

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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THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN JEHOVAH THEIR GOD

Arthur W. Adams

The prophet Jeremiah has told us: "I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). However, I am made to marvel at the attitude of some who call themselves Christians, who after obeying Christ in baptism seek to walk in their own way. In many cases these people are led by pride and arrogance and seem to feel that they have graced the earth with their presence. Feeling special, they assume that God will let them "get by" with some things that he will punish others for doing.

In the days of Jeremiah this same false idea was rampant. The people of Judah were corrupt, yet they failed to look at themselves in the mirror of God's Word. God, not seeing the people as they saw themselves, looked down upon Judah in disgust.

(1). The people were indifferent to correction. They were deprived of blessings and had even seen their sister, Israel, fall for doing the same wicked things. In all of this they had not learned their lesson for "They had made their faces harder than a rock; they had refused to return" (Jeremiah 5:7-9).

(2). In the face of God's greatness and goodness the people were ever characterized by a "revolting and a rebellious heart" (Jeremiah 5:23). The false prophets encouraged the people in this by telling lies in the name of Jehovah. Yet, the tragedy of all of these sins was "My people love to have it so" (Jeremiah 5:31).

WARNINGS FROM GOD

God forewarned of an impending judgment even early in time (Deuteronomy 28:1-68) and continued the warnings by the mouth of His, prophets. Jeremiah warned that unless the people repented and turned to God with their whole hearts that the wrath of Jehovah "would go forth as fire and burn so that none could quench it" (Jeremiah 4:4).

At that time Jehovah had a great army led by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon which he would allow to come and enslave the people. Jehovah never ceased to

warn His people for He loved them. Yet, when they would not turn to Him the punishment was inevitable and Judah, like Israel, was punished for her wickedness.

THE JUDGMENT

The judgment did come as the powerful armies of Babylon swept into Judah, killing the people and enslaving many of the pious leaders (Jeremiah 24). After Zedekiah, a puppet King in Judah, broke a promise to Nebuchadnezzar another group was taken to Babylon and Jerusalem, the holy city of God, with her majestic temple crumbled in 586. God had warned them of the judgment, but the people would not listen.

NO NEW THING UNDER THE SUN

The writer of Ecclesiastes spoke of there being "no new thing under the sun" and surely there is nothing new. Even today we can see the same elements that caused the downfall of Israel and Judah within our society and to some extent even within the church. We see indifference, pride, lust, and rebellion even today.

(1). Indifference is caused by an attitude of unconcern brought about by the hardening of one's heart to God's message. Fruits of indifference are seen in the lives of individuals who fail to give heed to God's standard, the Bible. Christians do not believe in the doctrine of "once saved, always saved", but by their actions from time to time you would think that some strictly adhered to it.

(2). Pride also is a contributing factor in the fall of a child of God. Often there is a tendency to become self-willed and to "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" rather than to be pleasing to God. In Proverbs 6:16-19 there are six things which the Lord hates and a "proud look" is the first on the list.

The person who is truly converted will walk by faith and obey God, just as Abraham did, simply because "God has spoken, I must obey." By doing this we are yielding our lives to God as the soft clay yields itself to the design of the potter's hand. Of course, the proud man will not allow himself to be molded.

(3). We live in an age of numerous lusts where it seems that indulgence is the way to be happy. Galatians 5:19-21 tells us that the person who par-

icipates in these activities "cannot inherit the kingdom of God." We must all avoid these temptations for God has excluded no one from obeying His law. It must be admitted that from time to time it seems extremely difficult to obey God, yet if we want to escape the wrath of the Creator we must strive to the best of our ability knowing that these lusts "war against the soul".

(4). All sin is rebellion against God. We saw that Judah had this spirit and it led her to a crashing fall. In the same manner, if we today have a rebellious spirit we also shall fall into the wrath of God.

THE JUDGMENT

The final judgment of God is on its way and it is to be a most terrible one. Just as God warned Judah by the prophets, so He warns us today by His Word. The way to escape is to turn to God with our whole hearts for if God did not spare even His own people in Jeremiah's day, what hope can we have of His sparing us today when we, like they, refuse to yield to His will?

In the words of the Hebrew writer we say, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation" as is found in Christ our Lord (Hebrews 2:3)? Let us not be guilty of "forgetting Jehovah our God".

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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PERSONAL EVANGELISM (1)

If the world is to be won to Christ, Christians everywhere must personally tell the story of redeeming grace. While there are activities divinely authorized for the church as a unit, the sum total of our responsibilities as the people of God cannot be discharged in that fashion alone. Without minimizing collective action I wish to point up the need for Christians distributively working to save the lost.

It is encouraging to see the increase in conversions being realized in so many places in the recent past. But the number of these is small compared to what could be done if the subject of this article were properly understood and practiced by all Christians everywhere. Many reasons could be assigned to explain the lack of personal evangelism. Some are without sufficient knowledge to teach anyone. Some are indifferent to their own growth and the salvation of others. Well-meaning brethren have at times contrived elaborate plans for the congregation which have resulted in more paper work than soul saving. Some are afraid to try for fear of failing. Some are willing, but lack know-how. For whatever reason, all obstacles must be overcome so this divinely appointed work can be done.

Perhaps we have been confused by imprecise terminology. I am not writing just about personal work but a *specific kind* of personal work. When any Christian in any of life's relationships fills his role in harmony with Biblical instruction, then that is his personal work. Being a good neighbor, worker, parent, child, visiting the sick or helping the needy all classify as personal work. But none of it is personal evangelism. The word "evangelism" is from the same term from which the word "gospel" comes. "Gospel" means good news or glad tidings. An evangelist is a herald, or one who brings that good news. We are not talking now about a group supporting a man to go and teach, but about individuals shouldering their own obligation to teach others.

