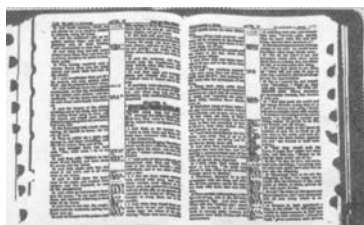


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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•

VOLUME XVI

APRIL, 1975

NUMBER 4

SIN - CONVICTING SERMONS

by Donald R. Givens

My greatest desire is to go to heaven. Your greatest desire should be the same. But, one shall never strive to please God and inherit eternal life until he realizes he is lost in sin.

Conviction of sin must **precede** obedience. Obedience precedes salvation. One of the things most needed today is the sin-convicting sermon. We do not need sermons which entertain. We do not need sermons that tell pretty little stories. We do not need sermons which provoke constant little snickers and giggles. What we need is sermons which convict of sin, and point to the Lamb of God who can wash away our sins.

Some brethren are so afraid of "hurting someone's feelings" that they never get around to exposing sin which damns one's soul. The devil has led us to believe that if we expose sin people will quit attending our services; so we lecture on economics, sociology, politics, cute little moral stories, or nice family episodes. Did all people gladly listen to Jesus? Read John 6:66 and compare Acts 22:22-24. Was Jesus overly concerned about offending people? Look to Matt. 15:12-14 for the answer.

The alien sinner needs to see himself as defiled in sin, polluted with iniquity, and helping the devil in his efforts to destroy the kingdom of God. The gospel message will convict one of wickedness and point out the wonderful cleansing found through the blood of Jesus.

In the first century, preachers convicted their audiences of sin. First, we see Peter in his first gospel sermon plainly saying: "Ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay," yes, they had murdered the very Son of God (Acts 2:22). They were stunned! That hit them hard (verse 37)! Peter boldly made the accusation. Those who were guilty KNEW he was referring to them! Peter did not "beat around the bush." If Peter had never had the courage to make the accusation of sin . . . none would have been convicted and therefore none could have been saved.

Stephen was another evangelist who preached sin-

convicting sermons. He was addressing an audience of considerable size when he said: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51). Was that good psychology? Was that bad manners? Was that too harsh? You be the judge.

Stephen did not soft-soap, but in a straightforward manner accused them of gross evil. Will you accuse Stephen of a lack of love? For his boldness, Stephen lost his life . . . but he saved his soul. Is it possible that preachers today who refuse to convict people of sin with plain straightforward book, chapter, and verse, are saving their lives, but losing their souls?

The apostle Paul is another excellent example of a preacher who preached sin-convicting sermons. When he went to Athens, the intellectual center of that day, he accused them of ignorance (Acts 17:23)! Now Paul, was that the right approach? Paul, don't you know you made them mad? I fear that many of our modern preachers would not dare make such bold accusations of sin and ignorance before the outstanding intellectual leaders of our centers of learning today.

No, it is not popular to accuse people of sin and prove it to them, yet there can be no victory over sin without such proof and conviction. A man who does not realize he is lost, will not see any need for rescue. NO person is interested in what he must do to be saved, until he is convicted of sin and realizes he is lost.

Friend, the devil has a program in this world. Yes, Satan intends to rob every boy of his honor and spiritual usefulness as soon as he becomes responsible for his actions. Satan intends to rob every girl of her purity and chastity as soon as she crosses the threshold of responsibility. And he plans to lead every person to waste his mental and spiritual powers in sin and shame, working against God to destroy the church of the Lord.

Shall we preach and teach against the devil's program? or shall we pretend it doesn't exist? Whose side are you on? Your life is giving the answer.

2710 21st Ave. S.
Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

I MARVEL Galatians 1:6

James P. Miller
1111 Hickory Lane
Cocoa, Fla. 32922



TRIBUTE TO FRANK PUCKETT

There will be a thousand men who will take pen in hand and write a tribute to Franklin T. Puckett. This is as it should be for the Lord had no greater preacher. Born among the hills of his native Arkansas he had a way of influencing many churches. Brother Jack Hobby who worked with this congregation for many years on Merritt Island, Florida came under his influence as a boy and was encouraged to make a preacher.

In 1955 I was in the very prime of life and had a debate with Morris Butler Book of the Christian Church on mechanical music. Frank Puckett moderated for me in that debate. It was held in the Howard Junior High School Auditorium in Orlando, Florida. The debate was to be published and the charts were pinned to the curtain that was raised and lowered with a rope. In the course of the discussion, Book got his chair too close to the curtain and jokingly remarked that Brother Miller was about to hit him in the head. Everyone laughed and I thought that was the end of the matter, but Brother Puckett would not have it so. As moderator he said the book would be read a hundred years from that time and unless the matter was made clear it would appear that Brother Miller was running Brother Book trying to hit him on the head.

That was the kind of man Frank Puckett was. He wanted all things right. In his study and in his preaching he wanted the full meaning of every verse he used fully explained to the people. He was a great man and a great preacher.

In the last years of his life he had gone back to Florence, Alabama to work with the College View Church. This was the second time he had lived in Florence for he had worked with the Poplar Street congregation in the forty's. Recognizing his great Bible knowledge, the College View Church hired another preacher and let Brother Puckett go where he could do the most good. He had been in meetings for 41 consecutive days when he was stricken. He departed this life as the result of a heart attack and other complications that included a mysterious infection that caused his temperature to reach 107 degrees. One thing can be said of Frank Puckett, he wanted to be right.

Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

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THE CLAIMS OF ANOTHER FALSE PROPHET

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2 Peter 2:1-2).

The world has had many self-proclaimed prophets. These have established religious movements upon their false claims and deceived multitudes of the untaught. Mormonism would never have been born without the pretensions of Joseph Smith who claimed to be a prophet of God and who is so regarded by Mormons today. It took the claims of Mrs. Ellen G. White to get Adventism off the ground. Christian Science rests upon the prophetic claims of Mrs. Mary Baker Glover Paterson Eddy. Jehovah's Witnesses look to the claims of Pastor Russell and Judge Rutherford. It is unique that regardless of how far-fetched and absurd the pronouncements of these self-styled prophets and prophetesses, there are multitudes ready and willing to follow their errors.

Now comes Herbert W. Armstrong with the same claim. He is the founder of the Radio Church of God, now known as the Worldwide Church of God. For many years he preached on a nationwide broadcast and advocated Anglo-Israelism, Sabbath keeping, soul sleeping and a host of errors. In more recent times his son, Garner Ted Armstrong, has been the radio voice of "The World Tomorrow." I have heard it in many different states at practically all hours of the day or night. The PLAIN TRUTH magazine, together with these broadcasts purports to explain to the world the news behind the headlines. Every national or international emergency was detailed in Bible prophecy, to hear them tell it. But the boldest claim we have seen from them yet came in the January, 1975 issue of PLAIN TRUTH in an editorial written by Herbert W. Armstrong entitled "Just What Is the Work?"

