institution** to do the churches' **work of edification** (schools, educational societies) or the churches' **work of relieving the needy** (benevolent societies, "homes" or asylums), some will listen no further!

Such pride can be engendered by the "GREAT" things the "brotherhood" is doing that men will refuse to listen to calls for a return to the simple, New Testament pattern. Such prejudice can be stirred up against those who call for Bible authority ("antis," "legalists," "hobbyists") that misguided brethren will absolutely close their ears to the truth.

THE ONLY SOLUTION

Only ONE THING will cause men to stop this "listening . . . up to a point." Only one thing will impel men to go all the way with truth. That thing is a genuine **desire for** and **love for the truth**, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. When one WANTS the truth — all of the truth, he will search for it. He will listen to what he hears — not gullibly, but critically — trying to determine whether it is the very truth of God's word. Paul preached to people in Berea who were ready to listen, and anxious to investigate the Scriptures to see if what they had

Some people will listen to the word of God — to a degree. When Paul was defending himself in Jerusalem, he recited the story of his life. His Jewish audience listened patiently as he told of his Jewish origin, his education in the very center of Judaism, Jerusalem, his zeal for the law of Moses, his persistent persecution of Christians — yes, even of his amazing conversion to Christ. But then he made one big mistake — he mentioned that Christ had now sent him forth "unto the **Gentiles**" (Acts 22:21). That did it! The very mention of the name "Gentiles" closed the doors of those Jewish minds. It "tuned them off" immediately. Whatever listening they had done earlier was now wasted. Luke states, "They gave him audience unto this word . . ." (Acts 22:22). The New American Standard renders the passage, "They **listened to him up to this statement**. . . ." Then they began to declare Paul unfit to live on the earth!

UP TO A POINT

Several groups are mentioned in the book of Acts who were willing to listen to the gospel of Christ — **up to a point!** (1) The Jews mentioned above were willing to listen **until** the preacher made favorable mention of a group of people they hated — the Gentiles. Their prejudice was blinding; they would hear no more. (2) The Athenians in Acts 17:32 were quite interested in hearing Paul's discourse — **up to a point!** When he began to advocate a certain doctrine which they did not believe — the resurrection of the dead, the curtain was down for many of them. They had heard all they wanted to hear. (3) The Jews in Acts 7 listened to a long discourse by Stephen on the development of God's purposes in Abraham's posterity — **up to a point**. But when Stephen made the application of his lesson to them personally, accusing them of being sinners, their ears were suddenly closed and their hearts were filled with rage (Acts 7:54).

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Two things accounted for much of the attitude of the people above: (1) **pride**, or their great vanity over fleshly birth and traditions; and (2) **prejudice**, or resentment of any teaching contrary to what they already believed. Many ears have been closed to the gospel in modern times by the same unreasonable conditions. This is manifested by people yet in the world and also by some within the body of Christ.

been taught was the truth (Acts 17:11). They were not full of human pride and vicious prejudice. They were willing to hear Paul out. Nearly 3,000 on Pentecost laid aside pride and prejudice and "gladly received his word" (Acts 2:41). If they had stopped listening, the story would have been different.

How dangerous it is to the human soul for one not to receive "the LOVE OF THE TRUTH" (II Thess. 2:10). Without real love for truth there is no way to be saved. It ought to be obvious that if one does not LOVE truth, he will not listen to it. And even if he condescends to listen, he will not believe and obey it.

The extent to which people will listen to the word of God will determine their eternal destiny. If they listen only "up to a point," they will be condemned in that great day of judgment, for only those who **listen obediently** will escape hell (II Thess. 1:7-9). If they listen "all the way," and then obey from the heart what they have heard, they will become servants of righteousness and have the hope of life eternal (Rom. 6:17,18; I Peter 1:3-5).

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QUESTION: Please answer me if Isaiah 29 and Ezekiel 37:16-28 really have to do with the Book of Mormon? — A.O.M.

ANSWER: Concerning the prophecy of Isaiah 29, Latter Day Saints affirm "the coming forth of the Book of Mormon" to be the fulfillment. Their line of reasoning is rather extended and involved. However, the primary points may be summarized as follows:

Verses 1 and 2: A comparison is drawn between "Ariel" (which they admit refers to Jerusalem) and another place which was to be unto God "as Ariel." Hence, they talk of an old and new Ariel. This new Ariel is further identified as "the land shadowing with wings" (Isa. 18:1), which is North and South America.

Verses 4: The expression "and shalt speak out of the ground" refers to the Book of Mormon which contains a history of the new Ariel. This history was written on brass and golden plates found and translated by Joseph Smith.

Verses 11-14: The "book that is sealed" represents the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith copied some of the characters from the plates and had them submitted by Martin Harris to Professor Anthon of New York for translation. Anthon explained that he could not translate them, but might if he had the plates. When it was explained that "part of the plates were sealed," he replied "I cannot read a sealed book." Hence, the "learned" could not translate the plates, so it was left to the "unlearned" to do, namely, Joseph Smith, which he did by use of divine instruments. Thus, was Isaiah's prophecy of "a marvelous work and a wonder" fulfilled.