The subjects of such effort are two-fold. First there are the alien sinners. While the law was in force for the Jew, the Gentiles were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel" and "strangers to the covenants of promise" (Eph. 2:12). Even so, an alien sinner is one who has not entered into covenant with God. He is not in the body, not a citizen of the kingdom nor a part of the family of God. He has never obeyed the gospel. Some are aliens without realizing it. Some are

religious and dedicated to their cause while yet being aliens. In every city and country community, in every factory, office or field, in every block on every street and in nearly every house the world around there are souls who have never obeyed the Lord, and many of these have never even once heard the pure, sweet story of salvation through Christ and the church.

There is another class of subjects for this effort. These are the backsliding children of God. They heard the gospel, believed and obeyed it in its primary demands, but these "have no root, which for awhile believe, and in time of temptation fall away" (Lk. 8:13). Paul said a brother may be "overtaken in a fault" and stand in need of being restored (Gal. 6:1). James said "if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas. 5:19-20). If an erring brother is not rescued, he, along with the alien, shall be eternally lost. Jesus said the unprofitable servant would be cast into outer darkness (Mt. 25:30). Brethren, there are plenty of these subjects around. If every person who once named the name of Christ and was baptized for remission of sins in the city of Louisville were to be restored, every congregation in the city would have to expand its facilities and several new ones could be started. The same story could be duplicated in most large cities in this country.

The **need** for this work should be obvious to every Bible student. Paul said "all have sinned" (Rom. 3:9-10, 23). The condition of those in sin should summon our deepest compassion. They are "dead", walking "according to the course of this world", serving "the prince of the power of the air" and have "the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience" while they fulfill the "desires of the flesh and of the mind" and in the very nature of the case, shall be the subjects of divine wrath unless they repent (Eph. 2:1-3).

God offers only one remedy for this tragic plight of the sinner and that is the gospel. It is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16-17). Paul said that those to whom the gospel is veiled shall perish (2 Cor. 4:3-4). "He hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). This gospel was to be carried to all nations for the obedience of faith (Rom. 16:25-27). It must be taught. "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the father, cometh unto me" (Jno. 6:44-45). The grace of God that brings salvation appears "teaching us" certain things (Titus 2:11-14). What Timothy had learned from Paul he was to commit to "faithful men who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). This is where evangelism enters the picture, both public and personal kinds. God uses our feet to go, our eyes to see the opportunities, our ears to hear the doubts and questions and our lips to speak the words of salvation to the lost.

This work is not optional. It is a divine mandate. The

Great Commission was to be preached in all the world to the very end of the gospel dispensation (Mt. 28:19-20). Timothy was commanded to teach others what he had learned so they might teach it to still more (2 Tim. 2:2). Col. 4:6 lays upon us the duty of learning how we "ought to answer every man." 1 Peter 3:15 requires that we be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." Failure to practice what the Lord required in this regard jeopardizes our own salvation. Brethren, look upon the fields that are even now white unto harvest. Let not the harvest perish in the field for want of reapers. "If the name of the Saviour is precious to you . . . will YOU not tell it TODAY?" (More to follow)

SOCIAL DRINKING: A FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Ron Halbrook

The June, 1973 *Searching the Scriptures* carried a study on "Social Drinking Demythologized." The study of I Peter 4:3 showed that God forbids (1) extreme indulgence and debauchery with intoxicants, (2) the intoxication of revellings, and (3) sipping the intoxicant or social drinking. The myths men hide behind to justify their drinking were then discussed. Many inquiries from readers have led to continued research in follow-up study.

First, a correction. Under "MYTH 4," we stated, "A 'chimney corner scripture' says, 'The legs of the lame are unequal.'" Having heard this quoted as an adage, we failed to remember it originated in Prov. 26:7 — making it very much scripture instead of "chimney corner scripture."

All are creatures of habit and common usage, which can be good or bad. Common use has rooted certain meanings for "church," "baptism," and "pastor" in the minds of many. Once scriptural definitions are established, and once we get a person to actually think of the proper definition every time he reads those words in the Bible, then he is well on his way to understanding what God says on these matters. *One of the most difficult matters to get over to people, and yet one of the most helpful*, on the subject of drinking intoxicants, is the meaning of the word "wine" which appears so often in the Bible. We constantly think of our specialized use of the word "wine" when we see it in the Bible. From all this writer can gather, the original words translated "wine" simply referred to a drink produced from the grape. For instance, *Young's Analytical Concordance* of the Bible defines the most common New Testament word involved here as "wine, grape juice" (p. 1058). That is what the term means within itself; then, various scholars will comment on what they think the nature of the grape drink was in general or in specific passages. *It is exactly like our word "cider"* — which does not tell the condition of the product, whether it is fermented or unfermented. Once we understand the proper definition, and think of it every time we see the word "wine" in the Bible,

we are well on our way to a proper understanding of what the Bible teaches on the use of intoxicants.

How shall we know in a given passage whether the grape juice is intoxicating or not? Simply by the context, just as we did in the original article when discussing John 2:1-10. To see just how fresh the wine or grape juice was often served, read Gen. 40:11; "I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup." Not only do we have ancient statues showing this very practice (as one from Pompeii), but we also have ancient records of how they preserved the grapes through a whole season at times so it could be served in this manner year round.

When the grapes were pressed by presses to obtain the juice, certainly unfermented juice was the result, yet the Bible calls this "wine" (Prov. 3:10). It is not "new wine" in the sense of juice that has reached the proper level of fermentation, but in the sense of juice fresh and sweet, direct from the grape. We also know the ancients had a number of methods of preserving the fresh, sweet juice from fermentation, as was mentioned in our original article.

