

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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THE GRACE OF GOD

The Bible teaching of God's grace is a much misunderstood subject. This has always been so with the denominational world and now is true with a good many in the body of Christ.

Simply defined grace is God's unmerited favor to man. God bestows his grace but man must receive the grace of God. Denominationalists have the idea man does nothing to receive the grace of God, that is, God's grace is received unconditionally. Some even teach that men are saved by grace alone. Some in the church are so close to this position that it is hard to read from their pen that which does not have the denominational smell of grace. Thus, there is the need to consider what the Bible has to say.

GRACE PROVIDES A SACRIFICE

God's grace provides a sacrifice for man in Jesus Christ. Man could not save himself. "The world by wisdom knew not God" (I Cor. 1:21). Jesus Christ "by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9). The death or blood of animals could not atone for sins (Heb. 9:11-12; 10:4). Jesus Christ reveals God's grace. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, ... full of grace and truth. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:14,17).

GRACE PROVIDES A REVELATION

God's grace has provided man with a revelation, and since man has not merited it, the revelation is of God's grace. Paul calls it the "gospel of his grace" and "the

word of his grace" (Acts 20:24, 32). To ignore the revelation of God's grace is to ignore God's grace.

The gospel revelation is often called God's grace. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (Gal. 1:6). Paul said he was called of God "by his grace" (Gal. 1:15). "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. 2:8). Paul and Barnabas "gave testimony unto the word of his grace" (Acts 14:3). The brethren in Achaia had "believed through grace" (Acts 18:17). Paul told Roman Christians they stood in the grace of God (Rom. 5:2) and said Corinth stood in the gospel (I Cor. 15:1). Men have access into grace (Rom. 5:2). Men are under grace, not the law of Moses (Rom. 6:14-15). Grace reigns through righteousness (Rom. 5:21) which is made known through the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17).

GRACE TEACHES

Paul said, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12). The grace that teaches is the grace that is revealed, and that which is revealed is the gospel.

The gospel is the revelation of God's grace. All that one knows about God's grace is revealed in the gospel. What the gospel has not revealed is not a part of the grace of God. Since the gospel does not reveal instrumental music in the worship of the New Testament Church, one can not say that God's grace will take care of those who use it. Since the New Testament revelation of grace does not include human denominations one can not claim God's grace for those in them or for himself in fellowshiping sectarianism.

GRACE MAY BE SEEN

In Acts 11:23 when Barnabas came to Antioch, the record says, "And had seen the grace of God." What he saw was the results of God's grace — men saved by God's grace in obedience to the gospel and added to the church by the Lord.

GRACE TO BE RECEIVED

While God's grace has appeared to all men, it must

be received. Men can reject God's grace. Paul told Corinth not to receive the "grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. 6:1).

God calls men to gospel obedience by his grace (Gal. 1:15; 2 Tim. 1:9). Men are called to obedience by the gospel (2 Th. 2:14). This call is out of darkness into light (1 Pet. 2:9).

In order to be called by grace one must believe the gospel. We are saved by grace but it is "through faith" (Eph. 2:8). Our access into God's grace is "by faith" (Rom. 5:2). We are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1). Our faith comes from hearing the "word of God" (Rom. 10:17). If one will not believe the gospel revelation of grace, he can not be called by God's grace.

To receive God's grace, faith alone is not sufficient. One must work righteousness. Grace reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:21). Peter said, "God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). The kind of work performed is not human works of which one can boast (Eph. 2:9; Titus 3:5) but rather the work assigned by God (John 6:28-29). When one does that work commanded of God, he is still an "unprofitable servant" (Lk. 17:10) and his salvation is still by God's grace, but that grace must be accepted upon the conditions set forth in the "gospel of the grace of God."

There are the works of the law of Moses referred to in Rom. 4:4-6 and these works men can not be saved by (Rom. 2:28; Gal. 2:16). Paul says men can not be justified by the works of the law. He does not contradict James when he says men are justified by works of faith (Jas. 2:14-26). Denominational minded people have never seen that Paul and James do not contradict each other since Paul is considering the works of the law of Moses and James is considering the works of faith.

SAVED BY GRACE

Paul says of the Ephesians, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). How were the Ephesians saved by grace?

(1) The Ephesians "**heard** the word of truth, the gospel of your (their) salvation" (Eph. 1:13).

(2) After hearing, Paul said, "ye **believed**" (Eph. 1:13).

(3) Their **repentance** is evidenced in burning their books of curious art (Acts 19:19).

(4) We learn they "**confessed**" (Acts 19:18).

(5) The Ephesians were "**baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5).

Paul affirms they were "**saved**" (Eph. 2:5, 8). When they heard the truth of the gospel, believed it, repented of sins, confessed their faith, and were baptized into Christ, Paul says they were "saved by grace."

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The July special - *An Unchanging Kingdom In A Changing World* - is having a good advance order. A number of congregations have ordered bundles to use in their personal evangelism efforts. All articles in this special are written by the regular contributors to the paper and each article is aimed at the non-Christian. How about YOU? Could you use a bundle of these to help teach your neighbor?

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Editorial

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PERSONAL EVANGELISM (3) Its effectiveness

Public proclamation of the gospel is effective in the saving of souls. To deny this is to deny a method used by the Lord and his apostles, and to defy common experience even in our day. The message of truth faithfully delivered with power, persuasiveness and love will always do good. Yet, while we recognize that fact, we must also consider the great power in the person to person confrontation where one individual leads another into an understanding of the will of God and urges him to obey it. This too has great effectiveness.