He explains that just as John the Baptist came before Christ to prepare the way for his first coming, even so, the Lord sent Herbert W. Armstrong to prepare for the second coming. But, let him tell you in his own words: "More than 41 years ago the living

Christ called and chose me as his instrument in **reviving** and carrying out his Great Commission in this END time." "The prophet Malachi prophesied that God would send a human messenger to prepare the way before Christ's coming to earth. But this prophecy describes TWO appearances of Christ on earth - the second of which, more than 1900 years after his FIRST coming, is now imminent!" "Before the end of the first century 'the Work' had stopped. The true gospel of the kingdom of God was thereafter taught secretly, but not proclaimed to the world for 18 1/2 centuries." "All this refers to Christ's second coming **in our** time! So when the prophet foretold the human messenger, preparing the way before Christ's coming, he referred to John the Baptist (see Mark 1:1-3) only typically as a forerunner or type of **one to prepare the way before Christ's second coming!**" . . . "And the way is **INDEED even now being** prepared before Christ's return to rule." "That, co-workers and brethren, is what the living Christ is doing right now through me, through Garner Ted, and through His co-workers and church which stand loyally behind us in this tremendous age-end commission!" "It's the most important Work given any human beings in the past 1900 years. And **nobody else** is doing it! The full, awesome responsibility of it is on OUR shoulders, whom God has **SPECIALLY** called now!" "As the original apostles were sent out to proclaim Christ's gospel in A.D. 31, I was ordained and sent to proclaim the same gospel in A.D. 1931." . . . "It was through me that, in August, 1933, Christ raised up the parent church of this present 'Philadelphia era' (Rev. 3:7-13) in Eugene, Oregon, U.S.A.; and on January 7, 1934, the gospel of the kingdom started going out over radio; on February 1, 1934, the PLAIN TRUTH began publication. 'The Work' was once again, after 18 1/2 centuries, **UNDER WAY!**" "Right now the living Christ is about to return to earth." "He called me as his instrument to announce all that in advance! He raised up my son Garner Ted to help me and to take over the chief executive administration of 'the Work,' now grown big and worldwide." "He called many others, to be trained in Ambassador College, for important phases of this most important work on earth!" "He called each of you to stand staunchly behind me and Garner Ted, as human leaders, with earnest and fervent PRAYERS. With such tithes and offerings as he has made possible. With such inspiration as you can give."

Well, there you have it. Herbert W. Armstrong is to the second coming of Christ what John the Baptist was to the first coming! He claims to have been called specially of God, claims this calling for his son, Garner Ted, and wouldn't you know that he called everybody else to stand behind them not just with prayers, but by all means, with tithes and offerings! Such humility leaves me speechless.

Brethren over the country are having to meet the errors of these men. In private studies, questions

must be answered and confusion lifted because of the false teaching of these self-appointed prophets. There have even been some members of the church carried away with this error. How shall it be met? I suggest that these statements be held before people to let them see the broad claims being made. Then, let us proceed as we have with Mormons, Adventists and others who rely on claims of latter-day revelation. We must show that "the faith" has been "once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3) and is therefore final. Through the knowledge of Christ, God has given unto us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3). Everything necessary to prepare us for the second coming of Christ is in that "faith once delivered." When we prove that revelation is complete, adequately equipping us to every good work, then we have in the same stroke disproved the claims of modern day prophets, including Herbert W. Armstrong. "Beware of false prophets" and their "damnable heresies."

Prove the Resurrection
and You Have
Proved It All



Royce Chandler
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Danville, KY 40422

The resurrection of Jesus is the central item in the whole Word of God: it was promised in Eden, prefigured in Abraham, typified in Israel, sung about in the Psalms, foretold by the prophets, predicted by the Lord, wrought by the Father, announced by angels, witnessed by disciples, proclaimed by the apostles, obeyed by believers, and confessed by His enemies. Such is the chief fact upon which the whole religion of Christ either stands or falls.

With most of the world looking heavenward through skeptics' glasses, true saints must peer more keenly into the Word, to firm up and to secure their faith. Since it is the Bible that tells of His resurrection, that same Book must be able to show the proof of its claim.

For some, the mere fact that the Bible says this event occurred is proof enough. For those, however, who place less confidence in the Scriptures, we must show such proofs as will cause them to believe both in the resurrection and in the Bible which teaches it. If one can be convinced that Jesus was raised from the dead by the divine power of God, he must also admit all that that same divine power reveals in that same Word. To prove the resurrection is to prove the truth and the absolute certainty of Christ's religion and of the Gospel revealing that religion.

This was precisely Paul's plan of attack as, by inspiration, he pleaded his case against all the false systems of his day. In Athens, in Corinth—in every place he preached—the all-conquering proof of the gospel was Jesus' resurrection from the dead. He summed it up to the Corinthians this way: "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which ye are saved. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;" (I Cor. 15:1-4). The resurrection, with its meaning and application, was the beginning, the middle and the end of Paul's inspired gospel.

We can prove that specific prophecies were uttered hundreds of years before their exact fulfillment; we also can show, in great detail, the unity and harmony of the Bible, though it was written by forty different men, who were spread over the whole eastern hemisphere and separated from

July Special –
The Family Under Fire

The homes of Christians today are being severely tested. In a world of Women's Lib, legal abortion, birth control pills, rising divorce rates, mounting crime, generation gaps, the New Morality and general disrespect for authority, the family is indeed under fire. We want to do something to help shore up the foundations and put hope into the hearts of the faithful. Our July special issue is designed to do that. These articles by faithful men will help:

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each other by hundreds of years. Still other great evidences of the Bible's trustworthiness can be demonstrated, but of what importance are they if Jesus did not arise from His grave? Do we have hope apart from a slain and resurrected Lord?

Seeing the capital importance of this proposition, then, let us look at some evidences which substantiate it as an historical fact.

There are a number of mighty arguments which we could examine. Several pages could be written about the change that came over the Lord's disciples, how that at His arrest they fled as cowards but shortly afterwards, stood as martyrs; the only rational cause for such a change was the certainty of the resurrection. We might also argue the evidence from the empty tomb, demonstrating that the Bible's explanation is the only logical one. The Spirit's descending on Pentecost would make a good argument, as would the great number of credible witnesses who personally saw the resurrected Lord (I Cor. 15:5-7). Another possibility is the testimony of the monuments established upon and perpetuated by that miracle; e.g., the church, the Bible, the Lord's day, the Lord's supper, and baptism. But as the scope of this article must be greatly limited, let me suggest that the strongest evidence is the complete lack of evidence—that is, the lack of evidence to the contrary.

No one has ever had such cause to disprove the resurrection as did those Jews who demanded His death and were then accused, on Pentecost, of being murderers. Jesus and His disciples had many bitter enemies who would have been savagely disposed to demonstrate, if possible, any error, falsehood or deception by the apostles; if their claims were false or inconclusive, the rabid hatred of His opponents would have published to the world. When was the evidence ever more available than in those very days, and who would ever have searched more thoroughly to uncover it than those who were accused of His murder? But where is their evidence, their arguments, their debates, their writings—where is the dead body of this Jesus! All they could muster for a defense was the incredible tale of the soldiers, who weakly attempted to say that the disciples stole the body while the guards slept. If they were asleep, how did they know a disciple from an enemy? As this issue itself could fill many pages, let it be now sufficient to say that the soldiers prove themselves to be false and unreliable witnesses. All logic proves their explanation to be a lie.