The priests and Levites were allowed to eat and drink certain things brought by Israel for sacrifices. Wine is included (Num. 18:12). The context provides a clear understanding of what is meant. It is not juice that has set up for some time and gone through processes of fermentation, for it is called "the firstfruits" and in the next verse the "first ripe." Also, the Jews drank grape juice ("wine") at certain feasts; but they were instructed to remove all leaven, leavening agents, and leavened products from the house. There must be some leavening agent, natural or artificial, to produce intoxicating wine. Thus, *the context of a verse and the context of what other passages teach on the subject must be the guide*. The word "wine" appears in both Gen. 9:20-24 and in John 2:1-10, with no explicit explanation of whether an intoxicant was involved or not; *careful attention to the context* in each case supplies the answer without a doubt.

Notice the following contrasts between the two kinds of wines, as drawn from the Bible.

FERMENTED GRAPE JUICE

ASSOCIATED WITH:

Intoxication and drunkenness

Violence

Woe

False sense of security

Profaning religion

Poison (Prov. 4:17; 20:1;

23:29-31; Isa. 5:22; 28:7;

56:12; Hab. 2:5; Eph. 5:18, etc.)

THIS ONE IS:

1. The cause of intoxication, violence, woe.
2. The cause of irreligion and self-destruction.
3. The symbol of divine wrath.
4. The emblem of eternal damnation.

UNFERMENTED GRAPE JUICE

ASSOCIATED WITH:

Altar offerings

Sustaining power

Emblem of spiritual blessings
 Emblem of Christ's blood
 Things which strengthen the body
 and rejoice the heart
 (Gen. 27:28,31; Num. 18:12; Deut. 7:13;
 11:14; Prov. 3:10; Isa. 45:1; Zech. 9:7;
 Matt. 26:26-28; Jn. 2:1-10, etc.)

THIS ONE IS:

1. The occasion of comfort and peace.
2. The devout offering of piety on the altar.
3. The symbol of spiritual blessings.
4. The emblem of eternal salvation.

With such points as these in mind, Prof. Moses Stuart concludes,

.. whenever the Scriptures speak of wine as a comfort, a blessing, or a libation to God, and rank it with such articles as corn and oil, they mean, *they can mean only such wine as contained no alcohol that could have a mischievous tendency*; that wherever they denounce it, and connect it with drunkenness; and reveling, they can mean only alcoholic or intoxicating wine.

Scholars and commentators take the best information available to them, shape an opinion about the nature (intoxicating or not) of the wine or grape juice available to ancients, and then write the comments which we read about wine in general or in a specific passage. The result is conflicting, or apparently so. Thus, we may be confused, and may fall into the trap of selecting the comments that suit our preconceived notions or the common understanding of the day. For instance, on Jn. 2:10, *Barnes* says, "The common wine drunk in Palestine was that which was the simple juice of the grape." But, *Barclay* says a light intoxicant ("two parts of wine to three parts of water") was the common drink "in Greece," and he thinks therefore "total abstinence" is not required (*Flesh & Spirit*, p. 61). The writer of this present article can by no means compete with any of the scholars on the basis of scholarly training, but he believes a valid conclusion can be reached in spite of conflicting commentators.

(1) We know "wine in the Bible was *at least* sometimes intoxicating (as Gen. 9:20f), but was the grape juice consumed always so? We know fresh juice was also *at least* sometimes consumed, from Gen. 40:11, Num. 18:12, and other passages. If the wine was thus sometimes of one nature and sometimes of another, then we are left with nothing but the context for a guide — just as with our word "cider."

(2) If we further knew from profane history that the ancients actually did preserve and use fresh juice, we would be confirmed in the view that any Biblical occurrence of "wine" *may* or *may not* refer, to an intoxicant. Is the evidence available? Indeed, it is. The ancients were very much in the habit of preserving and using grape juice free from fermentation. Not only do archaeologists know of their storage centers and the containers used, but also testimony comes from the ancients themselves — Plato, Columella, Pliny, Aristotle, Horace, Homer, Plutarch, etc. "Some of

these ancient writers give in detail the very processes of boiling, filtering and sulphurization by which the wines were preserved from fermentation" (Dr. Herrick Johnson). Polybius says,

Among the Romans, the women were forbidden to drink (intoxicating) wines; they drink, however, what is called *possum*, made from raisins, which drink very much resembles *Aegosthenian and Cretan gleukos* (sweet wine), which men use for allaying excessive thirst.

The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (1973) says "means for preserving grape-juice were well known;" it quotes Cato, *De Agri Cultura* CXX, who concludes one recipe with these words, "It will be grape-juice for a whole year." The ancients knew not just one, but a number of ways to preserve fresh juice. So, we repeat: just as with our word "cider," the only way to determine the nature of the wine will be the context in which it is used!

Some have wondered if our definitions and discussion of I Peter 4:3, excluding social drinking, were based on "a Southern, rural, temperance view" of the drinking question. It should be noted that the definitions given came straight from the pen of "Richard Chenevix Trench, D.D., Archbishop of Dublin, Chancellor of the Order of St. Patrick," who lived in the mid-1800's. His *Synonyms of the New Testament*, widely recognized as an excellent study of fine shades of meaning in Greek words, was quoted with the page number. All Archbishop Trench's titles don't impress us that much, but we leave it to our readers to judge whether he represents "a Southern, rural, temperance view" on Greek words!