In reply to the above, let it be pointed out that Mormonism is one of the most self contradictory systems of religion ever propagated. Their teaching on Isa. 29 is one good example.

Joseph Smith's "Inspired Translation" makes these verses refer conclusively and exclusively to literal Jerusalem (I.T. Isa. 29:1-4). No other place is mentioned or permitted according to this translation. Yet, Mormonism depends upon the "new Ariel" (the American continent) concept of this passage. If the "Inspired Translation" be true, then there is no way to make Isa. 29 apply to America, the Mormon plates, the Book of Mormon, and the people involved in its history. A choice must be made between the two. Both cannot be correct.

Furthermore, the Book of Mormon affirms that the Mormon plates were written in a language un-

known to any people on earth, hence, a means was prepared for their interpretation (Mormon 9:32,34; I Neph. 1:2). Yet, Joseph Smith quotes Martin Harris as saying that Anthon of New York assured him "The translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian... He gave me a certificate certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct" (P. of G.P., "J.S." 2:64, p. 55). Question: How could Anthon give such assurance when the Book of Mormon says no one knew the language? Why did Smith need the divine instruments for interpretation? Why not let Anthon do it?

The truth of the matter is, the "woe" of Isa. 29 was against literal Jerusalem, "the city where David dwelt," and cannot possibly refer to anything in America. The expression "as Ariel" (v. 2) tells why "the city where David dwelt" is called "Ariel" in this prophecy. The word "Ariel" is from a Hebrew word translated "altar" in Ezek. 43:15. Hence, Jerusalem was to be unto God as an altar. It was to be a place of slain victims (not animals, but people in this instance).

Subsequent history of God's people shows that every detail of this prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of its people by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

That Jerusalem is the place of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy is evident from the whole context of the book itself. Notice, first, Isa. 1:1: "The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." Now notice the immediate context of the prophecy under study: "Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem . . . For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act" (Isa. 28:14, 21). This "strange work" is the same "marvelous work and a wonder" of Isa. 29:14. Notice that the wrath of God or the "woe" of our text was to be upon them that "rule this people which is in Jerusalem," and "the city where David dwelt."

From the prophecy of Isa. 29:1-5, we learn that the "woe" involved "the city where David dwelt," that "the multitude of thy strangers" was to "camp against thee, round about;" • that they were to "raise forts against thee," and those who were the object of the "woe" were to be "brought down" so as to "whisper out of the dust" — the latter statement symbolizing the humiliation and low state to which they were to be reduced. For an accurate fulfillment of every minute detail of this prophecy, one has only to read the subsequent history of Jerusalem as set forth in II Kings 25:

"And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about. And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth day of the fourth month

the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about:) and the king went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him... And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away... So Judah was carried away out of their land" (II Kings 25:1-4, 8-11; 21).

The evidence and conclusion is corroborated several times over by other scriptures and prophecies, especially from Jeremiah. Space limit, however, forbids such examination here.

Isaiah 29:7,8 picture in prophetic language the overthrow of Babylon and others who fought against Jerusalem. While Babylon's triumph over Jerusalem seemed real and lasting, it was only as a dream. It was enjoyed for a moment, then she herself was overthrown. Her subsequent history confirms this. Notice that these verses refer to nations that fought against "Ariel" (Jerusalem) or against "mount Zion" (Jerusalem). These verses cannot possibly refer to nations that warred against one another on the American continent.

Isaiah 29:11-14 picture the condition of Jerusalem and Judah immediately prior to and during their destruction. Because of sin, the people are pictured as one overcome with "deep sleep," blind, drunk, staggering on to destruction. They no more discern God's revelation through prophets and seers than a learned man could discern the contents of a sealed book, or an unlearned man could read the same book with the seal broken. Both pose impossible situations. Because of their blind spiritual stupor, God wrought "a marvelous work and a wonder" in bringing about the destruction of Jerusalem — a seemingly impossible task in view of its apparent power, might and security. (Continued next issue with an examination of Ezk. 37.)

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THE SABBATH TODAY

This is the second in a series on the sabbath question. It is alleged by most Sabbatarians that the ten commandments were not given on shaking Sinai but in the garden of Eden. In a discussion with Burt F. Marrs, I asked "With whom could Eve have committed adultery since Adam was the only man on earth?" He replied that she could have committed adultery with the devil. Of course, this was nonsense since the devil is a spiritual being but Eve was physical. It is argued from Gen. 26:5 that since Abraham kept the statutes and laws of the Lord that it must have included the Sabbath. However, one might as well argue that Abraham had been baptized for the remission of sins and observed the Lord's Supper, since they are commands of the Lord. Sabbatarians need to be reminded that Abraham also kept the law of circumcision (Gen. 17:10-14) and also offered animal sacrifices (Gen. 22:13). Would this mean that Christians are to keep these today?