If the apostles' claim was false, how do we account for their being allowed to run around loose, continuing to proclaim their "false" doctrine which, evidently, was "turning the world upside down" (Acts 17:6)? When these same mobs had so eagerly killed Jesus, why did they back off from His apostles? When their entire religious system was being set aside (fulfilled —Mt. 5:17) and thousands were turning to this "new" religion, are we to suppose that these enemies, knowing Jesus and His

religion to be frauds, decided to try a more understanding approach?

Why did not the Sanhedrin arrest the apostles and make them confess their deception? Why did they not confront them with the soldiers? Why did they not force these disciples to make a full confession of what had become of Jesus' body and of all their other fraudulent acts? If there really had been any suspicion that the disciples disposed of or still possessed the dead body, those rulers would have used every possible means to recover it and forever quash the claims of a resurrection.

Campbell made a strong point when he, in his debate with Owen, said:

We have the testimony of Myriads of Jews and Greeks who lived in those times and places, and had access to the evidences, who were as hostile to Christians and Christianity, as any skeptics now can be; and yet, so overpowering was the evidence, that from enemies they became friends. Their conversion was a proof of the facts. Look at the precautions taken by the Lord's enemies: a great stone was rolled across the door of the tomb; this stone was sealed by the chief priests and Pharisees; a Roman guard, as large as they wanted, camped in front of the grave to prevent a theft. But, as Home argues:

Notwithstanding these precautions, however, early on the morning of the first day of the week following, the body was missing, and neither the priests nor the Pharisees could ever produce it. Yet none of the watch deserted their post . . . nor was any force used against the soldiers, nor any arts of persuasion employed, to induce them to take it away or to permit any other person to remove it. (Introduction To Scriptures, Vol. I, pp. 108-9).

We ask then, "What happened to His body?" His enemies could offer no proof of their position; in fact, many of His murderers were so convinced by the apostles' evidence that, on the day of Pentecost, they unhesitatingly admitted their own error. Thus, one of the strongest proofs imaginable was displayed to the world—the fact that about three thousand Jews, many of whom were, up to that day, vicious enemies of Jesus, confessed their faith in a resurrected Son of God. By Acts 4, the number of the men who believed "came to be about five thousand." If those very Jews who reviled, cursed and killed Jesus were forced by the evidence to admit His resurrection, who today can seriously deny it? That they could not deny it then is an irrefutable argument that no man can deny it today. Judas Iscariot is another witness, one who might well head the list of all infidel, pagan and Jewish witnesses. He had lived with Jesus for three years and was intimately acquainted with Him. If there ever had been any talk of deception, any insincere or unspiritual designs plotted to delude the people.

Judas would certainly have known it. Had he been able to accuse Jesus of any sort of wrong doing or deception, he obviously had the disposition and the opportunity to do it. But his last few breaths were spent confessing that he had betrayed innocent blood.

How can we conclude without calling the apostle Paul to testify? Here was the most zealous and unrelenting persecutor of the gospel, who was transformed into its foremost proponent. What power was able to change this fierce zealot of Judaism, a well educated, intelligent scholar and logician, into a martyr for Christ? His metamorphosis can be explained only by the appearance of the resurrected Christ, recorded in Acts 9 and 22.

All the available evidence from those days and events supports the claim that Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God. The overwhelming admission of His enemies, coupled with the total absence of contradictory evidence, should convince every honest heart of the truth of this divine fact. Upon it rests the hope of all mankind, and God has graciously flooded us with the testimony of its truth. We cannot accept this foundation stone without accepting all that is built upon it, for the same divine power that wrought the resurrection also wrought the perfect, complete revelation of God's will for all men—the Bible. The two stand or fall together.

SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

J. G. O'Neal

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Bessemer, Alabama 35020



CALVINISM—No. 4

Having seen in the previous article in this series that Calvinism teaches that men are "born in sin" or are totally depraved by inheritance, the next step of this system is to get man saved. Since man is so bad ("born in sin") it will take a miracle, we are told, to make him want to be converted.

Notice again the teaching that men are "born in sin." "We believe the Scriptures teach that man . . . fell . . . in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners not by constraint but choice, being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil" (Hiscox Baptist Manual, page 60). "Dearly Beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin" (Methodist-Episcopal Discipline, 1892, page 233). "Dearly Beloved forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin" (Methodist Discipline, 1904, page 291).

Direct Operation of Holy Spirit

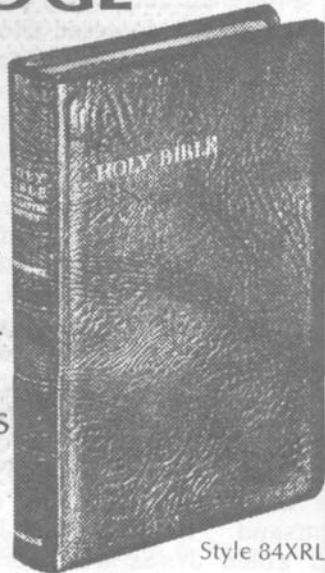
"Man having brought himself under the curse of the law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him that they may be saved; and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life his Holy Spirit to make them willing and able to believe" (Article 7). "Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation" (Article 9). "This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, . . . the creature being wholly passive therein, being dead in sins and trespasses; until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call and to embrace the grace offered . . ." (Article 10). "The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts" (Article 14). "Although the gospel be the only outward means of revealing Christ and saving grace, and is, as such, abundantly sufficient thereunto, yet—that men who are dead in trespasses may be born again, quickened or regenerated — there is moreover necessary an effectual, insuperable work of the Holy Spirit upon the whole soul for the producing in them a new spiritual life, without which no other means will effect their conversion unto God" (The Philadelphia

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Confession of Faith) (Article 20). "The new birth, is that change wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, . . . the change is instantaneous, effected solely by the power of God, in a manner incomprehensible to reason . . . and without it salvation is impossible" (New Hampshire Confession of Faith, Article 6) (The Hiscox Guide For Baptist Churches, pages 165-197).

Action Apart From Word

The Calvinistic concept of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of a sinner is that set forth in the above quotations, namely, the Holy Spirit operates directly upon the heart of the sinner separate and apart from the word of God. This the word of God does not teach.

The agency the Holy Spirit used to convert sinners is the word of God (Eph. 6:17). Observe in every record of New Testament conversion listed in the book of Acts, the word of God was preached to those in need of salvation. The Holy Spirit converted them, but He exerted his power and influence upon them through the word of God.

The New Testament affirms the action performed by the Holy Spirit is also to be said to have been accomplished by the word of God. Thus, the Holy Spirit is found working through the word.

Holy Spirit	Action	Word of God
John 3:5, 6, 8	born	I Pet. 1:23-25
John 6:63	made alive	Psm. 119:50, 93
Titus 3:5	saves	James 1:21
Rom. 15:13	power	Romans 1:16
I Cor. 6:11	sanctifies	John 17:17
I Cor. 6:11	washed	Eph. 5:26
Rom. 8:9	leads	Psm. 119:105
Acts 9:31	comforts	I Thess. 4:18

(1) Rom. 1:16-17. Paul affirms in this passage the power of God to save is "the gospel of Christ." The power the Holy Spirit uses is directed through the gospel to the heart of the sinner.

(2) 2 Thess. 2:13-14. These men are said to be chosen "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel." The Spirit sanctifies but it is accomplished by "belief of the truth."