Some wondered if using fermented wine in the Lord's Supper "would be a deterrent against improper use of it at other times." There's no more logic in that than in the 1967 federal commission idea that parents serving small amounts of intoxicants to children at mealtime would be a deterrent. It won't work at the Lord's table or the dinner table. Authorities warn that the smallest drink of an intoxicant can rekindle the passion for drink in a rehabilitated alcoholic or drunk. Paul said, "Such were some of you," at Corinth (I Cor. 6:11). Did the Lord then prepare a memorial that would require drinking that which might very well reset raging fires of passion in some weak and trembling soul? On the contrary, when the Lord first dedicated this Supper, he took the wine that had just been used in the Passover feast — the pure, fresh juice of the grape — "the fruit of the vine" (Matt. 26:29). The Jews had meticulously removed all leaven, leavening agents, and leavened products from their homes for the Passover feast by divine command. Intoxicating wines require the work of leavening agents — natural or artificial:

(Our readers may be interested in one of the most helpful works on this subject I've ever seen, just recently having found it myself; it is a reprint of an old work: *Bible Wines*, William Patton. Paperback, \$1.25, The Challenge Press, P.O. Box 5567, Little Rock, Ark. 72205.) 3536 Dickerson Rd. Nashville, Tenn.

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

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THE PROFITABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY

To those who "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," spiritual, physical, mental, emotional and material blessings are promised. Dr. S. I. Mc-Millenn has written a very interesting book based upon Exodus 15:26 where God called Israel to obedience and promised as a reward, "I will put none of these diseases upon them."

I'm not a Christian Scientist. I believe that disease and pain are real, and that the righteous suffer and die. But I also believe that there would be less illness and longer lives if people would live by the commandments of God. Also there would be more purity and spirituality in our lives if we would recognize sin and its consequences and cease trying to appear righteous while living with a guilty conscience.

Dr. Karl Menninger, psychiatrist and co-founder of the famed Topeka, Kansas clinic which bears his name, has written an article entitled "Whatever Became of SIN?"

He began by calling attention to a man who stood on a street corner in Chicago pointing to each pedestrian and uttering the single word "GUILTY!" One man turned to another and asked, "But how did HE know?" Dr. Menninger then said, "The solemn accuser on the Chicago street has had many predecessors. Many centuries have passed since the Hebrew seers preached the importance of a moral code — preached and warned and exhorted and died. Human beings have become more numerous, but scarcely more moral."

Dr. Menninger, along with many other psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists and physicians are now recognizing what Christians have known for a long time, namely, that much of the illness and anxiety of our time is caused by ignorance of sin or an effort to ignore it or lessen its effects by calling it by some high-sounding and more acceptable term. The doctor said:

"In all of the laments and reproaches made by our contemporary seers and prophets, one misses any mention of 'sin,' a word which used to be a veritable watchword of prophets. The disappearance of the word 'sin' involves a shift in the allocation of responsibility for evil. Its obsolescence may be a clue to fundamental changes in the moral philosophy of our civilization.

"The word 'sin' was once a proud word. It was once a

strong word, an ominous and serious word. It described a central point in every civilized human being's life plan and lifestyle. But the word went away. It has almost disappeared — the word, along with the notion. Why? Doesn't anyone sin anymore? Doesn't anyone believe in sin?

"I believe there is 'sin' which is expressed in ways which cannot be subsumed under verbal artifacts such as 'crime,' 'delinquency,' 'deviancy.' There is immorality; there is unethical behavior; there is wrongdoing. And there is usefulness in retaining the concept, and indeed the word, SIN. I have in mind behavior that violates the moral code or the individual conscience or both; behavior which pains or harms or destroys my neighbor — or me, myself.

"The wrongness of the sinful act lies not merely in its nonconformity (its departure from the accepted, appropriate way of behavior) but in an implicitly aggressive quality — a ruthlessness, a hurting, a breaking away from God and from the rest of humanity, a partial alienation, or act of rebellion."

Commenting further, Dr. Menninger said:

"We suspect — indeed we **know** — that there are still some old-fashioned homemade sins lying around which go unmarked. And for most of us, believers and non-believers, there is always that still small voice of our conscience. The forms of sin in the traditional list of seven were envy, anger, pride, sloth, avarice, gluttony, and lust. Curiously — to our thinking today — none of the lists included dishonesty, vindictiveness, cruelty, bigotry, or infidelity.

"If one wanted to find a germinal word to link all sins, perhaps **hate** would do it. In terms of action, however, the long-term consequences of hate are self-destruction. Thus, the word 'sin' does carry an implication of cost, of penalty, of answer ability. The wages of **some** sins are death, without doubt; and the wages of lesser sins, while less than death, are substantial, including reparation, restitution, and atonement."

One of the problems of our day in almost every human relationship, including Christianity, is the loss of individuality. One student said that the only time he got individual attention on the college campus was when he spindled his IBM card. People do things-good or bad — in crowds that they would not do individually. Often ambitious leaders with evil designs seize the advantages of mob psychology. Some people feel that by acting as a part of a group they lose individual identity, responsibility and accountability. Not so! Consider what the doctor said on this:

"As people have become more numerous we have ceased to be so completely individualistic and have joined together in many ways to do and to share many things, including responsibility for crime and sin.

"If a group is guilty of an act that would be a crime for an individual to do, just how much blame **should** the participant individuals take upon themselves personally? If four 'thugs' cooperate in a robbery or murder, all are usually accounted guilty and punished. But suppose 400 or 4,000 persons join in the crime?"

What then is the moral responsibility of the individual? If the group activity were a constructive one, each individual would certainly receive — at least claim — a certain amount of the benefit and also the credit. In the case of destructive acts, are only the officers guilty?

"If a dozen people are in a lifeboat and one of them discovers a leak near where he is sitting, is there any doubt as to his responsibility? Not for having **made** the hole, or for finding it, but for attempting to repair it! To ignore it or to keep silent about it is almost equivalent to having made it!

"Thus even in group situations and group actions, there is a degree of personal responsibility, either for doing or for not doing — or for declaring a position about it. The word 'sin' involves these considerations, and upon this I base the usefulness of a revival of the concept, if not the word, sin.