Mr. Roy B. Thurman, in his little book uses Isaiah 56:5 which mentions the "sons of the stranger" as keeping the sabbath. What Mr. Thurman failed to tell his readers is that the same STRANGER was told to observe the law of circumcision for the same reason as keeping the sabbath. God said, "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover of the Lord, let all his males be circumcised ... for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof (Exo. 12:48). Does he practice circumcision? The Bible makes it clear what the "sons of the stranger" in Isa. 56:6 had to do in order to be eligible for sabbath keeping and entering God's house. The Lord said, "No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in the flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel" (Ezek. 44:9). When these Gentiles joined themselves to the Lord, they ceased to be Gentiles and became proselytes to the Jewish religion. In Exodus 20:10 God tells the stranger WITHIN THY GATES to keep the sabbath command. If the sabbath is universal as the Sabbatarian claims then why speak of the stranger WITHIN AND WITHOUT the gate, since there would be no STRANGERS.

Sometimes it is argued by Sabbatarians that the standard of right and wrong is found in the ten commandments, because of the death penalty. It certainly would not be denied that under the Mosaic system some standards of right and wrong were

found in the ten commandments. However, we must remember that the death penalty is found in other commands. The sons of Kohath were told not to touch any holy thing lest they die (Nun. 4:15). This would also have to be a standard of right and wrong. It was not part of the ten commandments. Even wizards were to be put to death (Lev. 20:7). So it must be observed that many standards of right and wrong were found outside the Ten Commandments. In Amos 8:5 the Jews asked two important questions, "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?" The Jews' wanted to know when the sabbath would be gone. Sabbatarians argue that it will never be gone but God says it would. In verse nine God answers their questions, "And it shall come to pass in that day saith the Lord God that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in a clear day." In Mark 15:33 we read that the sun went down at noon and darkness covered the earth and remained for three hours. Thus, according to God, this ended the sabbath. Burt F. Marrs claimed that this could not be true because the Jews wanted to cheat. It can be granted that many of the Jews wanted to cheat God, but remember, gentle reader, it was God who thundered back his reply by saying the sabbath would end when the sun went down at noon. The cheating of the Jews had nothing to do with the answer of the Lord. The stubborn fact remains that God said the sabbath would end when the sun went down at noon.

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"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

This is the question which old Pilate asked Jesus a long time ago (John 18:38). There has been much discussion of the subject in the religious world, and many answers to the question. To the average sectarian, including preachers, there is no such thing as truth. Oh, I know that they don't think they believe that, but they do. Any time one argues that anything one wants to believe and practice is right (just so he is honest) he is saying that there can be no wrong. And if there is no wrong, then there is no standard by which we determine that there is truth.

Let me illustrate what I mean by examining some statements which I have heard and read recently.

A local newspaper reported an interview between a staff writer and the vice president of a local Baptist seminary. The Baptist official stated that in many ways Billy Graham was too liberal for them. He said, "we differ on the subject of the church and its importance in evangelism. We believe here that the commission of evangelism to the world was given to the church as a local group. I could not in good conscience tell a new convert to go out and join the church of his choice."

It is refreshing to hear a denominational preacher deny the old "join the church of your choice" argument. And he is right in saying that evangelism (and any other work) was given to the church in the local rather than the universal sense. Many people need to learn that lesson. Of course Baptists deny that the Bible speaks of the church in the universal sense, but it does (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22,23).

I now quote from the newspaper article:

"Owen said he and others at the seminary consider the Missionary Baptist churches to be some 'of the true New Testament churches today,' but he added:

"That is not to say we are the only true church. But it has been my observation that most of the true New Testament churches in America today go under some kind of Baptist name."

Now you never read more double talk than that, yet such is typical of sectarian preachers. This is right, but something different is not wrong. How absurd!

The gentleman believes that the truth of the Bible authorizes the Baptist church and that it teaches the truth. Yet he said they are SOME of the true churches today. If that be true, then there are churches which do not wear the Baptist name nor teach Baptist doctrine which are also true. But if

those churches can believe and teach something which is different from the Baptists (which he believes to be true) and be right, then error is as good as truth. So to them, there is no standard of truth, and that is what I said in the beginning.

Notice that he said that they are not the only true church, but that MOST of the true churches wear the Baptist name. Now by what standard can one determine that it is right to wear the Baptist name but it is also right to wear some other name? Not by truth, for it doesn't contradict itself nor teach conflicting doctrines.

On a recent radio program, I heard a Baptist preacher discussing Revelation 5:9 which says, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." In his comments, he applied the word "nation" to denominations (which is par for the course for him) and then concluded that there were saved people in all churches. He said that he expected to meet Martin Luther in heaven, even though Luther was not a Baptist and was wrong on baptism. I'm not the judge of Luther's salvation, but I can detect the fallacy of the Baptist preacher's argument.

He believes the Bible (truth) teaches one to be a Baptist, and that immersion is scriptural baptism. Yet he believes one will be saved who was not a Baptist, was not immersed, and did not believe and teach it. If they should both make it to heaven, it will prove that God has no standard of authority concerning baptism and church membership. So anything and any way would be acceptable, and where there is no error there can be no standard of truth. I pointed this out on our program the following Sunday (on the same station) and asked how many other points a man could be wrong on and still be saved, or if he could be wrong on everything. If so, what is truth?

While we are speaking of Baptists and have mentioned Billy Graham, we may as well make a day of it. In his newspaper column someone asked him about the clothing one should wear, and what this had to do with being a Christian. Here is his reply:

"Nothing! We are not saved because of what we wear or don't wear, or even what we do, or don't do. 'By grace we are saved, and it is not of ourselves.' It is not what we do, or wear, or the way we act, but what God has done in Christ. The Bible does teach us that we are to dress modestly."