(3) I Cor. 4:15; 15:1-4. Paul shows the Corinthians were "begotten" "through the gospel." By the gospel Paul says they had been saved. The Holy Spirit saves but salvation is accomplished by the preaching of the gospel.

(4) James 1:18, 21. James teaches that men are begotten "with the word of truth" but this implanted or engrafted word "is able to save your souls." When the word is preached and obeyed, it will save men. The Holy Spirit saves men through the preaching of truth into which He guided the apostles (John 16:13).

(5) I Pet. 1:18-25. Peter says men are "redeemed" and this is accomplished by "the precious blood of Christ." This is done when they "obey the truth through the Spirit." Redemption and obedience to truth is the same as "being born again" but the new

birth is "by the word of God." The new birth is experienced when "the gospel is preached unto you." When the gospel, the truth, the word of God is not preached then men cannot be born again or be redeemed from sin.


It takes the preaching of the gospel to save men from sin. Where the gospel has not been preached men have not been saved. If God sends His Holy Spirit to save and men cannot resist His power, why is it that there are no saved people where the word has not been preached? If apart from the word of God the Holy Spirit saves men, why is it necessary to send men to preach the gospel? Why does not the Holy Spirit operate directly upon their hearts on the other side of the world and eliminate the need of sending men over there to preach?

Rom. 2:11

"For there is no respecter of persons with God." If the Holy Spirit operates directly upon the heart of men to save them, if one is lost, it will be God's fault and not man's. God did not send the Holy Spirit to operate upon man's heart and thus God is responsible for lost mankind, according to Calvinism.

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NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE—
A VINDICATION
PART 3
by Wayne Broaddus

Note: This is the last in a series of three articles. The previous articles have been primarily a review of some arguments advanced against the New American Standard Bible. This article completes the review of the arguments, then finishes with a discussion of some defects and excellencies of the version.

Argument 10

1 Corinthians 7:25, 40. New American Standard gives, "I give as an opinion. . . ." Paul did not mean to state an opinion. **Answer 10**

The translators have rendered the Greek according to one of the several definitions of the word **gnome**. Definition: "opinion, judgment (Analytical Lexicon)"; "view, judgment, opinion (Thayer)"; "mind, judgment, opinion (Robinson)." Literally, the Greek may read, **judgment but I give or opinion but I give**. The word **as** is not in the Greek text. The objection that Paul did not say that he was giving an opinion may be valid.

Space will not permit me in this article to review the last ten of the twenty arguments; however, fairness compels me to consider briefly argument 15.

Argument 15

Colossians 2:12. New American Standard omits the article before **faith**. Translators ought to have retained the article.

Answer 15

The article ought to have been retained; it does appear in the Greek text. But the objection that the translators seem to be trying to rid themselves of the phrase **the faith** is not a valid objection. On the same grounds the King James would have to be rejected, for it commits the same error by omitting the article before the word **faith** in Galatians 3:14; 3:25; Ephesians 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 3:2 and numerous other passages. In fact, it was the treatment of the definite article in the King James that required special attention by the 101 translators previously mentioned. One of those 101 translators was Alexander Roberts. He wrote, "But in the King James Version this point of accuracy has been entirely neglected. The Greek language has a definite article, and its omission or insertion in a passage often has the weightiest effect upon the sense. Yet our translators seem to have been ignorant of this fact, and have treated the article as if it were not of the slightest importance . . . they have omitted it in their version where it existed in the original; they have inserted it where it had no place in the Greek." See Matthew 14:8 where omission of the definite article is harsh. Compare smoother reading in New American Standard.

We must note that such departures from grammatical precision are common in every version of the Bible, for the English idiom will not always tolerate a

strict rendering of the Greek. Sometimes the article must be inserted to accommodate English idiom as in 1 Corinthians 1:20 in which the literal reading of the Greek text is **pou sopos, pou grammateus**, where wise? Where scribe? Good English idiom requires insertion of the article, where is **the** wise? Where is the scribe? And quite often instead of the aorist tense, the perfect or pluperfect brings out the meaning better in our language (See Matthew 19:20). The job which translators have of turning the Greek into good English idiom without detriment to the sense is often exceedingly difficult. Sometimes they must decide whether good English idiom must give way to grammatical strictness or vice versa. One may get some idea of the problem by examining the literal reading of John 11:6: "When therefore he heard that he is sick, then indeed he remained in which he was place two days." To reject a translation on the grounds that the definite article was omitted or inserted or that the tense of a verb was imperfectly rendered is to reject all of the versions.

To sum up, the arguments urged against the **New American Standard Bible** are in the main unsound. Some of the arguments are gross blunders since they are based on words non-existent in the Greek text. Others are little more than quibbles. Still others advance arguments that may also be urged against both the King James and the American Standard.

Yet to suggest that the New American Standard is without fault would be hazardous. The translation of Acts 10:43 is an unhappy rendering. The marginal reference to Obadiah 10:14 at 2 Chronicles 28:17 is a discrepancy as are the misspelled words in Amos 1:4 and Philipians 4:6. Like all other translations, it is the work of imperfect men and will contain minor errors and defects, for God has not seen fit to provide us with infallible translators.

But in my own view the translators of the **New American Standard Bible** have followed sound principles and made the best use of their resources. The rendering of the participle in Matthew 16:18-19 is a decided improvement. **Shall have been bound** more accurately expresses the sense of the Greek than **shall be bound**. What the apostles spoke on earth by means of the Holy Spirit was that which **first** had been bound and loosed in heaven. And the attention given the Greek particle *me*, hitherto neglected, provides an insight and a fresh look into numerous passages. Consider John 6:67 in which the negative particle has been taken into consideration. "You do not want to go away also, do you?" gives an insight into Jesus' feelings that we do not see in other versions. Or John 7:52 in which "You are not also from Galilee, are you?" suggests disdain of the Pharisees for Nicodemus but not an inquiry. Then notice the proper use of the italics in John 4:20: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain: and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." The italicized word brings out what the woman is saying. The woman is not asserting that Jesus alone had said that Jerusalem was the place where men ought to worship, but what she is

asserting is that the **Jewish people** said that men ought to worship in Jerusalem. The italicized word is authorized by the Greek *umeis legete*, which is the verb phrase for **you** say in the second person, plural. *Umeis* is the second person pronoun in the plural number. Here it is used to denote emphasis because the woman is asserting. If the woman had wanted to say that Jesus had told her she ought to worship in Jerusalem, she would have used the second person, singular **su legeis**. Then too the use of Arabic numerals is most welcome. ". . . of the tribe of Dan, were 62,700 . . ." is much to be preferred to ". . . of the tribe of Dan, were three-score and two thousand and seven hundred (Numbers 1:39). . . ."

In short, the **New American Standard Bible** vindicates itself. It is a conservative translation, faithful within the bounds of human limitations to the Greek text. It is, in my judgment, to be recommended to everyone who wishes to read, as did our brethren in the First Century, the inspired Scriptures in an idiom with which he is most familiar, with the confidence that he is reading a clear and accurate rendering of the Holy Scriptures. Like the King James, it has its minor errors and defects, but also its acknowledged excellencies. It sets forth the Gospel message in language that is direct, plain, and meaningful. Unlike the Hebrew scholar Broughton, one could hardly wish rather to be torn asunder by wild horses than to allow the version to be imposed on the church.