"My proposal is for the revival or re-assertion of personal responsibility in all human acts, good or bad. Not total responsibility, but not zero either. To revive the half-submerged idea of personal responsibility and to seek appropriate measures of reparation might turn the tide of our aggressions and of the moral struggle in which much of the world population is engaged.

"We will see our world dilemmas more and more as expressing **internal** personal moral problems instead of seeing them only as **external**, social, legal, or environmental complexities."

Dr. Menninger offered some sound and timely advice in the following statements:

"Buddha, Confucius, Lao-tze, Socrates, Zeno, and all the Hebrew prophets from Amos to Jesus taught that sin, hate, alienation, aggression — call it what you will — could be conquered by love. To transcend one's own self-centeredness is not a virtue; it is a saving necessity.

"The message is simple. It is that concern is the touchstone. Caring. Relinquishing the sin of indifference. This recognizes acedia as the Great Sin; the heart of all sin. Some call it selfishness, some call it alienation, some call it schizophrenia, some call it eccentricity. Some call it separation — another word not only for sin, but for mental illness, for crime, for non-functioning, for aggression, for alienation, for death. Some prefer one or the other, but all these words describe the same thing.

"Thus, as an operative term **sin** has this value: it identifies something to be eliminated or avoided.

"And what would be the good of that? someone asks. Do we need more breast-beaters? Shall we add depression to the already mentioned gloom and world uneasiness? Why not a 'no-fault' theology, equivalent to no-fault casualty insurance: no one to blame? Things happen, alas? The assumption that there is sin in it somewhere implies both a possibility and an obligation for intervention. Hence sin is the only hopeful view."

His concluding remarks were:

"Neither theologian nor prophet nor sociologist, I am a doctor, speaking the medical tongue with a psychiatric accent. For doctors, health is the ultimate

good, the ideal state of being. And mental healthsome of us believe — includes all the healths: physical, social, cultural, and moral (spiritual). To live, to love, to care, to enjoy, to build on the foundations of our predecessors, to revere the constant miracles of creation and endurance, of 'the starry skies above and the moral law within' — these are acts and attitudes which express our mental health.

"Yet, how is it, as Socrates wondered, that 'men know what is good, but do what is bad'?"

And the Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Rom. 3:23). "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (III John 2).

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CALVINISM EXAMINED #6

You will recall that when we began this series of lessons, we made the observation that the five points of Calvinism are: (1) Total Depravity, (2) Unconditional Election, (3) Limited Atonement, (4) Irresistible Grace, (5) Preserving of the Saints.

In our discussion of Calvinism, we have already covered the first four points. We now turn our attention to the final step. The idea of the doctrine is this. Since God has chosen before the foundation of the world who the elect will be, and since there is nothing one can do to resist being saved, then of course he is not going to allow them to be lost, hence the doctrine of eternal security.

The doctrine of the eternal security of the believer is almost as old as man himself. For you will recall that God told Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden that they were not to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But the devil, of course, was not willing to let these believers alone. He told them that in the day they ate thereof they would NOT surely die. Such is the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer today. God gives hundreds of warnings in the Bible to the believer about falling from grace, and yet Calvinists tell us that it is an impossibility for them to fall so as to be finally lost in hell. But, such is the same doctrine that the devil taught to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. God said to his people through the prophet Ezekiel "The soul that sinneth, it shall die . . ." but the devil says **SHALL NOT DIE** (Ezek. 18:20).

There are many, many passages that could be cited to refute the doctrine of the believer becoming an unbeliever. In John 3:16 we read, ". . . whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But this is a conditional statement by the Lord. A **believer** is under consideration. The question is, can a **believer become an unbeliever**. Those who hold to the doctrine of the security of the believer deny that a believer can become an unbeliever. They try to maintain this position even in the face of what the apostle Paul said in Heb. 3:12, "Take heed, brethren lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God."

Another passage that is used by those who believe in the eternal security for the believer is John 5:24. It reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemna-

tion but is passed from death unto live." Calvinists argue that the expression "shall not come into condemnation" means it is **impossible**. However, let us notice another passage where the words "shall not" are used, and see if that means impossible. In John 3:36 Jesus said, "... he that believeth not on the son of God **shall not** see life." Does that mean that it is impossible for that person to be saved? Someone may ask, "But what if a man decides to become a believer"? That is exactly the point I am trying to make. What if a man decides to become an unbeliever? Of course a **believer** will not come into condemnation. But what about one who lasts for a little while and then becomes an unbeliever — will he still be saved? The consequence of Calvinism is that he **will** be saved, even though he has become an unbeliever. So, we can see that the "shall not" does not mean impossibility in either passage.

A good example of one who is saved and then falls away is found in Luke 8:13. Jesus said, "They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." That is exactly my position. A person can become an unbeliever and then in time of temptation **fall away**.

Now let's note a few more passages which set forth the fact that a believer may so sin as to be lost. In 1 Tim. 4:1-2 we read, "But the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." How could one depart from the faith if he had never been in the faith? Again, in 2 Pet. 2:20-21 we read, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." So here are some people, according to the Apostle Peter, that had been saved (for they had escaped the pollutions of the world **through the knowledge** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ), and now they have turned back to that way of life from which they had escaped. Are they still saved? — Calvinists say they are.

In our next and final article, I will show further evidence from the scriptures that one may so apostatize from the Lord that he will eternally be lost.

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GROWING IN THE GRACES

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. . . ." (2 Pet. 1:5-11).

In these verses are seven principles that are often called, "the seven graces." The importance of them is seen in the fact that (1) if we abound in them we shall neither be barren (idle) nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ, (2) if we lack them in our lives we are blind and cannot see afar off, (3) if we do them we shall never fall, and (4) an entrance into heaven shall be richly supplied (vs. 8-11).