How about that for some more double talk? He would have us believe that the Bible (truth) teaches us to dress modestly, but one can go naked and still be saved! It is all- up to God and Christ. We can do wrongly, dress immodestly and act unrighteously and still be saved. If we are not saved by what we do, why such statements as those found in Matthew 7:21; Luke 6:46; James 1:22 and Revelation 22:14?

According to Graham, it is the truth that one should dress modestly, but one may dress immodestly and still be saved. Therefore, wrong is as good as right and error is as acceptable as truth.

In closing, I believe two questions are now in order: What is truth? What is the purpose of it?



SOWING the
SEED of the
KINGDOM

J. T. Smith

1320 Gardiner Lane
Louisville, Kentucky 40213

I RECEIVED THE "PHILIPPINE CHRISTIAN" AWARD

In a special issue of the **Philippine Christian** (Sept.-Dec. 1971) the new editor, brother Douglas LaCroy, devoted the entire issue to the benevolent question. He also devoted two pages of the above mentioned issue to J. T. Smith and his position (s) on the benevolent issue. The article was written in an effort to try to destroy the work that brother Connie Adams and I did in the Philippines in May 1971. While we were in the Philippines I engaged brother Eusebio M. Laquata in a debate on the benevolent question and the sponsoring church arrangement in M'Lang Cotabato; and since that time many Filipino people and preachers have given up, as I did, a position that cannot be successfully defended. Not only that, but the debate has been put in book form and over 1500 copies have already been shipped to the Philippines. Thus the "liberals" in the Philippines are beginning to "hurt" as is obvious from the articles printed in the **Philippine Christian**. The truth of the matter is, at no time when Americans have been in the Philippines will the Americans who are connected with the "liberal" school in Bagio City attend any of the services. Dudley Spears and Jim Needham were in Bagio City in April of this year, and the "American liberals" brought some of the Filipino preachers by and "dropped them off" at the services. The purpose of those who attended seemed to be to disrupt the services during the question and answer period. The Americans in the Philippines are too cowardly to appear before the Filipino people and try to defend what they teach and practice. No! I guess I am mistaken about that. They are too smart to **try to defend** what they teach and practice. They know they would lose more brethren to the truth than they already have. I challenge any or all of the Americans in the Philippines, or anyone they would get to represent their position from the United States, to meet me in two debates — one to be held in Bagio City and the other one anywhere the brethren can agree upon on the island of Mindanao. They know their doctrine cannot be successfully defended. Hence, they are not going to try it.

Now, about the "award" I received from brother LaCroy and the brethren in charge of the **Philippine Christian**. They tried to discredit the work I did in the Philippines by pointing out how unstable I am in doctrinal matters. They printed an article in the Philippine Christian that I sent to the Gospel

Guardian in 1960 after coming to the conclusion that the orphan homes and the sponsoring church arrangements were O.K. I came to this conclusion because I did as many of the people are doing today. I listened to what a preacher had to say and was led into error because I had confidence in a man, Basil Overton, and not because I could go to the Bible and defend what I believed. Brother Overton's "logic" sounded great — **until** I began to try to defend the position myself. I found that I could not defend it by the Bible, and thus after much study I came to the conclusion that my first position had been correct. By the way, I would be happy to meet Basil Overton in a debate in the Philippines on the subject of benevolence if the brethren connected with the school in Bagio City would be willing to endorse him. So, the great award I received was the "wavering coat of many colors."

Well, who knows, perhaps brother LaCroy or brother Overton might present a position in favor of orphan homes that would cause me to change my mind again, if I am so unstable. Think what that would mean if one changed during a debate in the Philippines. Yes, I have changed. Any time that someone presents a position that I am convinced is a Scriptural one on the benevolent or any other question, I will hold that position until I am persuaded that it cannot be defended — then I will change. I do not believe a person is honest with himself or with God who will do otherwise. However, since 1962 when I was pushed off of the benevolent and sponsoring church questions because I could not successfully defend them by the Bible, I have not heard a single argument that I thought presented Scriptural proof in favor of church support of human institutions or the sponsoring church arrangement. So, the **Philippine Christian** crowd can ridicule and belittle me personally all they want while they are 8,000 miles away. I am sure they feel very safe and secure in so doing. However, let them say what they will, when all is said and done I still have a position that I am willing to affirm as being Scriptural in an open debate with any reputable brother in any city in the United States and/or the Philippine Islands. How about you and yours, brother LaCroy? Will you defend the position you hold?

As you read this article, prepositions have already been sent to the Philippine Christian brethren challenging them to defend what they believe. I would not advise, however, holding your breath until it comes about. We will keep you informed IF and WHEN we hear anything.

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THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Edward Fudge

Most Bible students are familiar with the story of Christ's baptism, related in the three synoptic Gospels (Matt. 3:13-17; Mk. 1:9-11; Lk. 3:21-22) and referred to in the fourth (John 1:32-33). But when asked the "why" of it, or the significance for the Christian and his salvation, many can say but little. Some religious folk speak of being baptized "after the example of Jesus," or of "following Him in baptism," as though the purpose of His baptism was solely exemplary. Others respond with the phrase found in Matthew, that Jesus was baptized "to fulfill all righteousness." When asked what **that** means, the conversation often stops.