We think too much, perhaps, in terms of converting "the masses" without considering that masses are made up of single units. Multiplied thousands in Jerusalem obeyed the gospel while the truth was being taught publicly and from house to house. Yet its saving work was being confined to that city. It took a persecution to scatter the masses to other places. Once more, man's calamity became God's opportunity, for the scattered forces did not go underground to nurse their wounds. Rather, they went "everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Wherever a Christian goes, there must go his faith and his determination to spread the knowledge of the word of God.

Many congregations had their beginning because of some dedicated Christian who moved to a place where no New Testament church was located and who, rather than finding something "nearly" like it, set out to teach his family, friends and neighbors the truth. My brother, or sister, if you are having to move to an area where no faithful church of the Lord exists, then YOU may become the means of doing what has not already been done there.

Harris J. Dark, long-time mathematics professor as well as gospel preacher, made this observation on the effectiveness of personal evangelism:

"Suppose I relate a story to just one other person, then two of us know it. Let each of us tell another and that makes four. If each of the four tells another, obviously eight will have heard. Do you know how many times that would have to be repeated in order for every person on earth to hear the story? Only thirty times, following the first! If I tell another person, each of us another, and so on, after the message has been communicated thirty-one times it will have been heard by 2,147,483,648.

If we allow an entire month for one person to relate the story to one other person, it can cover the earth in thirty-one months. Can we do that well with our modern methods and devices? To be generous let us say that it will take an entire year for each one to teach another. At that rate we can include all the people on earth in thirty-one years. How long will it take at the rate we are going now? If we assume that there are already as many as 500,000 Christians in the world we can reduce the number thirty-one to twelve, hence the required time to twelve years! Remember that in accomplishing this, one half of the earth's population would not have to teach any one, another fourth only one person each, and no one would need to teach more than twelve others!" (Ancient Faith in Conflict, Philippians - the Church and Evangelism) In contrast to that, think of a congregation of 300 members which reports that ten have been baptized for the year. That means it took thirty members for every one converted. If the truth were known, most of these would be the result of the work of the preacher and maybe two or three others. Certainly it is to be admitted that all hearing the gospel will not obey it. We are only responsible before God for the effort. But how many cannot even summon the courage to hand a tract containing a good gospel sermon to a friend or relative. Members will walk right past a tract rack well supplied with valuable items without ever a thought of finding just the right one to help meet the need of an acquaintance they know to be lost. Ask members to seek out people to take a Bible correspondence course and see how many you get? If it succeeds at all, will it not be due to the zealous efforts of only a few? And perish the thought of trying to set up a Bible study in MY home to try to teach my neighbors the gospel!

Several years ago a young woman taught a neighbor girl the gospel. On Sunday morning where I was preaching, when the invitation was offered, two people stepped out and came forward. I knew the neighbor girl needed to become a Christian but the thought crossed my mind, "I wonder what Betty has done, why is she coming forward with her?" After a brief exchange with the girl I turned to Betty and asked "Why have you come forward?" "Oh", she said, "my friend was a little bashful and I told her I would come with her." That's what I call "bringing in the sheaves." There is no joy to compare with having a direct part in leading a lost soul to the Lord.

Personal soul winning has its rewards here, but the greatest rewards are in the world to come, both for the teacher and the taught.

"If we work upon marble, it will perish; if we work upon brass, time will efface it; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds, if we imbue them with principles, with the just fear of God and love of our fellow man, we engrave on those

tablets something that will brighten to all eternity." (Daniel Webster)

I close this series of articles by quoting something I clipped out of a bulletin published several years ago by A. O. Raney when he was preaching in Tucumcari, New Mexico. These words from his eloquent pen troubled me when I read them and have haunted me since, when I know I have not done my best in trying to reach the lost. I fervently hope they will trouble my readers as much and to the end that all of us will remove all alibis and excuses and truly seek the lost. "IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN — Of all sad words spake by men . . . the saddest are 'It might have been.'

If I had only known, my friend, how short your time of life would be, how I would have hastened to speak to you of God, and of Christ, and of the Gospel, and of your soul-need. I walked before you in the shining garments of Christianity: a soul saved, a spirit redeemed, a life purified. You wandered in sin: lost, bewildered, doomed. Yet in you there was still so much good, so much grace, so much of the likeness of the God who made us both that I loved you deeply. I know that you were alien to God only because you did not know how to find him. You were in sin only because you did not know how to attain righteousness. You were lost only because you did not know the Savior. I knew. I knew because someone who loved ME told me these things. I knew, and I meant to tell you, because I loved you. But I waited too long.

If I had only spoken the words that were in my heart, I might have led you to Christ. But there seemed to be plenty of time. You were so alive, so vital, so strong. Surely the words could wait awhile. Surely I could safely wait for that illusory 'more convenient season', which somehow always seems to be tomorrow and never today. So I waited, even though I was aware, not only of your need, but of your hunger as well. I waited — while your eyes begged for the Bread of Life, with eloquence your lips were embarrassed to frame. I waited, intending, and while I waited, your life slipped away and you were dead — without Christ. I still see you in the darkness of my sleepless nights. I see you as a ragged beggar beside the highway of life; supplicating hands uplifted to those rich in God's blessings, asking an alms that, if given would have made the giver no poorer, but would have made the poor immeasurably richer. As I hurry by, I say to myself, 'tomorrow I must take time to give that poor man something!' But, alas, tomorrow he is not there. If only I had not waited, what good I might have done! IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN! If I had spoken some word of love, kindness, or encouragement; some gentle exhortation to constancy in faith-