These graces do not come easily. They develop out of our faith (v. 5) by diligent effort. Sometimes they are presented as stairsteps — one leading to the other — until finally all of them are obtained. But observe that Peter said, "If *these things* be in you (v. 8) or "he that lacketh *these things* (v. 9) or "if ye do *these things* (v. 10). A Christian must grow in all of these virtues, simultaneously. Which one or ones may a child of God omit and still be acceptable to God? None of them!

The reason or cause for adding these things is stated in verses 3 and 4. Those verses point out that God's divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, and we are given exceeding great and precious promises that we might be partakers of the divine nature. "And beside this," verse 5 states, or "For this very cause," or "For this very reason," add to your faith these principles. Let's briefly look at each one of these and resolve to abound in them.

The Seven Graces

(1) *Virtue*. Heading the list is virtue. There is divided sentiment as to what Peter meant by the word in this passage. Webster gives several different definitions of the word. He states that "virtue" means "moral excellence," "manly strength or courage," and "chastity." Certainly a Christian is to be all three of these things. However, the apostle could not have meant all three when he used the word in verse 5. It is my persuasion that the word could be translated, "courage," and convey the intention of the inspired author. In this respect I concur with Barnes, MacKnight and some others.

A great deal of courage is necessary to be a Christian. In the face of trials and tribulations, courage is needed to remain steadfast in the faith. To stand up for the truth at the risk of being ostracized, boycotted and ridiculed, requires courage. For young people to say "no" to the pressures to conform to the worldly standards of their peers, takes courage. The words of Moses to Joshua, "Only be thou strong and very courageous," are very pertinent today.

(2) *Knowledge*. It is imperative that we grow in knowledge of the word of God. Peter, elsewhere in his epistles, exhorts Christians to gain knowledge. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pet. 2:2). As physical babies desire milk, in like manner may children of **God** (mature and immature) desire the milk of the word. No one knows all there is to know about the Bible. There is a constant need for study and meditation. In 2 Pet. 3:18, we read, "But grow in grace, and in knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." When a person quits studying, he stops growing.

Paul admonished the Colossians that they let the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom (Col. 3:16). Far too many let other things fill their hearts rather than the word of God. Multitudes of brethren are most conversant on politics, sports, the stock market and television programs, but are unable to carry on a discussion about the Bible. The reason is they have not taken the time to learn the Bible like they have these other matters.

Many homes of Christians have no books that would assist them in Bible study. Neither do they subscribe to religious journals, although they manage to buy the daily paper for about \$50.00 a year. Really, it boils down to what our interests are as to what we do. Many do not learn the Bible because they are not interested enough to put forth the effort. Peter says, "add knowledge," and we had better take the time to do it.

(3) *Temperance*. A more preferable rendition would be "self-control" rather than temperance. Temperance suggests "moderation in that which is good and abstinence from that which is evil." A Christian is to be moderate, but this is not the idea in the text under consideration. Peter is saying to have self-control; to control the will so as not to sin. There is no way that a Christian may be temperate in sin. Thayer says the meaning is "the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites." William Barclay states that the essence of the word is nothing more than "chastity."

Those who have control of themselves, who have developed inner-government, will not be seduced by lust and uncleanness. These persons have learned how to possess their vessels in sanctification and honor; not in the lust of concupiscence" (1 Thess. 4:4-5). Paul concludes the list of the fruit of the Spirit with "self-control" (Gal. 5:23).

William Hendriksen, commenting on Gal. 5:23, page 225 in his commentary, said, "The person who is blessed with this quality possesses 'the power to keep himself in check,' which is the meaning of the word that is used in the original. The previous mention of

immorality, impurity, and indecency, among the *vices* (verse 19), shows that it was very appropriate to list self-control as an opposing *virtue*. Of course, the reference is to other things besides sex. Those who truly exercise this virtue compel *every* thought to surrender itself in obedience to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5)."

(4) *Patience*. In his book, *Flesh and Spirit*, William Barclay quotes from some able men as to the meaning of patience. On pages 91-92 he writes, "Trench says that it describes 'a long holding out of the mind, before it gives room to action or to passion'. T. K. Abbott says that *makrothumia* is 'the self-restraint which does not hastily retaliate a wrong'. Plummer says that it is 'the forbearance which endures injuries and evil deeds without being provoked to anger or revenge'. Moffat describes it as 'the tenacity with which faith holds out.'" In short, we could say that patience is to stand up under all kinds of duress or the power to see things through.

Regardless of the circumstances or situation, whether it is unreasonable people or unfavorable events, the Christian with patience endures the difficulties, continuing to serve the Lord.

(5) *Godliness*. Some erroneously explain this word to mean, "godlikeness." Certainly, in some aspects, we are to be as much like God as humanly possible. The Bible teaches us to be perfect as the Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48), to be pure as God is pure (1 Jn. 3:3) and to be holy as God is holy (1 Pet. 1:16). But the word, "godliness," denotes "reverence or respect for God and the things of God." It is having a right attitude toward God.

R. L. Whiteside aptly stated, "If we revere God as we should, we will respect his word, his church, and his worship. Those who blaspheme the name of God, or speak lightly of any of God's commands, are ungodly. . . There is ungodliness in the church, and even in the pulpit. It manifests itself in many ways. Some men are so careless as to what the Bible says that they put themselves to no real trouble to find exactly what any given passage means. A godly man wants to know exactly what the will of God is. Some are so ungodly as to destroy the church to carry their own selfish ends" (Com. on Romans, p. 24). Our current problems in the church are the results of ungodly brethren — brethren who lack respect for the word of God. How we need godliness in our lives!