In this article we will ask two questions: (1) Why was Jesus baptized, or, what was the significance of His baptism so far as **He** was concerned? (2) What is the significance of His baptism so far as **we** are concerned, or, how does His baptism relate to ours? In reporting Jesus' remark that His baptism was "to fulfill all righteousness," Matt. (3:15) does not use the word which refers to a specific commandment or righteous deed (**dikaioma**), but the more general word which describes the state or condition of acceptability to God in the broadest sense (**dikaiosyne**). We are not to think, then, that Jesus' baptism was simply one more commandment to be obeyed. It was to "fill up" or "complete" the over-all purpose of God for Christ, and it was directly related to His divine mission on earth — of saving men from their sins. Let us begin by suggesting an answer to our first question. We will then trace five lines of evidence which point to this answer. Here is the thesis: **Jesus was baptized by John to publicly identify Him as the one in whom the Old Testament lines of prophecy concerning a Suffering Servant and a Triumphant Son would both be fulfilled, and to consecrate and commit Him to the tasks that those terms implied.**

I. THE DETAILS OF CHRIST'S BAPTISM

When Jesus was baptized by John, three things happened. The heavens opened, the Spirit descended, and the Father spoke. Let us look at these one by one.

The latter chapters of Isaiah are heavily Messianic, prophetic of the Anointed One to come and the effects of His work. In the passage 63:7-64:12, the prophet speaks on behalf of the people, calling on God to save. He speaks first of God's past acts of salvation for Israel (63:7-14). Next he describes the people's present need for such divine deliverance (63:15-19). Finally he calls on God to come and save His people as before, and ends his prayer with confession of unworthiness and dependence on God (64:1-12). In this context the prophecy prays for salvation in these words: "O that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down" (64:1). As Jesus enters on His ministry of salvation, in fulfillment of

Isaiah's prophecies, God does rend the heavens **as a** sign of what is to follow. Mark's Gospel includes another informative bit of evidence at this point, for the word he uses of the heavens opening is the very strong word meaning to rip or tear (**schizo**, 1:10). Furthermore, the only other time Mark uses this word is at 15:38, where God's salvation is symbolically testified at Christ's death by the tearing of the Temple veil from top to bottom.

The descent of the Holy Spirit is also significant in the light of prophecy. In introducing the Suffering Servant who would bear the sins of others, Isaiah spoke these words for God: "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; . . . I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations" (42:1). We will notice this verse later in another connection, but for now simply note that the Servant will be given God's Spirit for His work (see also Isaiah II:2ff; 61:1ff). At His baptism, Jesus is identified as God's Servant by the descent of the Holy Spirit in the bodily form of a dove resting on Him.

The voice of the Father from heaven involves a double quotation from the Old Testament Scriptures. "Thou art my Son" (Matthew has the third person "this is") comes from the Psalms (2:7). "My Beloved . . . in whom/in you I am well pleased" comes from Isaiah (42:1). The Second Psalm speaks of the triumphant Son. He is the anointed of God (vs. 2), the king (vs. 6), the avenging heir (vss. 8-9); yet He is a stronghold for those who trust in Him (vs. 12). Isaiah pictures quite another figure, as men would imagine it, one who suffers and is despised and dies in silence. God had known all the while that both would be fulfilled in Jesus Christ, but the apparent conflict greatly troubled many Jews for whom it was a stumbling-block. At His baptism, Jesus was presented by the Father as the one who would be first the Suffering Servant, but would finally be seen as Triumphant Son. Here Jesus enters on His ministry. As the waters of Jordan clear from His eyes, He sees already by faith the dark and rugged cross looming ahead. More than that, Jesus sees the throne, and the crown, and the ultimate satisfaction His death will accomplish. The Father announces the dual role, but Jesus accepts it. "He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death. Therefore God also highly exalted Him" (Phil. 2:8-9).

II. THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Following Jesus' baptism, John the Immerser saw Him approaching and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29,36) But in the same conversation John says, "I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God" (vs. 34). The same conflict already noted between the ideas of Son and Servant is again apparent. Jesus is the **Son**, but also the **Lamb!** And how did John know that Christ was both? "I did not recognize Him," he tells us, "but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the one . . .'" (vs. 33). John learned that Jesus was both Son and Lamb (Servant) when He was baptized!

III. JESUS' USE OF "BAPTISM" WITH REFERENCE TO HIS DEATH

Jesus Himself saw His death not only as necessary in the will of God but in terms of His earlier baptism by John and the work He assumed at that time. "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished" (Lk. 12:49-50). He is speaking of His "baptism" (submerging, plunging) in **death**. When James and John seek choice seats in the Kingdom, Christ responds in similar terminology (Mk. 10:38-39). Christ viewed His own death, then (1) as necessary in the will of God for the work He came to do, and (2) as a final parenthesis on His ministry, complementing the first parenthesis which was His baptism by John. What began there in His baptism of water is ended in His baptism of death.