fulness to God, — if I had reached out the steadying hand of help, I might have kept my brother from straying. I behold you there, a prodigal in a far off country of sin, and my heart is sad. I see you yonder, in Temples of human idolatry, and my spirit is crushed. I see you, who once walked with me in the footprints of Jesus, running eagerly after foolish little men vainly building their Towers of Babel of the finite stones of human presumption. I see, and my soul weeps in sorrow. What in the world could have happened, my brother, to drive YOU to such things? 'We took sweet counsel together and walked unto the house of God in company!' (Psa. 55:14). Who hath seduced you, my brother? Then, slowly but with certainty, understanding dawns. Nothing DROVE you away and no one SEDUCED you. You just drifted away. Little by little without even noticing it till you were lost in the darkness of man's devices. You drifted. I stood by and let you drift. And I KNEW the truth that could firm you, steady you, save you. I knew, but I waited — embarrassed to speak out while you were near enough to hear. Now I speak. Now I cry aloud, but now you will no longer hear. Now, after it is too late, I cry out to my lost friend, to my lost brother. Alone and unheard, I speak the words which might have made their lives so different, so good, so worthwhile. I speak and stormy winds of discord whip the words away into nothingness. I cry out, and even the echoes of my words die in the distances which separate us. O, my guilty soul! O, my grieving heart! How can I know either peace or rest? The restless nightmare returns again and again to haunt me. And I wonder, I fearfully wonder, if someone in Hell will raise up accusing eyes and cry out my name in blame for their torments. Surely not you, my friend! Surely not you, my brother! Yet it may be. It may even be that I, so sure of my salvation, may in justice have to stand with them in the flames and give everlasting tongue to the sad lament of the damned: 'IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN!'

How can I face God's judgment without fear? How can I explain to God the wasted opportunities, and fruitless hours, which I cannot even explain to myself? I cannot wait longer! I must tell my friend while he yet lives. I must tell my brother while he yet wavers!"

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THE RESTORATION OF WHAT?

Earl Kimbrough

It is not uncommon to hear men who promote departures from the New Testament pattern for the church talk lovingly about "restoring New Testament Christianity." They cling to the word "restoration" as if they were the world's foremost advocates of "the ancient order of things." Some time ago we heard one of our far out brethren lecture a gaggle of preachers on how we ought to "restore" what he believes to be the long-neglected "love and justice" of the first century Christians, but at the same time he thought we ought to give less attention to "doctrine." He apparently thinks we have restored too much of the latter. He went on to explain that, in his view, restoring "love and justice" would involve the church more in concern for social justice among the oppressed people of the nation and move the church to do more (or did he say all?) of the welfare work now being done by the federal government.

This is very likely the same kind of murky thinking T. B. Burnett had in mind nearly a century ago when he wrote: "Every now and then some progressive scribe inadvertently uses the phrase, 'our plea for the restoration of primitive Christianity.' If they go on 'restoring' fiddles and organs and boards and societies and pastors and programs and conventions and lectureships and holy days, and forty other things that have no place in Christianity, the apostles will not know the thing when they get it restored" (**Gospel Advocate**, about 1895).

Some today who claim to be "restoring" New Testament Christianity are building and promoting child care societies, homes for unwed mothers, recreation halls, summer camps, sponsoring elders, and "forty other things that have no place in Christianity," as the work of the church. Some have suggested that a better term for these brethren would be "borrowing." Instead of restoring New Testament Christianity they are borrowing denominational claptrap. They have borrowed these things from the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Salvation Army. Some are even borrowing from the latter-day Pentecostals. Such men are turning the restoration into denominationalism. When they get done, if they ever do, what they have left of New Testament Christianity could be put in a teacup with enough room left for a cup of tea.

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"SALVATION" WORDS: "JUSTIFY" DIKAIOS "JUSTIFY," IN THE GREEK WORLD

In the Greek New Testament, one of the words used to denote human redemption is the very *dikaioo*, "I justify, make righteous." This verb is widely used in non-Biblical literature. New Testament uses of the word do not necessarily parallel those of Greek literature in general, but basic denotations of the word are found both in Biblical and in non-Biblical writings.

ETYMOLOGY AND COGNATES

The common root of the "justify" words seems to be **dike**, which is derived from a term that would suggest "way," "manner," "direction," "custom." It is interesting to note that the goddess Dike stood beside Zeus as the representative of the principle of Law.

The various "justify" words in the New Testament are all cognates of the "righteous" words; that is, from the same root we derive "justify," "make just," "make righteous," "justification," "righteousness," etc.

THE IDEA OF LAW

At the very foundation of Greek life from as nearly as the eighth century BC was the idea of Law, in religious, political, and ethical relationships. A **dikaios** man was one who conformed to established legal norms. He would also be one who fulfilled his obligations both to men and to the gods. **Dikaios** became a leading term in lists of ethical precepts.

TO MAKE RIGHTEOUS

The Greek writer Pindar uses the verb **dikaioo**, "I justify," in the sense of "sovereign validation." (See Greek uses of the term in **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament**, vol. 2, pp. 211ff.) Plato says that the *nomos* (law) makes a **dikaios** (righteous) man.

In classical literature **dikaioo** passes from the legal sphere to a more general area where it denotes "to regard as fair or right." It is doubtful that the term is used in this sense in the New Testament.

The legal sense of the term is seen in a personal way in passages where the meaning is "to secure justice for someone." Similarly, the term may be used negatively in the sense of "condemn, punish someone."

In the New Testament it is almost always possible to detect the legal connotation of "just," "righteous," etc.