(6) *Brotherly kindness*. In the original language the literal meaning is "love of the brethren." It is the word, "Philadelphia." Thayer says it is "the love which Christians cherish for each other as 'brethren'." Paul wrote, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love" (Rom. 12:11). MacKnight commented on this Roman passage that "Christian charity must be warm and strong, like that which near relatives bear to one another."

Peter wrote that we "love one another with a pure heart fervently (1 Pet. 1:22). The word, "pure," denotes the sincerity and depth of our love while the word, "fervently," suggests the intensity of our love. How wonderful it would be if all of us had this kind of

love for each other. There would be no defamation of character, misrepresentation, envy and jealousy, pursuit of preeminence, etc. We would rejoice with them that rejoice and weep with them that weep, and esteem others better than ourselves. Hasten the day that more brotherly love will be shown!

(7) *Love*. Here the apostle exhorts us to extend our concern beyond our own brethren — to love all mankind. The word translated "love" is "agape." It is a love of devotion rather than emotion. W. E. Vine wrote, "Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward all men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered. Love seeks the welfare of all, Rom. 15:2, and works no ill to any, 13:8-10." Whatever we say or do, may it be prompted by love.

Our eternal security is contingent upon these seven graces. We can assure our going to heaven if we will flourish in them. Peter said, "if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." What kind of progress are you making?

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UNBORN CHILD – "LIFE FOR LIFE" ???

Glenn R. Burt

An article in the February, 1973 issue of Searching the Scriptures used Exodus 21:22-23 to argue that the "unborn child" does not have "life", because "God . . . did not demand 'life for life' for causing the death of the unborn, but did demand 'life for life' for causing the death of the mother wherein **both** deaths were the result of the same cause".

I do not know the gentleman who made this argument and have no bone to pick with him, however, I do believe he is misusing these verses and makes a false statement when he said God did not require "life for life" for causing the death of the unborn child. In his article the **Douay Version** was quoted on these verses. The writer made no comment on the use of this version. I don't know if he uses it all the time or if he used it just for this occasion, but I suggest that he and the readers of this paper look at several other translations, which I believe give more literal translation of the original language. Two other translations of these verses follow. Please read them carefully and consider the comments which follow. "If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished,

according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life," (KJV) "If men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart, and yet no harm follow; he shall be surely fined, according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if any harm follow, then thou shalt give life for life," (ASV) Note: (1) A woman with child is hurt, (2) her fruit (lit. "child") depart (lit. "to go out"), (3) and yet **NO MISCHIEF** (lit. "injury" or "harm") **FOLLOW** (No injury **PERIOD!** To the woman or the child? There is nothing in the context to limit the injury to the woman.), then (4) the guilty will be punished accordingly, but (5) **IF MISCHIEF** ("injury") **FOLLOW** (Injury to whom? To the woman or the child!), then (6) punishment shall be "life for life" ...

These verses teach that **God does disapprove** of the death of the unborn child and requires punishment — "life for life". In view of this, how in the name of reason can anyone conclude that God approves of the deliberate and premeditated killing of the unborn child? This, of course, is what most abortions are and that subject is what precipitated the aforementioned article.

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

AUSTIN PUTERBAUGH, 212 E. Oakhill, Ft. Walton Beach, Florida 32548. Having resigned effective the middle of June, I am ready to consider a move elsewhere, preferably in Florida though not limited to that. I enjoy training young men to take an active part in the church. Contact me at the above address or phone (904) 242-2441.

HERSCHEL E. PATTON, 4605 Dyshel Dr. S.W., Huntsville, Alabama 35805. The Jordan Park church in Huntsville begins 1974 with great prospects for good. All indebtedness on our property was liquidated in 73. We have a \$58,500 budget planned for 1974, 70% of which is committed to preacher support in various places; full support for two preachers, half to another, and partial support to seven others. A spirit of love, zeal and cooperation exists in the congregation. My new book "Revelation in Outline" which is a commentary, class workbook and sermon outline book (\$1) has been ordered by preachers throughout the United States and several churches are already using it for classes.

REAVIS PETTY, P.O. Box 676, Morehead City, North Carolina 28557. I will be leaving the work here in June, to work with the North Street church in Tampa, Florida. The church here will be looking for a gospel preacher at that time or as soon thereafter as possible. The brethren here have a nice little building, debt-free, and could furnish about half the needed support, and would be in position to help secure the rest. Anyone interested should write the church at the above address, or call Wayne Beasley at 726-4719.

MARIO BALSAMO, 115 Park St., Grinnell, Iowa 50112. On February 10-17 the Grinnell church conducted a gospel meeting with Roland Fritz of Hicksville, Ohio preaching. Morning and evening services were conducted with an average of 16 for the

morning classes and 27 for the evening services. We had visitors (21) each day of the meeting. Several home studies have resulted. Another meeting is planned in June with John Witt of Kansas City, Missouri.

EFRAIN PEREZ, Casilla 3052, Correo Central, Santiago, Chile. In January, 1974 Wayne Partain visited the work here, preached in a gospel meeting and we are happy to report that 7 were baptized in the River Maipo in Puente Alto. We now have six home Bible studies each week plus services at the church building two days each week. We have 12 people attending one of the home studies.

DANNY HOLTON, 110 Park Blvd., S.W., Winston Salem, North Carolina 27107. The Winston Salem church is happy to have a new meeting place. In August we purchased a dwelling and lot adjacent to the lot on South Main Street which we already owned. The brethren spent four months remodeling the dwelling and we began meeting there in January. The address is 2801 Woodleigh Street. We invite those traveling in this area to worship with us. We would also welcome any who are interested in moving here since we are small in number and the only church for about 60 miles which takes a scriptural stand on the institutional questions.