IV. THE RELATION OF THE TEMPTATION TO THE BAPTISM

We can not here discuss this point in detail, but it may be observed that all three synoptic Gospels tell of Jesus' temptation immediately after His baptism. In His **baptism**, Jesus takes on the role and work of the Servant-Son, with all that the terms involve; in His **temptation**, Jesus is subjected (unsuccessfully, for which we may literally be eternally grateful) to Satan's attempts to turn Him from this divinely-given work, this "fulfilling of all righteousness," to a kind of "success" and "glory" that is based on Satan's will and not God's. We may better understand the baptism and the temptation each because of the other.

V. A POST-PENTECOST TESTIMONY

Long after Jesus had been baptized and crucified, after churches are appearing in response to the gospel proclamation, John the Apostle speaks of Him who is both Jesus of history and Christ of faith in these words: "This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood" (1 John 5:6). Jesus was not some kind of phantom on whom the "Christ" came at His baptism only to leave again before His death, as certain false teachers of the day were saying. The faith that overcomes the world is that which believes that Jesus is the Son of God — and in the sense John and the other apostles had announced (5:5). Jesus "came" by **water**, at the beginning of His saving ministry of obedience and suffering! He "came" by **blood**, at the close of that same work. Our faith is in the real man Jesus who was at once truly God — and who is now Lord and Christ!

Christ was baptized in water in view of His future death. We are baptized in view of the same death now past. By His baptism He identified with sinful man, taking on Himself the sins He would bear in death. By our baptism we identify with the sinless Christ, personally laying our sins on Him and taking on ourselves His perfect righteousness by faith. At His baptism, Jesus was committing Himself to the will of God, trusting Him to raise Him" from the death the baptism foreshadowed. At our baptism, we commit ourselves fully to the will of God for us, trusting God to raise us from baptism cleansed and pure, and, finally, to be with Christ forever.

THE FORMULA FOR HAPPINESS

Robert Wayne La Coste

Happiness is a goal of every human individual, regardless of age, nationality, sex or religious belief! It is happiness which makes life worth living, but the absence of this intangible, practically undefineable object makes life quite unbearable. More people have taken their lives, wrecked their homes and in general "missed life and living" due to the loss of happiness. Surely all would agree this is a necessity of life!

Numerous books, some serious, many more humorous have been published striving to pin-point this item which like "love" to many remains a mystery. People through the ages have begged, borrowed and stolen in an all out effort to find happiness.

I would strongly suggest that happiness will not be found in carnal, earthly objects. Money it has been said brings happiness, yet those who believe this idea know too well that even money will not "buy back your youth when you are old" nor keep one from the grave! Some have thought LOVE was the only intangible object which could produce another intangible object. In other words LOVE plus LIFE equals happiness. This, however, is too vague a formula as far as God is concerned! The apostle Peter becomes more specific when he says, "For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it" (1 Pet. 3:10-11).

There is not much question from those who have tried it that this is indeed the perfect formula for happiness. Peter is not saying that if you do this you will be sinless! Neither is he advocating that you will never be persecuted or scomed by the world. What he is saying, however, is simply, "to love life (love here the intangible item) plus refraining from evil and doing good (good another item, as love, hard to describe) plus seeking peace will bring happiness. Now the word happy or happiness is not used, yet by obvious inference it is produced!!

A question: How are we to know good from evil? God's word is the only answer! It by words of inspiration describes both and the warfare that has existed between them since the beginning of time! Through it we may discern good from evil! (Heb. 5:14).

If we are desirous of living with happiness, let's try God's way. It will work. We will glorify God and save our souls! (James 1:21-22).

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

THE BLACKFORD-DAUGHERTY DEBATE

On May 17, 18, and 19, Brother Dick Blackford and Mr. Robert Daugherty of the Apostolic Church discussed publicly some of the doctrinal matters upon which they disagree. This debate took place in Central City, Ky. where both men live and preach.

The first night, Brother Blackford affirmed that it is right to use the words, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" in administering water baptism. In defining the terms of the proposition, he made it clear that by "right" he meant permissible. He was not affirming that one MUST use these words or any words. There is no fixed formula to be repeated. Jesus does not tell us what to SAY in baptism, but what to DO.

The scriptural proof upon which Bro. Blackford based his affirmation was Matt. 28:18,19. He asked a series of questions based upon this verse: (1) Is it wrong to DO what Jesus said? (2) Is it wrong to SAY what Jesus said? (3) Is it wrong to say what you're doing? (4) If it's wrong to say "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," who misleads me? (5) Where is the scripture for baptism in the name of Jesus only?

Only one of these questions was answered by Mr. Daugherty and that, not in a negative speech, but from his seat while Bro. Blackford was speaking. In fact, it became necessary for this writer, who served as moderator for Bro. Blackford, to arise to a point of order and demand that Mr. Daugherty remain quiet until it became his time to speak. In the one question he answered, he said that it was wrong to say what Jesus said. Dick showed that if so, Jesus was wrong, because He said it.