ANSWERS

for our hope

Send Bible questions to:

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QUESTION: I enjoy learning from your articles in SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. I have two questions which have bothered me for a while and I would like your thoughts on:

1. Matt. 12:1ff, especially verse 4, says that David did that which it was unlawful for him to do. It is taught by some here that Jesus 1) **approved** this unlawful deed 2) thereby admitted that he (Jesus) also had done an **unlawful** deed 3) was Lord of the Sabbath, therefore he set aside the Sabbath law at this point, so did not sin 4) approved our setting aside any N.T. law if something **more important** is at stake. The proof that this must be so is 1) that when we are on our way to worship according to N. T. command and we see an accident and someone's life is in danger, we should help the need and ignore the command and 2) if we are taking a sick person to the hospital, we should ignore the speed limit (God's command is to obey) and obey the more important need. — H.K.E. (Ed. Note: Two more questions were submitted by our querist — one a P.S. — both of which will be answered later. — M.E.P.) ANSWER: The text under study reads as follows:

"At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priest? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day" (Matt. 12:1-8).

Before attempting to answer and comment on the above questions and observations, some very basic and fundamental principles need due consideration. To these we first give our attention.

Since the word of God is truth (Jno. 17:17) and truth never contradicts itself, the word of God is **harmonious**. One rule in the word of God can never be set at variance with any other rule in the word of God. Every rule and regulation of the Almighty must

necessarily, in all instances, so mesh one with the other as to produce perfect harmony at all times (1 Cor. 14:33).

General rules have exceptions. Some things take precedence over others. This is axiomatic. The rules of God are no exception. There are times and circumstances under which general rules must yield to higher law. When in our text (v. 7) Jesus said, "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless," he was reproving the Pharisees for their violation of this fundamental principle. They should have known that the traditional rules which they were trying to enforce (not of God in the first place, but simply their own additions to the law) were against a higher law of God — the law of mercy — in harmony with which the Sabbath was established in the first place: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mk. 2:27). Hence, their rules were in error.

While our Lord did not argue this point in answering the Pharisees, he did state the truth about it (Matt. 12:7; Mk. 2:27). He answered the Pharisees from their own point of view showing that their rules (had they been of God) were subservient to a higher law. Thereby he justified his disciples and condemned them. Furthermore, in verse five he gave an example, which even the Pharisees approved, that involved action on the part of priests that could be justified only on the grounds of general laws being subservient to higher law. A further study of our Lord's use of the law of "mercy" (Matt. 9:13) and the original law (Hos. 6:6) from which he quoted, corroborates the above position.

Now we turn to the questions of our querist and answer them in the order submitted. We shall also point out some things concerning the application of this fundamental principle.

Yes, our text implies approval on the part of our Lord of David's act (1 Sam. 21:1-6), which under normal circumstances would have been unlawful. This approval was made on the basis of the fundamental principle set forth above.

No, Jesus did not admit that his disciples "had done an unlawful deed." The truth of the matter is that the disciples were not in violation of the Sabbath. The law allowed them to eat of the grain as they passed through the fields: "When thou comest into thy neighbor's standing grain, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle into thy neighbor's standing grain" (Deut. 23:25). The Pharisees defined the Sabbath law so as to make the action of the disciples servile work, which was forbidden in the law (Ex. 20:10). They defined the law in this instance, and in many others, far beyond its original intent. Such definitions were really additions, and were called by Jesus "traditions" which make void the word of God (Mk. 7:13). Hence, the disciples only appeared to be in violation of the Sabbath because of the Pharisees' perverted views of it.

No, the expression "Lord of the Sabbath" does not imply that Jesus could set aside the Sabbath, disregard it, and do with it as he pleased. It does mean

that as one who **instituted** the Sabbath, he **knew** what was involved in keeping it. As Lord of the Sabbath, he upheld it, and condemned every violation of it. He knew no sin (1 Pet. 2:22). Only under circumstances demanding respect for higher law could the general laws of the Sabbath be set aside, e.g., the case of the priest (Matt. 12:5). Jesus never violated the Sabbath. He kept it perfectly.

Concerning the statement that Jesus "approved our setting aside any N. T. law if something **more important** is at stake," I think perhaps it can be stated more clearly and more in harmony with the word of God by saying that Jesus does approve our setting aside any general law to be applied under normal circumstances, when circumstances become such as to demand respect for a higher law. The examples given by our querist illustrate this point.

A word of caution is in order. We ought never to set aside God's regulations Under normal circumstances in the name of benevolence or mercy. God does have regulations under which such are to be administered. These regulations can be set aside only under circumstances that are exceptional, urgent, demanding, and when the imperative necessities of life are at stake. We need to keep our equilibrium and never enforce one to the neglect of the other. God's primary objective is the welfare of man both for time and eternity. His infinite wisdom and grace has made every provision for the realization of this objective. We, however, must be careful to respect his provisions — not improvise some of our own.

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JESUS, JOE, AND MRS. BERGMEIER

Dick Blackford

What is moral is "what you feel good after" and what is immoral is "what you feel bad after" seems to be the attitude of the situationist. Joseph Fletcher, chief advocate of situationism, says nothing is right or wrong — it just depends on the situation. He and his cohorts say there are no rules that must always govern under every circumstance. It is right to tell "white" lies and engage in "white" thefts, fornication, killing, etc. Rules may be cast aside when love can be better served — necessity nullifies law. In spite of the situationist's rule against rules, he has a rule. His rule is that we are to **"love persons and use things."** One should always do the loving thing.

Supporters of this view are not reluctant to try to justify their position by scripture. Probably the strongest "scriptural" arguments that are made are the cases of Jesus' disciples eating corn on the sabbath and David's eating the showbread (Mt. 12:1f).