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Things Most Certainly Believed

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PRECIOUS THINGS

It is quite interesting that the two epistles of Peter use the word "precious" more than all the rest. The word is defined as, "of great value; highly esteemed or cherished." It is used in connection with many things in the Old Testament. Items of wealth, fruits, one's good name, are said to be precious. But Peter attaches special significance to the term precious as he describes four items which challenge our understanding and thrill our hearts.

He speaks of **faith** as being **precious** as it is tried. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7). The second epistle addresses "them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:1). The theme of Peter's first epistle seems to be "the Christian in the crucible." Faith under fire, tested in the crucible of trial and adversity increases in honor. Under such circumstances it improves in value as well as proving its value. Like precious metal refined by fire, faith which has withstood trial is indeed precious, yea more precious than gold.

Faith that can stand trial must have the Lord Jesus Christ as its object. "For except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). He is an object worthy of trust and fidelity. When the evidence of his divinity is considered and accepted one is realistically committed in allegiance to Him. Just as one in pledging allegiance to the flag of our country indicates commitment to its principles and faith in its foundation objectives, so the more lofty idea of allegiance is attendant when Christ is the object of our faith.

Faith must also be considered in a subjective sense. Precious faith, that which will stand trial, is subjective to the right things as comprehended in the statement, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). The acid test of faith is obedience. Jesus challenged his disciples, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say" (Luke 6:46)? Marks statement of the great commission includes the simple statement of requirement for forgiveness of sins. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be

saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Genuine faith has the proper object, Christ, and is subjective to the proper thing, the Word of God. There must be a believing in the Man and an unreserved acceptance of His plan. This is faith that will save, faith that will stand the pain of trial, adversity, and temptation. The tears of persecution, disappointment in men, will neither dampen nor discourage, but will refine our faith to the richness comprehended in "precious."

Secondly, Peter speaks of precious blood. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" (1 Pet. 1:18-19). With but slight meditation upon the idea of redemption the pulse quickens and our interest is stirred. Redeemed is the idea of, "to release on receipt of ransom." If Christians, we are redeemed with the "precious blood" of Christ, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." This is an Old Testament reminder of the sin offering under the Law. Jesus' blood was shed as were these blood offerings. Yet, there is one significant difference between the Old Testament sin offerings and the blood of Christ. The Old Testament offerings were the condition of forgiveness, His blood is the means of forgiveness.

Redemption's plan was not complete until the shedding of the precious blood of the Son of God. In His life, in His death, through His blood redemption is. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:8-9). Salvation, nevertheless, is conditional. Faith in the blood of Jesus Christ does not preclude obedience. There are actually two sides to the matter of salvation, God's part and man's part. God's part is expressed in the sending of His Son, His death, burial and resurrection, and the publication of the gospel. Man's part involves obedient faith to the requirements of God. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9). Indeed, precious blood, precious because of what it is, redemption's price.

Thirdly, it is the precious Christ that is given attention. The words of Isaiah, "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded" (Isa. 28:16), serve as introduction to, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious" (1 Pet. 2:6-7). The Psalmist complements the prophet's statement in the words, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner" (Psa. 118:22). Consider the term "rejected" or "refused" as connoting, to cast aside as worthless after trial and examination. This is a prediction of the wholesale rejection of Christ by the Jew. Such rejection did not affect the purpose of God, as premillennialists say.

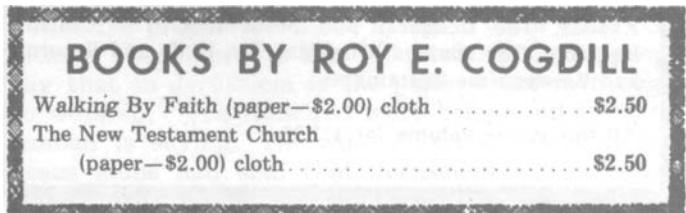
He, nevertheless, became the "head stone of the corner." "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11).

This is God's "elect," the precious Christ. "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence" to the disbelieving Jew and for that matter, to all who disbelieve. Reason being, "for they stumble at the word, being disobedient" (1 Pet. 2:8). But, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious" (verse 7). To the eye brightened by faith he is a "living stone," not inert and lifeless. He being raised from the dead to die no more, being alive, is the source of life to the believer. Thus, resting upon the chief corner stone, the precious Christ, the believer acquires life, becomes a "living stone." Ah, so precious, the Christ.

Finally, the inspired penman is brought to use this impressive term as a description of the promises to the faithful in Christ. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises:" (2 Pet. 1:4), looks back to verse one for identity, "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The promises here considered are preceded upon faith, the blood, and the Christ, as previously considered.

This initial paragraph of 2 Peter focuses upon our being "partakers of his divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." The pristine beauty of Eden furnished a stage for Adam and Eve in their sinless perfect condition. This original purity and God-likeness was lost because of sin. Transgressing the law of God, Adam and Eve brought their expulsion from the garden and the attendant material consequences. Looming over all this in its blackness was death spiritually because of the sin. Thankfully, it does not end here. That which was lost in disobedience is regained in obedience to God's will, restored in the transformation of conversion. "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:18). "And have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:10). "Partakers of his divine nature," what precious promises and to think they are yours and mine.

Indeed, precious things, valuable and priceless beyond compare. Precious faith, precious blood, precious Christ and precious promises. How precious are they to us really? The answer depends upon how precious our soul is to us.



WORD STUDIES

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SOME THOUGHTS ON PSALLO An Introduction

The controversy continues regarding the meaning of the Greek verb psallo and its cognate noun psalmos. Traditionally, instrumentalists and non-instrumentalists have amassed lexical evidence in an effort to determine whether psallo in New Testament passages allows (or even demands) the use of mechanical instruments of music in the worship of Christians.

I have studied and taught Greek for nearly twenty-five years. I have a deep and abiding love of the language. I seriously doubt, however, that an appeal to lexicons is a very fruitful exercise. I make this statement—which may startle some people—simply because it is always possible to discover lexicographers on both sides of any word battle. All lexicons are human productions, and after one has sifted all available evidence he is still faced with the task of determining what evidence is in harmony with the contextual facts of Scripture.

Another Instrumentalist Writes

Robert E. Gulledge, Sr., who is described in a footnote as "a Christian minister living in Jerseyville, Ill.," wrote an article which appeared in the December, 1974 issue of *The Christian Standard*. In this article Mr. Guldedge presented a brief study of the words "psalms," "hymns," and "songs." It is not my intention to review this study in its entirety; however, I wish to comment on two short portions of it.

Mr. Guldedge writes the following paragraph regarding psallo:

"Psalming (psallo) —'singing with an instrument,' is introduced into the New Testament Scriptures just 'as it is written' in the Septuagint. Romans 15:9 is the Sep-tuagint Psalm 18:49—therefore, it now stands in the New Testament Scriptures 'as it is written.' If Psalming does not stand in Romans 15:9 as it is in Psalm 18:49, then it does not stand 'as it is written.'" In his closing paragraph, Mr. Guldedge writes as follows:

". . . The position held by 'exclusivists' demands a different set of definitions for the same musical terms within the same century at the same time in the same language for the same people."