It became clear in the first night of his discussion that Mr. Daugherty had no conception of the duties of the negative speaker. He ignored the questions. He replied to none of the affirmative arguments. He attempted to introduce new arguments in his final speech which is an infraction of the rules of honorable debate and of the agreement signed by both disputants. When a point of order was called on this, he tried to shout the moderator down. Apparently he was later straightened out by some of his fellows for his conduct improved the last two nights of the discussion.

On the second night, Mr. Daugherty affirmed that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is for all Christians and continues until he present time. He relied principally upon the prophecy of Joel in 2:28 and its fulfillment in Acts 2:16f. He tried to show that the "all" of Acts 2:1-4 was the 120 of Acts 1:15 and that the "gift of the Holy Ghost" of 2:38 was the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

In reply, Bro. Blackford pointed out that the antecedent of "all" in Acts 2:1 is not the 120, but the 12 apostles of 1:26. They were the only ones on that occasion to receive Holy Ghost baptism. He pointed out that Daugherty saw "baptism" every-

time the scriptures mentioned Holy Ghost but that this did not prove his proposition.

Daugherty also made an argument on "all flesh" of Acts 2:16,17. He said that "all" meant "all." But it was proved that Daugherty does not really believe that absolutely "all flesh" has received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The final night, Bro. Blackford affirmed that miraculous healing and other miracles were limited to the first century. He analyzed I Cor. 13:8-10 to prove the proposition. Mr. Daugherty depended primarily upon testimonies from those who claim to have been healed.

Dick said that he could produce the same kind of testimony from Catholics, Mormons, and followers of Oral Roberts whom Daugherty claims is a fraud. The Apostolic Church will not accept their testimonies. Why then, should we accept their? What people claim does not prove what the Bible teaches.

The debate was well attended by local people. A friendly spirit prevailed. The audience was well behaved with but a few exceptions. Brother Blackford did a commendable job.

I'm convinced that great good can be accomplished by debates of this nature in which local men who are known and respected by local people agree to discuss their differences in an orderly fashion.

— Ken Green
4001 Taylor Blvd.
Louisville, Ky. 40215

MARK'S GOSPEL IN DEAD SEA SCROLL?

Popular press and wire-service reports have made much of the claim by a Spanish scholar to have found a portion of Mark's Gospel on a fragment of papyrus discovered in one of the Dead Sea caves. In the current issue of FACTS FOR FAITH, Edward Fudge discusses the actual facts in the case, based on technical articles written by the men involved, as well as on popular press reports. A copy of this issue of FACTS FOR FAITH is available from the editor upon receipt of 250 to cover handling. Address: Gordon Wilson, 6316 Pernod, St. Louis, Missouri 63139. Supply is limited.

A NEW CONGREGATION IN DENVER

For several months, the elders here at Boston street in Aurora have been formulating plans for a new congregation on the west side of Denver. Several families who attend Boston Street live in that area, so because of convenience for those who have to travel so far across Denver, and because of the great opportunity in that area, a congregation on the west side is needed.

Brother Carl Allen of Lufkin, Texas, has agreed to come and do the preaching for this new work. Boston Street plans to contribute \$200 per month

toward the support of brother Allen. Lord willing, the new congregation is to begin August 6, 1972.

Temporarily, the brethren will be meeting in the Maplegrove Grange Hall # 154 on the corner of 32nd Avenue and Youngfield, just off 1-70 west in Lakewood. We wish these brethren well and pray for the success of the new work.

Our work at 1297 Boston Street in Aurora is most encouraging. Attendance at all services is good and a fine spirit and interest are being manifested. Our Sunday morning attendance is near the 200 mark and contributions are averaging well over \$700 per week. We are having many visitors from all over the nation.

We just closed a very successful Vacation Bible School for five nights, classes for all ages. We reached a high attendance of 186 and averaged 171 for the week. Brother James R. Cope of Temple Terrace, Fla., is to be with us July 28-30 for a series of lessons on the Home and the Family. When in Colorado, we shall be happy to have you visit with us at Boston Street in Aurora.

— Hoyt H. Houchen 12528 E.
Alaska Place Aurora,
Colorado 80010

A. D. Puterbaugh, 212 E. Oakhill, Fort Walton Beach, Fla. 32548 — "I can not find one family in Frankfurt who has worshipped with a sound group in the States." These are the words of Dale Martin and wife, 2267-BR Heugel Housing Area, work phone, Frankfurt Military 6319. Have Christians in Frankfurt contact Dale Martin or send names and addresses to him at HQ ESR, Box 297, APO N.Y. 09101 or to me, at above address.

Bill Brittenham, 3028 Exmoor Rd., Columbia, S.C. 29204 — We would appreciate hearing from anyone who has friends or relatives in the Columbia area who might be interested in worshipping or studying with us. We would also welcome the opportunity to meet with sons, brothers, or husbands who are stationed at Ft. Jackson. We can also provide transportation to worship services. Please write or call. North Columbia church of Christ, 928 Columbia College Drive, Columbia, S.C. 29203. Phone: 803-782-5381.

Cecil Belcher, 630 E. Ash Place, Griffith, Indiana 46319 — I moved to work with the Griffith, Indiana church Sept. 1, 1969. I have enjoyed my work with the church here. I will be moving to South Bend, Ind. to work with the Caroline & Calvert Street church July 15, 1972. To my knowledge this is the only sound church in the north central part of the state of Indiana. All who will be traveling, visiting or moving to that area of Indiana are invited and encouraged to visit and worship with us there.