Situationists make a similar mistake as that of the Pharisees — only worse. There is irony in Jesus' question ("Have ye not read?"). The Pharisees took pride in their knowledge but had not read (understood) one of scripture's most common incidents. Jesus did not break the law nor endorse violations of it, for: 1) Sin is transgression of the law (1 Jn. 3:4); 2) Jesus committed no sins (Heb. 4:15).

When the disciples plucked corn they did not break the Law. They only violated the Pharisees' **misconception** of the Law. Obviously, the Pharisees "had not read" (and neither had Mr. Fletcher) of the humane provisions made in the Law for wayfarers and sojourners: "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn" (Deut. 23:25). "Eat thy fill, but pocket none," an old English proverb, is undoubtedly based on this passage. Jesus' disciples did not practice situationism, but were engaged in carrying out Christ's will, who was "Lord of the sabbath" (Lord: "one having authority over; institutor; governor."). No man on earth today is "Lord" over circumstances where morality is involved — not even Joe Fletcher. We must submit to the **one** Lord (Eph. 4:5).

In David's case Jesus specifically says that what he did "was not lawful" (Mt. 12:4). Eating the showbread violated a condition of the Law (Lev. 24:9). David lied to obtain it (1 Sam. 21:1-6). Jesus did not approve either act. To so infer is to make Jesus approve a violation of the Law and thus approve sin. Jesus' message to the Pharisees was this: "Your position is contradictory and inconsistent. You accuse my followers for **lawfully** plucking corn on the sabbath but you approve David who did what was **unlawful**. You condemn the innocent and acquit the guilty." Under no situation did Jesus approve lawlessness. Consequently, Joe Fletcher is left standing in a worse

predicament than the Pharisees. He believes **both** Jesus and David violated the law, but that it was "O.K." because of the circumstances. In reality, under this system it is nearly impossible to be wrong. Fletcher admits that his views are almost devoid of the concepts of "guilt, sin, repentance, and forgiveness." The redemptive work of Christ at Calvary is nullified. These views are greatly influencing our society **and** many are unaware that it is occurring.

Another consequence of situationism would be that Adolf Hitler was not wrong for murdering millions of Jews. By being able to give more jobs to the Germans (his beloved countrymen) and greatly improving the economy, who could doubt that he did the "loving thing?" At least many Germans thought so. Each man becomes his own god under this doctrine.

The "new morality" can be summed up with the phrase, "the end justifies the means." Paul was accused of this once. He said the man who says "Let us do evil that good may come" (the end justifies the means) has a just damnation (Rom. 3:8).

It may be that I would feel driven to do the wrong thing in a given circumstance. I would be no less guilty. But Fletcher would come out "smelling like a rose" by justifying himself. John Montgomery said it well: "We plead with Professor Fletcher ... to cease the irresponsible practice of sticking his thumb into sinful human situations, pulling out the plum of moral self-vindication, and saying, 'What a good boy am I!'"

Situationists find great sport in citing some condition that appears to be a dilemma and demanding that one of two equally wrong and unpleasant alternatives be chosen. They overlook the always possible third alternative of doing right. They forget the faithfulness of God who promises a way of escape in time of temptation (1 Cor. 10:13). The situationist's "way of escape" is to go ahead and commit the "lesser" sin and tell yourself it was "O.K." Some escape.

H. A. Dobbs gives an illustration: "When my son was 4 years old he asked: 'Daddy, would you rather jump off a 44 story building without any clothes on or be shot in the head by an automatic pistol?' 'Thanks a lot', I answered, 'but for my part I'd rather eat chocolate pie.'" Sometimes the situationist has to be dealt with accordingly. Even when I have to make a tough decision in moral matters, I must remember that I am not the standard. There is one thing God does not promise — that the right choice will be the easiest one to make.

In his book, *Situation Ethics*, Fletcher captures your emotions with a sad story about Mrs. Bergmeier who was separated from her family at the Battle of the Bulge and imprisoned in the Ukraine. During those months she learned that her husband (also a POW) had been released from another camp and had located all the children in Berlin. There were two reasons why the Russians would release a prisoner: the need for extensive medical treatment or pregnancy. She persuaded a German guard to impregnate her and was returned to Germany as a liability. The family was re-knit and they all loved her and the child for it.

Fletcher justifies this case of adultery because of the "good" that came. But in so doing he violates his rule! One becomes so emotionally involved with the Bergmeier family that the guard is forgotten. Mrs. Bergmeier treated the guard as a "thing" and not as a person! Without regard for his family or him she deliberately used a fellow human being! No one can really claim to love another when he works against that person's eternal welfare.

Fletcher forgets that an all wise God might have His own way of freeing a woman from a prison camp — if she doesn't lose her "cool," her patience, and her concern for fellow humans (1 Cor. 10:13).

RECOMMENDED READING:

SITUATION ETHICS: TRUE OR FALSE? (Debate between Dr. Joseph Fletcher and Dr. John Warwick Montgomery); Dimension Books (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc.)

FLETCHER-BANOWSKY DEBATE (Debate between Dr. Joseph Fletcher and Dr. William S. Banowsky); (Nashville: 20th Century Christian); July 1969

CHRISTIANITY AND HEDONISM — A CLASH OF PHILOSOPHIES (Debate between Anson Mount, religion editor of Playboy Magazine, and William S. Banowsky, Vice President of Pepperdine University); (Austin, Texas: Christian Chronicle)

THE NEW MORALITY: A CHRISTIAN SOLUTION, William S. Banowsky; (Austin, Texas: R. B. Sweet Co.)