GILES PAINTER, Newton, North Carolina 28658. The church here is young and few in number. I have worked with it since 1969 but full-time only in 1973. In 1973 there were 30 baptized (25 of which came out of denominationalism) and 3 restored. The church has a mind to work and a new building to their asset. Catawba County is an industrial area, with over 5,000 jobs waiting, yes available. Now! Why not check this out. Students looking for summer work may be able to find it here. While you work, help the cause in this area. Can

I assist you further? Write me at P.O. Box 893, Newton, N.C. or call (704) 464-9114.

JAMES O. LOVELL, P.O. Box 10144, Port Elizabeth 6000, Rep. of South Africa. In January, Bill Reeves of Fredericktown, Ohio preached in a four day meeting here in route to a month of work in South America. Fifteen visitors attended. I have been invited by the Indian brethren in Durban to move there and work among them and have decided to do so. We will move during the children's school break in April. This is the first time a full-time worker has gone to labor among the Indian people of South Africa. The move to Durban will cost us \$500 and my gasoline expenses there will double. We will need a mimeograph machine as the Indian brethren have very little study helps. I need to raise an additional \$275 a month in support. We came to South Africa \$50 a month short of what we needed and since then have lost \$25 more.

JERRY F. BASSETT, P.O. Box 928, Bend, Oregon 97701. In 1969 my family and I moved to Bend to work with six members and a total attendance of fifteen, in establishing a sound church. In the time since, we have suffered many trials and much discouragement while nonetheless progressing toward gratifying success. With patience and steadfastness and the encouragement of brethren in other places who have faithfully supported me, some of them from the beginning of this work, we have kept on. Two families still with us have moved here from other places. We have baptized 26. In the past six months 13 members from a liberal church in Bend have turned from digression to take their stand with us for the truth. Our membership now stands at 58 with a Sunday morning attendance averaging 80. We have had to withdraw from four of our number. A good piece of land has been bought and we intend to begin a building as soon as financing can be found. One of the brethren is a builder and by doing much of the work ourselves, we hope to reduce the cost. It has been our goal from the beginning to become self-supporting and able to help preach the truth in the many other cities of Eastern Oregon which do not have a sound church. We still have a way to go, but we are getting there. Above all, we give thanks to God for the power of His word, and for the progress we have enjoyed by it.

JIM SASSER, Rt. 3, Box 3, Rogersville, Alabama 35652. Leslie Diestelkamp and I have just returned (Feb. 15) from a very fruitful six weeks of labor in Nigeria, West Africa. We feel that much was accomplished during this short period of time. We thank God for strength, health and safety. We spent 43 full days in Nigeria. I preached 63 times and Brother Diestelkamp spoke 70 times. We preached in 90 different congregations, plus the times that we preached outside on the streets of the towns and villages. We were able to reach people from over 200 congregations. Our largest audience numbered 972 souls. We travelled 4000 miles by car over some very rough roads and over 14,000 miles by air going and coming. I changed lodging places, packing and unpacking my bags, 12 times. Brother D. moved 15 times. We worked in 7 of the 12 states of Nigeria. Plus all of this, we had many private discussions with preachers and others.

We were tired at the end of our journey, but very happy that we were able to accomplish so much in such a short time. Our emphasis on this trip was to strengthen the weak and encourage the strong among the brethren. We believe this was accomplished. We have received many worthy requests from preachers needing support. If any congregation or individual desires to help in this needy field, please contact me or Brother Diestelkamp and we will furnish you with names and addresses. We are thankful to God for brethren who care and give.

PREACHERS NEEDED

BILL HARRISON, 1704 Mosley Dr., Hopkinsville, Kentucky 42240. The church at Skyline Drive in Hopkinsville needs a full-time

preacher. Hopkinsville has a population of about 21,000 and is near Fort Campbell military base. We have 20 to 25 in attendance. We will be able to help raise the needed support. If interested contact us at the address above.

SANFORD, NORTH CAROLINA. The Sanford church needs a preacher. Billy R. Nave will be leaving here July 1, 1974 after two years labor with us. Anyone interested please contact Eugene Edwards (919) 944-1409 (evenings) or Billy Nave (919) 776-1502 anytime.

DEBATE IN NASHVILLE

A public debate has been scheduled for April 15, 16, 18 and 19 in Nashville, Tennessee. The disputants will be Howard See of the Eastland church of Christ and P. D. Hardin of the Church of the Firstborn. Propositions cover the baptismal formula, Holy Spirit baptism and spiritual gifts. The first two nights will be conducted at the Church of the Firstborn, 208 Gatewood Avenue, Nashville. The last two nights will be at the Eastland Church of Christ, 700 Gallatin Road, Nashville.

INFLATION SQUEEZING NATIVE PREACHERS

WALLACE H. LITTLE, P.O. Box 1306, Marshall, Texas 75670. For a number of months, my correspondence with Filipino preachers indicates the inflationary squeeze on these men is becoming progressively worse. Necessities, particularly food, are increasing in cost much more rapidly than even here in the USA. Many of these men, once fully supported, now find their income inadequate and must be supplemented by secular work. This severely diminishes their ability to spread the gospel of Christ. I know from extended personal experience most of these men possess very little compared to what the poorest of us have. Now even this is being badly eroded. I cannot speak positively on nations other than the Philippines, but reason would tell us the plight of preachers in these other countries is about the same, for the same economic forces affect them in the same way they do our Filipino brethren. I want to urge all who are having part in support of men in the Philippines and in other parts of the world to consider the possibility of increasing their support by a factor of approximately 20%. This is the approximate inflationary rate on food there, and this is the basic difficulty needing immediate attention by those supporting preachers there. If you are not involved in assisting worthy men outside the USA and have the ability to do so, would you not contact us? I will put you in touch with many worthy and capable men who badly need financial assistance to enable them to preach in a nation which is very white unto harvest.

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