Brother Bob Neely will be with us in a gospel meeting the last of August. I have two meetings scheduled. I will be with the church in Monticello, Ky. July 31 through Aug. 6. Brother E. Lacy Porter is the preacher there. I will be with the Willow Glen church near Central City, Ky. Oct. 2-8. Brother Dicky Blackford is the preacher there.

J. W. Evans, Annandale, Va. — After 7 1/2 years with the Annandale church of Christ I will terminate my work here effective June 30. I have accepted the work with the Eastside church of Christ, 2930 Avon Dr., Louisville, Ky. 40220, beginning July 1, 1972.

Having had a part from the very beginning of the Annandale church unto its present status of a sound congregation of approximately 95 members, occupying its own building, organized after the N.T. order, and self-supporting in meeting a weekly budget of \$570, it is with grateful contentment therewith that I end my longest tenure of work at any one place. I humbly feel myself fortunate, grateful to God and brethren (elsewhere as well as here), and happy to have had a part in "rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem" of a sound church in this area of our Nation's Capitol. The brethren here are in the process of looking for a preacher for this work.

I am looking forward to my work with the Eastside church, and the association with the host of gospel preachers in the Louisville area. Friends and "bulletin exchanges" please note my change of address after June 30: 3743 Essex Road, Louisville, Ky. 40220.

Vestal Chafin, 200 Carrington Way, Marietta, Ga. 30060 — On July 31, I will complete two years and one month of work with the Powers Ferry Road church. On the second Sunday in August, I will begin work with the church in Paden City, West Virginia. After July 31, my address will be: 217 S. First Avenue, Paden City, W. Va. 26159.

Larry R. DeVore — After three years' work with the Caroline St. church in South Bend, Indiana, I am moving July 1 to work with the Russell St. church in Portage, Indiana. Bro. Cecil Belcher of Griffith, Indiana, will move to South Bend the middle of July. I will hold a gospel meeting for the Portage church July 16-23. My address after July 1 will be: 388 Raritan Drive, Valparaiso, Ind. 46383.

**SMITH-LACUATA DEBATE NOW READY
FOR SHIPMENT**

This is the debate that was held in 1971 in the Philippine Islands between brethren J. T. Smith and Eusebio M. Lacuata on the questions of Benevolence and Evangelism. The price of the book is \$2.00. For every one you buy, one will be sent to the brethren in the Philippines free. Order several copies today. Keep one — give several to friends. Paper Bound

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"LEAVE YOUR RELIGION
AT THE GATE, PLEASE"

William C. Sexton

Recently I heard the following story: a man who was a "religious fanatic," had his boss tell him, "... I have respect for all religions, but leave your religion at the gate, please, when you come in here to work." I listened to another story, too: one who was a member of the ----- church and sang in the choir, also ran a service station, and at his place of business he would curse and rave and carry on unseemingly. One Monday morning his attention was called to the inconsistency between his religious profession and his conduct on the job. He responded: "How can a man go straight out here among all these crooks."

It doesn't take much character to be **good** among the "good," or to be a **Christian** among "Christians." The test comes when one is in the company of the sinning people of the world. Here one must excel (Cf. Matt. 5:20). If one's faith and ideology cannot control him at all times, in the trying and hostile world situations, then his religion is of no lasting value. Instead of being a foundation on which he STANDS, it is only a crutch on which he leans; instead of being a true disciple, he is only a pretender.

• There is a sense, however, in which a man should leave his religion at the gate. That is its **advocacy**. Some take up company time advocating their religious views, many times setting off time-consuming discussions, and even creating hostile feelings among workers which hinder production. Such persons are, in effect, asking the company to pay them while they advocate their religion and at the same time provide them with an audience and even pay them to listen. Such is not Christian conduct, good human relations, nor wise strategy. Such, I believe, indeed, should be left at the gate.

Although one should leave its advocacy at the gate, nevertheless, the **practice** of his religious tenets **must** be taken with him through every gate, behind every door and wall, into every activity. He must be governed by **honesty** and **purity**, both on and off the job. He cannot lie, steal, nor cheat, even though there probably is much of this being done in

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his presence. He must be governed in his speech, thoughts, and actions by the tenet of purity (Cf. Eph. 4:29; James 1:26-27).

Religion has come into disrepute mainly because persons conduct themselves contrary to the tenets of their religious profession. Filthy language, lying, shifting of responsibility and shirking of one's duty by those who profess to be religious, has caused many to conclude that all religious persons are **hypocrites**. Beloved, I know whereof I speak. I have worked on jobs with religious persons, some who call themselves **PREACHERS**, who have so acted. So, beloved, for your own good and the influence you may have on the eternal salvation of others, **don't leave your religious tenets at the gate**, rather, practice them everywhere you go on **THE JOB!** But don't expect your employer to pay you and provide you with an audience to which you can advocate your religious dogma. Be a Christian in conduct, and you'll exert a powerful influence, sending a message that will clearly reveal your identity.

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