TEENAGE CHRISTIAN, Larry Swaim (Atlanta: Teenage Christian Publishers); Vol. 12, No. 8 **THE ETHICAL STANDARD IN THE BIBLE**, Harold Hazelp, **The Spiritual Sword** (Memphis: Getwell Church Of Christ, 1511 Getwell Rd.) Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 45, 46

SITUATION ETHICS, H. A. Dobbs, **Anchor** (Dallas: Gospel Teachers Pub. Co); Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 2-9

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COMBATING EVOLUTION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Jesse Flowers

Many Christians for a long time, have felt helpless to do anything about the one-sided, prejudicial presentation of the origin of life from the evolutionary view in our public schools. It could well be that the time has **now** come, when in many parts of the nation, something can be done to rectify this injustice. Creationists were heartened in 1972 by the ruling of the California State Board of Education which said, the creationist view of the origin of life must be presented alongside the evolutionary one. Since then we have been encouraged by efforts in the states of Florida, Washington, Colorado, Michigan and Kentucky to have both views presented when life sciences are taught.

In the last two months I have been involved in a successful effort to have the creationist view presented in the Jefferson County school system. Our school system has 95,000 students which is the largest in the state of Kentucky, and one of the largest in the nation. It is hoped that the following account of such an effort might be of encouragement and of practical help in similar endeavors you might desire to initiate in your local school system.

It was about the first of December when a lady called concerning a book her son, in elementary school, had been assigned for research. This book taught that man had evolved from the lower primates (monkeys, etc.). She wanted to know if I could do something to stop the theory of evolution from being taught as scientific fact. Her "pastor" had told her nothing could be done, and frankly I doubted seriously if anything could be accomplished, but promised to try. Fortunately she knew who to contact, and gave me the name of the Associate Superintendent, who also is head of all curriculum in the county. She thought he would be receptive to us. This proved to be good advice, and let me say here that in most cases it is best to go directly to the one at the top.

Before calling the administrator, I called two other preachers in the area, Ken Green and John Clark, for advice on how to approach him. Their advice proved to be very effective. It was:

1. Do not demand that evolution cease being taught, nor ask for the destruction of the materials involved.

2. But, request that the creationist view have equal time in the classroom.

When the administrator asked what I proposed should be done, I offered the above suggestions, to which he was very receptive. His next question was "where can quality material on the creationist view point be obtained?" The material had to meet these criteria:

1. It must be scientifically accurate.

2. It must **not** teach any particular "doctrine".

Fortunately such high quality classroom material is available. The material covers the first thru the eighth

grades, (at this time I had only approached him about the elementary schools). Those within the administration and on the school board were delighted with the material. You may order the material from:

Institute for Creation Research
2716 Madison Avenue
San Diego, California 92116

Sample copies may be available.

The results have been beyond my expectations (Eph. 3:20). All teachers will now be required to use the creationist material anytime they teach in any form the theory of evolution. Also, the administrator has asked me to now secure, and present to him, material suitable for the high schools. May this and all similar efforts redound to the glory of our God, and exalt in the hearts of our youth the creator of the universe.

Louisville, Ky. 40214

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"NO PRIVATE INTERPRETATION"

Luther W. Martin

Unfortunately, the manner in which II Peter 1:20 is rendered by a majority of translators, the Roman Catholic teaching that the Bible is not to be "privately interpreted" by the nominal church member, appears to have Biblical support. Some of the very best English versions of the New Testament fail to recognize the actual subject being stressed by Inspiration in this verse.

II PETER 1:20

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." (King James Version).

"But know this first of all, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation." (New American Standard Version).

In each of these translations, the translators failed to note that the subject under consideration is the source from which the scripture comes. The very next verse substantiates this: "for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." So the actual truth being emphasized is that the scripture CAME from the will of God, rather than from the personal and private mind of the human penmen.

Now, let's note some of the few translations that do recognize the point being taught:

LIVING ORACLES -1882 EDITION

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private impulse."

H.T. ANDERSON TRANSLATION - 1866

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture came from private interpretation,"

McCLOSKEY'S NEW TESTAMENT - [CIRCA - 1860]

"Understanding this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is made by private interpretation." (McCloskey's has a foot note that flatly denies that the Scriptures should be expounded by anyone's private judgment.)

R. F. WEYMOUTH'S MODERN SPEECH TRANSLATION

"But, above all, remember that no prophecy in scripture will be found to have come from the prophet's own prompting; . . ."

FERRAR FENTONS TRANSLATION [CIRCA 18851

"recognizing, in the first place, that no prophecy of Scripture ever emanated from personal effort."

ROBERT D. WEEKES' THE NEW DISPENSATION -1897

"understanding this first of all, that no prophecy of the Writing came of one's own interpreting,..."

KENNETH S. WUEST'S TRANSLATION -1961

"knowing this first, that every prophecy of scripture does not originate from any private explanation (held by the writer),. . ."

GEORGE SWANN'S TRANSLATION -1947

"Know this first, that no prophecy of scripture comes from one's own unloosing it."

NEW WORLD TRANSLATION 1950

"For you know this first, that no prophecy of Scripture springs from any private release."

RHEIMS VERSION - 1914

"Understanding this first, that no prophecy of scripture is made by private interpretation." (The footnote denies that the scriptures are to be taught by anyone's private judgment.)

YOUNG'S LITERAL TRANSLATION - 1862 "this first knowing, that no prophecy of the Writing doth come of private exposition, . . ."

CHALLONER RHEIMS REVISION - 1941

"This, then, you must understand first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation"

ALFORD'S REVISED NEW TESTAMENT - 1869

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture cometh of private interpretation."

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION 1973

"Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation."

CONCLUSION

From the various words used by the above translators; i.e., "came about", "cometh", "is made", "doth come", "springs from", "originate", "emanated", or "impulse" . . . I suggest that we have made our point. Peter was dealing with the matter of the source of Scripture (where it came from), and not with man's use of it on earth.