On the Making of Lexicons

Before coming directly to a review of the statements of Mr. Guldedge, it is appropriate to observe the genesis of lexicons. To coin an expression, "man was not made for lexicons, but lexicons, for man." That is to say, dictionaries were not made and then forced upon their users. To the contrary, dictionaries merely reflect the uses that are more or less current. If a lexicographer is contemporary with uses, he may ask people for the specific implications of their words. Obviously, a lexicographer of ancient uses must derive his information from the contextual evidence of the literature he is studying (such as the LXX, or the New Testament) and/or from contemporary evidence such as non-Biblical literature, inscriptions, and similar evidence.

Lexicons and Specific Cases

A dictionary definition of a word does not necessarily mean that every single person or group uses that particular word in that particular way. An excellent illustration of this may be seen in Webster's definition of the word "baptize": "To dip or immerse in water, or to pour or sprinkle water upon, as a religious rite. . . ."

I, for one, do not intend to include sprinkling and pouring in my definition of "baptize" just because these meanings are found in Webster's dictionary.

If I should write an article on the word "baptize," and that article fell into the hands of a non-English-speaking reader who turned to Webster's dictionary and found "sprinkling" and "pouring" included under "baptize," would it be proper for that reader to assert, in the absence of any contextual evidence, that I practice sprinkling and/or pouring?

Similarly, one should not take a definition out of a Greek lexicon and force it into the exegesis of a passage in the complete absence of any contextual evidence. I believe this method of exegesis has been employed by some writers in their study of the term psallo, even as that term occurs in the LXX, to say nothing of its occurrence in the New Testament.

Implications of Psallo

When lexicographers state that the literal meaning of psallo is "to pluck, twitch, or twang," they do not simply draw these words out of the air arbitrarily. It is evident that this judgment is based upon ancient uses and settings of psallo.

When it is observed that psallo sometimes meant "to pluck the hair of the head," is this simply an arbitrary judgment? When it is said by lexicographers that psallo sometimes meant "to pluck the plumbline of the carpenter," is this just drawn out of the air for no apparent reason? Obviously, there is some contextual evidence somewhere to support this claim.

Similarly, when it is asserted that psallo in some passages of the LXX may mean "to pluck the strings of a harp," is this observation arbitrary? When it is said that psallo in some passages of the LXX may

mean "to sing to the accompaniment of a harp," is this judgment arbitrary?

It seems to me that lexicographers include the harp and/or other objects (hair, etc.) in their definitions of psallo on the basis of contextual evidence. Furthermore, the absence of such contextual evidence must be a prime factor in the decision of such men as Moulton and Milligan to give "sing" as the meaning of psallo in the New Testament, (Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, p. 697.)

Psallo in the Septuagint

For purposes of reference it may be useful to list all the occurrences of psallo in the LXX. It should be noticed that chapter and verse listings vary in some versions. Variant chapter numbering is indicated by parentheses. Further, one reference from the apocryphal book of Sirach is given, along with variations found in the LXX version of Aquila and of Symmachus. The occurrences of **psallo** are as follows: Judges 5:3; I Kings 16:16, 17, 18, 23; 18:10; 19:9; II Kings 22:50; IV Kings 3:15; Psa. 7:17; 9:2, 11; 12(13):6; 17(18):49; 20(21):13; 26(27):6; 29(30):4, 12; 32(33):2, 3; 46(47):6, 7; 56(57):7, 9; 58(59):17; 60(61):8; 65(66):2, 4; 67(68):4, 25, 32, 33; 68(69):12; 70(71):22, 23; 74(75):9; 91(92):1; 97(98):4, 5; 100(101):1; 103(104):33; 104(105):2; 107(108):1, 3; 134(135):3; 137(138):1; 143(144): 9; 145(146):2; 146(147):7; 149:3; Sirach 9:4; Aquila 32(33):3; Symmachus 32(33):3; 68(69):13; Isa. 38:20.

Even in the preceding references from the LXX, **psallo** does not always necessarily imply the harp. A rather exhaustive article on **psallo** appears in volume 8 of **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament**. The article was written by Gerhard Delling. Mr. Delling notes, ". . . often the obvious sense is 'to play,' esp. when an instrument is mentioned Psa. 33:2; 71:22 . . . but also Psa. 27:6; 57:8 . . . where singing and playing go together . . . Elsewhere the idea of praise by song as well as stringed instrument is suggested, Psa. 9:11 . . . Hence one must take into account a shift of meaning in the LXX in other passages in which the idea of playing is not evident. In many places the thought of 'to play' to Yahweh (in His honour) is a natural one, and this could be introduced into other passages, esp. when the Gk. equivalent contains esp. the idea of playing."

Mr. Delling is simply stating that **psallo** in the LXX may mean either "sing," "play," or "play and sing," depending upon the context. Notice carefully his use of the words "obvious," "mentioned," "suggested," "evident." These are common terms used in contextual studies.

"As it is Written"

Mr. Gullledge seems to think that "as it is written" in Rom. 15:9 means "as they sang," for he writes, ". . . if psalming does not stand in Romans 15:9 as it is in Psalm 18:49, then it does not stand 'as it is written.'"

It is evident that Paul is not saying "I will psalm as they psalmed." To the contrary, the clause "as it is written" does not modify the statement "... I will

confess . . . and sing. . . ." The clause "as it is written" modifies the statement that precedes, "... that the Gentiles might glorify God. . . ." That is to say, the redemption of the Gentiles is in harmony with "what is written" in Psalm 18:49.

Same Words With Different Meanings

Mr. Gullledge apparently reasons that it is unrealistic to have a different set of definitions for the same musical terms within the same century at the same time in the same language for the same people. I affirm, however, that this is precisely what we have in reference to the use of the Septuagint by New Testament Christians.

It is a simple fact that the use of the King James Version of the Bible by present-day Christians involves exactly the same phenomenon. Christians today read the English of the KJV, recognizing that some of the words do not have the meaning that they had in 1611. It is true that Christians today do not live in the same century as that of the writing of the KJV, but neither did New Testament Christians live in the century of the production of the LXX.

Furthermore, it is evident to everyone that many present-day English words are used with different meanings by people who are supposed to be speaking the same language. The "rock" generation has completely revolutionized the meanings of such terms as "grass," "pot," etc. etc. In religious circles the term "baptism" obviously does not convey a single, standard meaning even though it is used by people who are supposed to be speaking the same language. Every thoughtful person realizes that this confusion of meanings is eliminated only by a study of the contextual uses of words.

Psallo in Modern Greek

As a final note, it may be of interest to observe that Swanson's pocket lexicon of modern Greek defines **psallo**, "sing" (hymns). In his English-Greek section, under "sing," he gives **tragoudo** (general); **psallo** (in church); **kelaido** (of birds). Under **tragoudi** (the noun cognate of the verb **tragoudo**), he gives "popular song."

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1 CORINTHIANS 14:34-35

Johnny Stringer

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

This passage continues to be the subject of controversy among brethren. I have no illusions that this article will end that controversy, but I do want to present for your consideration my convictions regarding these verses.