May I illustrate? When we stoutly affirm that "God is" . . . we could just as well state it . . . "God exists". Now then, in the King James Version, of II Peter 1:20 . . . which is copied by so many other translators, when it reads . . . "no prophecy . . . is of any private interpretation" . . . if we substitute the word "exists" for the word "is" . . . then note the change of meaning: "no prophecy . . . exists of any private interpretation". This would stress the thought that God's Word could not exist, had it not come from the Holy Spirit, speaking through the human writers.

In any event, it is just such unfortunate renderings as this, that sometimes seem to support false doctrine. It is well for us to become aware of such.

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

JAMES N. GRUSHON, 622 Elm St. No. 6, West Bend, Wisconsin 53095. At the beginning of March, 1974, I began work with the church in West Bend. The congregation consists of 20 members with anywhere from 35-40 in attendance on Sunday morning. Within the last month and a half there have been 3 baptisms. The potential of growth is very good. I am now receiving \$375 a month support. This is not enough to sustain life. There has been effort made to find support with very little success. If anyone is able to help, HELP!

ROBERT WAYNE LA COSTE, Route 3, Box 144, Cooper, Texas 75432. After laboring three years with the brethren here in Cooper, I am moving to work with the church in Refugio, Texas. While in Cooper there have been 75 restored and 20 baptized. The church has grown numerically as well as spiritually. To God we give the glory. I recommend the Cooper church to any preacher of truth. You may contact the elders c/o W. B. Gunter.

A. O. SCHNABEL, 130 N.E. 160th Ave., Portland, Oregon 97230. It has been my pleasure to watch the 160th Avenue church in Portland grow spiritually and physically. During the eight years I have worked with them we have developed a fine educational program and have had a part in a daily radio "talk" broadcast for the last six years. The church has appointed fine elders and is providing full financial support for preaching. This is the only self-supporting church in Portland. Late this summer I plan to begin working with the Seminole church in Tampa, Florida. All correspondence after May, including orders for my book, **Has God Spoken?**, should be sent to me in care of Seminole Church of Christ, Rome Ave. & Wishart Blvd., Tampa, Florida 33603. At the time of this writing the church here in Portland has not obtained a replacement for me. Anyone interested who feels he is adequately qualified to work with them in their programs is invited to contact the elders.

DONALD R. GIVENS, 2710 21st Ave., S., Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. One college student was baptized here recently. Being from denominational background, he commented upon first attending services that he "never knew there was a church like this." We are glad to report that Larry Boswell is interested in moving up here to work WITH me in the gospel. There is plenty of work, home Bible studies, correspondence courses, Civic Centre Bible discussions, small churches needing help, etc. to keep several preachers very busy. Brother Boswell must raise full support to come to western Canada where he is so badly needed. He attended Florida College for three years and has done some preaching. Can you help on his moving expenses or monthly support? If so, contact him directly at: 2020 Kayewood, Denton, Texas 76201 or phone (817) 387-6051. He needs to settle this soon as he needs to get his Canadian Immigration papers in order.

TERRY PARTAIN, P.O. Box 511, Frostproof, Florida 33843. I have resigned from working with the church in Frostproof effective July 1 and will be available for a new work. I have worked with the church here three years. Three have been baptized. Attendance has fluctuated. Contributions have increased from an average of \$50-70 a week to \$150-180 a week.

CLARENCE BECKETT, 121 Custer Road, Newark, Ohio 43055. A new congregation has begun meeting in Newark, Ohio at 136 South 29th Street in the 100F Hall. We started with four families and 10

members and average about 20 at each service. Services on Sundays are at 9:30, 10:30 and 6 and on Tuesdays at 7:30. For further information call (614) 522-5413 or 345-7079.

MRS. SHIRLEY STRICKLIN, 3625 West Central, Missoula, Montana 59801. In July my family will be moving to Missoula, Montana as my husband's work requires it. We would like to get in contact with faithful Christians in that area who would be interested in forming a congregation completely committed to the authority of the scriptures. Please contact us at the above address or phone 549-7297.

TO AUSTRALIA

LESLIE DIESTELKAMP. On February 19, four days after returning from a preaching trip to Nigeria, I received an enthusiastic request from the 77th Street church in Birmingham, Alabama, asking that I consider going to Australia for an indefinite period of work. Consequently, the Lord willing, my son, Roy, now of Chester, Virginia, and I shall both go this summer. I plan to go by way of the Philippines for two weeks of work, arriving in Australia about mid-August. Our work there is to be of an itinerant nature, traveling much among many congregations over widely scattered areas. In fact, we were selected for this very work because both of us are single, thus enabling us to travel a great deal with a minimum of difficulty and cost. We do not intend to be together a great deal, but to split up for greater usefulness, though we shall plan to be together part of the time as occasion requires and permits. The 77th Street church is providing all of our support and travel funds. Most of the churches with which we shall work in Australia are very small, and often isolated by great distances from other faithful people. Temporarily either of us may be addressed after midsummer here, c/o Max Burgin, Lot 43, Ferny Creek, Vic. 3786, Australia.

DEBATES

Walton Weaver of Pine Bluff, Arkansas met **Irvin Barnes** of Harrison, Arkansas in debate May 13-17 at Mountain Home, Arkansas. The discussion concerned the scripturality of Bible classes, women teachers in some of these classes and the number of containers in the Lord's Supper. Brother Weaver defended Bible classes, women teachers in some classes and a plurality of containers for the fruit of the vine. We regret that this announcement reached us too late for publication prior to the debate.