Throughout the letter of 1 Corinthians Paul dealt with problems that troubled the church in Corinth. In chapter 14 he addressed himself to the conduct of the Corinthians in the assemblies in which spiritual gifts were exercised. From his remarks we can conclude that their activities were not always edifying, that they were characterized by disorderliness and confusion. It is in this context of urging orderliness that Paul addressed the women in verses 34-35.

In verse 34 Paul clearly ordered the women to keep silence, saying that it was not permitted for them to speak. Then in verse 35 he said that it was a shame for women to speak in the church. YET, this same Paul commanded all Christians (including women) to sing (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16). Singing is a form of speaking. If it is a shame for women to speak in the assembly, how is it that God could demand that they sing?

I believe that the answer is found in the last half of verse 34. After saying that it is not permitted for them to speak, Paul adds, "but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." Thus, the fundamental principle Paul was teaching was for women to be under obedience. *Speaking is contrasted against being under obedience* (note the word "but"); thus, the kind of speaking Paul was talking about was such speaking as would violate that principle of being under obedience. Singing obviously does not violate that principle; therefore, she can properly be commanded to sing, since singing does not fall within the realm of the kind of speaking forbidden in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. She can speak so long as she remains under obedience. Evidently, as Paul was seeking to correct the disorderliness and confusion in the assemblies at Corinth, part of that situation was caused by women getting out of line by the manner in which they spoke.

Verse 35 shows that it was only a certain class of women in Corinth who were causing the trouble. Note that the women: (1) had husbands, and (2) had husbands who were able to instruct them in truths they did not understand. This excludes a lot of women. Since (1) the assembly under discussion was

one in which divine truth was being revealed as spiritual gifts were exercised, (2) Paul had just addressed the prophets (inspired teachers) in the verses immediately preceding his instructions regarding the women, and (3) the women of verse 35 were the wives of competent teachers of truth, it is reasonable to conclude that the women were the wives of the inspired men (prophets).

In considering that Paul forbade these women to ask questions in the assembly, remember that the principle upon which the prohibition was based was that women were to be under obedience. The type of speaking forbidden was such that violated that principle. Evidently, then, these women were asking questions in such a manner as to be out of obedience. Perhaps the situation was that while their husbands were revealing divine truth, the wives would interrupt with questions; such would surely be out of place and productive of disorder.

The instructions to ask their husbands at home does not apply today as it did to the wives of the prophets. Women today do not have to ask their husbands; they have Bibles just like their husbands do and are just as mentally competent to find the truth in their Bibles as are their husbands. The women of verse 35 had no inspired book to guide them, but they had inspired husbands; women today have no inspired husbands, but they have an inspired book.

The prohibition of asking questions surely does not apply to the Bible class situation of today. The Bible class of today is altogether different from the assembly in which divine truth was being revealed by inspired men. When men and women are gathered together to study in an effort to learn and help each other understand the truth that has been revealed, it certainly is not getting out of subjection for a woman to humbly ask a question or submit an idea for the class's consideration. Certainly, in such a situation a woman *can* get out of line in the manner in which she asks questions or sets forth her ideas; to do so is to violate the principle Paul stressed in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 regarding being under obedience.

Conclusion: The fundamental principle of women being under obedience still stands, and any type of speaking that violates that principle is wrong. The manner in which some of the Corinthian women spoke did violate it. Women today should take care that they do not. But women can speak so long as they do so in a spirit of submissiveness, in such a manner that they do not violate the principle of being under obedience. P.O. Box 147

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THE DIVINE GUIDE IS COMPLETE

By Shelby C. Smith

"For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but man spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

In this age of skepticism, it becomes necessary for Christians to stand up and be counted and to deal a knock-out blow to those who would belittle the Bible. The Bible claims to be the word of God; but Modernists are trying to sift out part of its teachings and claim we have no use for parts of it. I believe the Bible to be the Word of God, spoken by the Holy Spirit, God's agent, to men who were moved by the same to write the exact words thereof, and that there is not one mistake or contradiction in the entire sixty-six books.

Let us show one of the evidences of inspiration as found in Gen. 1:11. We have the law that every seed produces after its kind. Another is found in Isa. 13: 17-22, Isaiah prophesied the destruction of Babylon. Four hundred years after the prophecy was made the city was destroyed, and to this day it has not been inhabited. Why don't the Bible-dishonoring, church-ridiculing, Bible-hating infidels in the church prove that the Bible is just a book of tales, by building a city on this ancient site, or by dwelling there? This would settle the matter!

Now let us look at the New Testament for an evidence of its inspiration. Paul said: "Grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men shall arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29, 30). In 2 Thess. 2:7, Paul wrote, "For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work" and by the sixth century the apostasy was complete, just as Paul had written.

Someone has said of the Bible: "This book contains the mind of God, the way of salvation, the doom of the sinner, and the happiness of the believer. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. Herein heaven is opened, hell is disclosed. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide our feet. It offers happiness for children, inspiration for youth, strength for maturity, assurance for old age, comfort in death, and salvation and riches and glory and a reward for eternity." I do not know the author of these words, but let all of us profit from them.

Today we are in the midst of a world revolution and the very foundation of civilization is being shaken; but the church of Christ with Bible in hand is the only thing that can swing this wicked world

back to decency, save humanity from an awful period of darkness, and keep the sunlight of God's redeeming love shining in the hearts of men.

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THE BAPTISTS AND THE BUS MINISTRY

by Daniel H. King

During the last few years many of the brethren have become elated at a new device for drawing large crowds into their meeting houses—the bus ministry. Really though, there's not anything especially new about the device. The Baptists and other denominational folk have been using the system for years. It is what has made possible the "Tabernacle-style" church houses that have begun to dot the landscape in many of our cities. Many brethren have argued, "Well, the Baptists are getting good results out of it, so it must work." As a consequence, denominational programs and gimmicks are examined, sectarian "how-to-do-it" manuals are read, and the system is fitted bodily into a congregation's program. "After all", it is argued, "it works doesn't it?" Soon children are being given candy, refreshments, and prizes for boarding the buses and attending regularly. Suddenly the Grand Old Gospel that was once the drawing power to salvation (Rom. 1:16; II Thess. 2:14) goes flying out a bus window. "Why, it doesn't matter what you use to get them there, just so Christ is preached to them", the prevailing voice says. One problem that goes unnoticed is that whatever it takes to get that kind of person to come the first time is what it is going to take to keep him coming. And, if the prize that the church of Christ is offering is inferior to that being proffered by the Baptists, it is for certain that we will lose out on these that sell themselves to the highest bidder. I wonder what scriptural precedent people think they're following when they offer carnal rewards for spiritual service in this manner? What happened to the biblical axiom that those who seek to receive earthly compensation as their payment for spiritual service rendered have been "paid in full": "Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward" (Matt. 6:2, 5, 16). This practice actually encourages the attitude that Jesus condemned.