Cecil Willis and **Jesse Jenkins** will meet in debate in the Houston, Texas area September 23, 24, 26, 27 at a place to be announced later. The debate concerns collective actions of Christians in teaching the Bible in college Bible departments and publishing companies. This is a live issue and getting livelier in some places. Both of these men are able and this bids fair to be an excellent and profitable study.

PREACHERS NEEDED

McROBERTS, KENTUCKY. The church at McRoberts is looking for an older brother to replace William H. Sowder who is moving in June to work with the church at Clintwood, Virginia. The church can furnish a house with utilities and can provide most of the support though some outside support is needed. McRoberts is situated in the heart of the Appalachian coal fields of southeastern Kentucky. Average attendance is about 55. If interested please

contact Manuel Hampton, Box 32, McRoberts, Ky. 41835 or phone 1606) 832-2795.

SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA. The Woodland church in Sumter desires a full-time preacher Tom Swilley presently labors with the church until a full-time man is secured. Partial support is available plus moving expenses. Presently there are 30-40 meeting. If interested please contact Tom Swilley at (803) 798-0758 or write the church at 3370 Broad St. Ext., Sumter, South Carolina 29150.

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA. The Lower Richland congregation is seeking a gospel preacher to work with them after Gary White leaves in June. Most of the support will need to come from other sources. If interested contact James Wilsford, 2523 Pleasant Ridge Drive, Columbia, SC or call (803) 776-6381.

PALMETTO, FLORIDA. Since Daniel L. Tam is leaving the work here to move to Cincinnati, Ohio, the church in Palmetto is looking for another evangelist to work there. Full support is supplied with a house and partial utilities. Those interested may write the church at 420 9th Ave., W. Palmetto, Florida 33561 or call Verl Fielding (813) 722-6889, or Don Galloway at either 747-5422 or 746-3121.

MACON, GEORGIA. In spite of many discouragements brought on by false teachers, the Bloomfield church in Macon is still holding up the banner of truth. They are meeting temporarily in a meeting room at Howard Johnson's Motel at the intersection of I-475 and Highway 80. Services on Sundays are at 10, 11 and 6:30 and at 8 on Wednesdays. Brethren traveling through that area are invited to stop and worship. Macon is a city of 150,000 people with good job opportunities in a pleasant climate. Any preacher desiring to move where a man is badly needed and who will have the loyal support of brethren who have been through the fire and have come out stronger and more determined than ever to uphold the truth, would do well to consider the work in Macon. Outside support would have to be secured for the present. A faithful man in life and doctrine is

needed. Interested brethren may contact Redmon R. Gainey, 2521 Locksley Dr., Macon, Georgia 31206 or phone (912) 788-5016.

ASHLAND, OHIO. The church in Ashland needs a full-time preacher. There are 20 members. The church is able to supply \$75 a week support with the rest having to come from other places. The church is at peace and has its own building. A good personal worker is needed. Persons interested should write the church at P.O. Box 647, Ashland, Ohio 44805 or call Wilbur Bland at (419) 325-2467.

JERRY CHANDLER, 2311 Pontiac Dr., Tallahassee, Florida 32301. A new congregation has begun here called the Capital City Church of Christ. We are presently meeting at 4042 Apalachee Parkway (U.S. 27) three miles east of the Capital. This is the second conservative church in Tallahassee. Permanent property is being sought. Let us know of friends or relatives who live in our area, specifically the eastern side of Tallahassee. All the men are sharing the responsibilities according to their capabilities.

JAMES P. MILLER. 1111 Hickory Lane, Cocoa, Florida 32922. On April 1, 1974 I entered the Shands Teaching Hospital at the University of Florida, Gainesville. As many of you know by this time, surgery was performed and a fatty tumor was successfully removed on Wednesday, April 10. I am very grateful to the Lord we serve and to brethren over the land who prayed as the surgeon worked.

On Tuesday following the surgery, I was afforded the opportunity to speak to all the doctors in the neurology department. This was indeed a rare and wonderful occasion. How wonderful it is to be a child of God as you fight for your life. I have made a remarkable recovery. The doctors sent me home to Cocoa without any medication and the prognosis is for a complete and 100 per cent recovery with better health than I have known for the last several years.

To my faithful wife and to hundreds of brethren who prayed, who phoned long distance, who came to be near to aid, or who wrote of your concern, I can only say thanks and to express an even stronger faith than ever in our heavenly Father who does all things well.

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<p>Fayetteville, Ark. OLD WIRE ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST 2480 Old Wire Road No. LORD'S DAY</p> <p>Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 10:50 a.m. Evening Worship 6:30 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Preacher: Louis J. Sharp Phone: 442-7486 or 442-9195</p>	<p>Jacksonville, Arkansas MAIN STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST 212 E. Main St. 72076 LORD'S DAY</p> <p>Bible Study 9:45 a.m. Morning Worship 10:45 a.m. Evening Worship 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Study 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Little Rock, Ark. ARCH STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST 1506 Arch Street Schedule of Services LORD'S DAY</p> <p>Bible Study 9:45 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Evening 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Evangelist: Eugene Britnell Phone: 225-4745</p>	<p>Gardena, California SOUTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST 1901 West 166th Street LORD'S DAY</p> <p>Bible Study 9:45 a.m. Morning Worship 10:30 a.m. Evening Worship 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Evangelist: Robert S. Swain Phone 329-1489 or 323-5221</p>	<p>Lodi, Calif. LODI CHURCH OF CHRIST Senior Citizen Bldg. 113 No. School Street LORD'S DAY</p> <p>Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Evening Worship 6:30 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Evangelist: Geo. C. Garrison Phone: 368-8191 Lodi, Calif.</p>