I was recently surprised to see that some of the Baptists are even beginning to object to this kind of absurd trafficking in human souls. I was surprised because Baptists took the lead in the use of this and every other kind of gimmick and contrivance imaginable. Everyone from karate experts to movie personalities have been invited to speak and perform during their worship services to draw crowds to their meeting houses. But, Forrest L. Keener, pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church of Lawton, Oklahoma, recently launched an attack upon such methods used in bus ministry promotion. In the July and August

issue of **Faith Magazine**, a Bob Jones University publication, Keener attacked the abusive techniques under the title, "A Critical Analysis of Modern 'Give-Away Bus Promotion'." His study of these time-honoured practices led him to brand them as a "hypocritical exploitation of children", and to conclude that "these tactics never actually increase the number of converts". Furthermore, Keener realizes that a lowering of standards must follow or the results will not be lingering. He says, "Meanwhile, sound doctrine occupies second place or no place at all." He then adds, "The common denominator that I seem to see in all fervent users of cheap tactics is that they rate doctrine after 'results', and sometime belittle doctrine altogether." This frank assault upon an almost universally accepted practice among Baptist churches was bound to draw fire. In the August 3, 1973 issue of **The Sword of the Lord**, Dr. John R. Rice, the editor of the paper, expressed his shock and surprise at Keener's remarks. A long expertise followed in which Rice made quite a play upon Baptist tradition and perverted a number of scriptures endeavoring to put some Biblical props under a totally unscriptural practice. His miserable display would almost certainly convince any honest person that such tactics completely lack scriptural authority. I must confess,

though, that Rice did do a little better job on the subject than I have heard any of the brethren do lately. At the very least he made an attempt to justify it by the Bible. Many of the brethren have given up this idea altogether. That is the reason that the like of this is being practiced by churches of Christ at all.

When will some brethren realize that you can't trick people into becoming Christians? There are no short-cut methods or sure-fire gimmicks that will replace the simple gospel of Jesus Christ. It remains the power of God to salvation (Rom. 1:16) and the only thing that can draw men to Christ (II Thess. 2:14). It will probably take the brethren a while yet to recognize the fruitlessness of any attempt to improve upon God's plan, but the realization is just as sure to come to them as it has to some of the Baptists. Real conviction can't be bought. Even the Baptists are beginning to see that.

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

THE CONVICTION OF YOUTH

Cindi Sullivan, daughter of Wayne Sullivan, gospel preacher, was recently chosen Homecoming Queen at Colonial High School, a very large school in Orlando, Florida. When Cindi was selected as a candidate she went to the sponsor and told her that if she should be chosen as queen, she would neither participate in nor reign over the traditional dance which follows the ball game. The teacher assured her that if chosen she would not be required to act contrary to her convictions. She was chosen to be queen, but did not participate in or reign over the dance. Sometimes young people may feel that in order to participate in some of the school activities and be popular with the other students they must forfeit their convictions. This is not so! (Palm Springs Drive BULLETIN, Altamonte Springs, Florida, Dec. 16, 1974).

EFRAIN PEREZ, Santiago, Chile. In December, 1974 we made a trip to Valdivia, 700 miles south of Santiago, to visit a congregation we had heard about but had no contact with before now. Valdivia is a nice city of about 150,000. Here we met Brother Ernesto Ortega who is 86 years old and who has been preaching the gospel for 45 years. He shares with other brethren in preaching now for the congregation of about 35 members. They have property where the church meets. In our studies they recognized some errors and readily rejected them. We rejoice in this and recommend these brethren as faithful to the Lord. As soon as funds are available we plan to translate and print "Walking by Faith" by Roy Cogdill.

FROM REPORT FROM ANDY DEKLERK, P.O. Box 31, Plaston 1244 E/TVL., South Africa. We begin this new year full of hope and greatly encouraged with the events of the past few weeks. Our new meeting house is under construction; two

families attended services in response to our weekly newspaper article and I have already had classes with them; a letter was received from a lady who receives our bulletin requesting more information concerning baptism; a full page article will be in this week's newspaper on the "Charismatic Movement" which is showing its ugly head here as well. Although few in number we are all thrilled with the prospect of meeting together to worship in a nice, neat, clean building without having first to clear away beer cans and having to sit through service with the smell of old beer and cigarettes in the air. This is what we have had to contend with these last few weeks, in the rented hall. The Lord has blessed us so abundantly that everything looks good and wonderful as we begin this new year in His service. We would appreciate receiving bulletins from where you worship or any special outline studies you may have engaged in.

JAMES O. LOVELL, 8 Doone Rd., Pinetown 3600, Natal, Rep. of S. Africa. We have been having a hard time about the meeting place at the back of the residence of one of the brethren. At first, the Development and Services Board ordered him to take it down. We have pursued every possible way to keep this structure as it is. With the help of the Department of Community Development we have been able to keep the structure as it is. We are praying that we shall be allocated one of the sites in Shallcross where we can build. This is doubtful since these allocations are usually made on the basis of the number of members. On November 10, the Shallcross church withdrew from five of its members. While such is not a happy occasion, it is an evidence of growth for this church. In October and November we baptized nine. That makes 24 since we came in April. We have started holding two mid-week services so we can

teach all these new converts. We continue to be thankful for your support and prayers.

ROBERT C. ARCHER, 1500 South Ridgeland, Berwyn, Illinois 60402. The Lord has blessed our efforts in 1974. Twenty-two have responded to the Lord by being baptized. The remarkable thing about this is that 19 of these were adults from the community . People are still interested in their salvation! What does 1975 hold for us? We, of course, do not know; but we look forward to the challenges of the coming year with enthusiasm and optimism. Brethren, pray for us.

ROBERT S. SWAIN, Lompoc, California. I began labor with this new congregation the first Sunday in March. We are located in the Lompoc, Mission Hills, Vandenberg Air Force Base areas. We want to especially alert service personnel who might be transferred to Vandenberg and invite you to come worship with us in a faithful congregation. For further information or transportation please contact Robert Cunningham at (805) 733-2104.

PREACHERS NEEDED

ASHLAND, OHIO. The small congregation in Ashland is in need of a preacher. The congregation has an adequate building and some support available, though some will have to be raised elsewhere. Interested persons should call Wallace Smith, 752 E. 7th St., Ashland, Ohio 44805, phone 325-3610. **GARDENA, CALIFORNIA.** The church in Gardena is looking for a full-time preacher to begin work now. The church is self-supporting and provides a house for the preacher. Those interested may contact Ed Rose at (213) 545-0045 or Mark Stringer at (213) 542-9384.

NEW CONGREGATION

JESSE W. BROOKSHIRE, P.O. Box 5765, Texarkana, Texas 75501. For a number of years conservative brethren in the Texarkana area have given thought and discussion to the need for a congregation on the Texas side of Texarkana. This much needed work became a reality the first Sunday in December, 1974 when four families met for the first time. Since then three more families have joined forces with us. There is complete harmony and cooperation in all scriptural ways between the new congregation and Franklin Drive. Daryl Powell and I share the preaching. We meet at 3107 Summerhill Road, Texarkana, Texas. If you are traveling through this area, stop and worship with us. Exit off 1-30 on Summerhill and 7 blocks south. See our ad in this issue of **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**. Warren Cheatham of Irving, Texas was with us in a meeting the last of March.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH	
Baptized	824
Restored	175
<i>(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)</i>	
Others are interested in what is taking place where you worship. Let others know of those who obey the gospel or are restored to their first love, of teaching activities of the congregation, of growth and development. This edifies others. Make your reports brief and send them to the editor at P.O. Box 68, Brooks, KY 40109.	