

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

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ARE WE LOSING OUR FREEDOM?

Our cherished civil freedoms are slowly being taken away by an ever increasing centralized government. We are gradually being deprived of the freedom of speech, the personal freedom to own and operate business enterprises as we please, the freedom to hear the truth about the conditions of government and its operation, and the freedom to worship without some sort of persecution. I do not mean that these are absolutely gone, but obviously the working of government in this country is slowly taking away these liberties by enactment of new laws and pressure tactics.

There are at least three reasons why this condition exists; the greed and grab for personal power within government, the effort to make all conform to the way of life that suits the rulers under the guise of personal or "civil rights," and the continuing effort to centralize the power of government in the hands of a few. These conditions are made easier by the fact that most citizens of the United States are indifferent to the trend and are willing to place more and more of their personal obligations upon the federal government. The more of our personal responsibilities it takes, the more of our personal liberties it takes.

Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia and said: "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberties which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (Gal. 2:4). Peter speaks of the working of evil men who would corrupt the children of God, and says of them: "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a

man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (2 Pet. 2:19).

The same three reasons given above are responsible for the conditions of the church today that would take us back into the bondage of sin and deprive us of the liberty we have in Christ. Liberty in Christ does not mean that we can do anything we want to do any more than civil freedom means we are at liberty to do anything we please. In both cases we are under law, and our freedom is derived from that law. It is when the law is ignored or changed that the freedom under law is taken away.

The greed and grab for power in the church by a few preachers, elders and editors is promoted by lying propaganda promising more liberty and greater work. Some have power enough in some areas now to control every congregation in that area, telling them who can and who cannot preach for them, and directing the spending of their funds from the Lord's day contribution. More and more these "great preachers of today" are getting into a position similar to that of the pope of Rome. Some love the "praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43). Little by little congregations are losing their congregational freedom to these power-loving men who would lead them into bondage.

The effort to make all conform to that way of life that has been planned by the present day promoters is a second reason congregational liberties are taken away. By economic pressure, public sentiment, emotional appeals, and outright lying about those who oppose this practice, these "false brethren" continue to "line up" churches and individuals. They preach personal and congregational "rights" and all the while they are taking away these "rights" given under the law of Christ and replacing them with the "rights" of these "great preachers," elders and editors.

The third reason for the loss of our freedom in Christ is the continuing centralizing of power and effort under a few men. This, of course, is possible because the individual does not want to assume his personal responsibility. It is easier to drop a nickel in the contribution plate on Lord's day and let the church send the nickel to some sponsoring church (central control), which in turn sends it to some human organization to

do the work which that individual should have done in the first place. It will not be long before we find some new headquarters on earth for "churches of Christ."

The combination of lustful men grabbing for power, the effort of these men to make the standard of life and bring individuals and churches to conform to it, and the centralizing of power and control into the hands of a few takes away the liberties we have in Christ. In civil government it tends toward Roman Catholicism. So much freedom has already been taken away from many congregations that they now have no safe ground upon which to fight for what remaining liberties they may have.

Paul's attitude toward these false brethren, as he spoke by the Spirit, was: "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Gal. 2:5). Jesus said: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

We cannot tell what the future years will bring for the civil freedoms of this nation. Neither can we tell about the liberty in Christ. Dictatorship will result if we continue.

NOW READY

The Willis-Jenkins Debate

This debate between Cecil Willis and Jesse Jenkins took place in 1974 in Pasadena, Texas. It concerns the issue of individual support of private enterprises which provide a Bible teaching service, such as Florida College and the Cogdill Foundation. You will find it very helpful on this live issue. Hardback **\$5.95**

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Editorial

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INVESTIGATE

We are often asked to carry notices about congregations needing preachers and sometimes about preachers who are interested in moving to a new work. As space permits, we carry such notices as news items without charge. A few times we have printed "disclaimers" by stating that we do not have personal knowledge of all those who write such items and cannot guarantee that the work would be satisfactory under every circumstance, nor that a preacher who announces his availability is all that might be desired. We have acted in good faith in trying to render a service to worthy brethren and shall continue to do so, though we frankly do not believe this is the best way for a congregation to find a preacher nor for a preacher to find a congregation. All of this prompts what we believe is a much-needed admonition.

It is scripturally right for brethren to be commended by those who know them to brethren who do not know them. After Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos the right way of the Lord at Ephesus, he decided to go into Achaia. "And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace" (Acts 18:27). The brethren in Achaia did not know Apollos but the brethren at Ephesus did. Paul indicated that while others might need letters of commendation to the church at Corinth, he did not for they existed as a people of the Lord through his labors and were therefore Paul's "epistle written in our hearts" (2 Cor. 3:1-3). His implication is clear that while they already knew plenty about him because of his work among them, others who came later and called in question the genuineness of his apostleship, needed some kind of commendation from others. Paul wrote to Philemon and urged him to receive Onesimus as a brother, beloved in the Lord, though in the past Onesimus had been unprofitable to Philemon (Philemon 10-17). When Paul came to Jerusalem and "assayed to join himself to the disciples" they were "afraid of him and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out of Jerusalem" (Acts 9:26-28). In the case of the benevolence to be sent from Corinth to Jerusalem, Paul wrote "And when I come, whom-

soever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem" (1 Cor. 16:3). Surely, evidences for the benefit of those who do not know a man, or a congregation, are not out of place.

Worthy Men Do Not Mind Inspection

When a congregation is seeking a preacher and is contacted by a man they do not know anything about, it is the height of folly to make a decision based on a sermon or two, or good words and fair speeches in a hastily called business meeting. We have heard several times of preachers who used high pressure tactics on brethren by insisting that they "make a decision tonight" or else they might decide to go some other place. That ought to be a danger signal from a man who is desperate. No congregation should be placed in such a predicament. Worthy men do not mind brethren investigating their work at other places. How long did he stay there? What about other places he has lived? Has his work been stable? Or has he been a problem everywhere he has gone? Certainly any worthy preacher will make some enemies along the line which will not speak kindly of him, but some general things can be learned. Not only should brethren be concerned about his teaching, but about his personal conduct as well. Has he behaved himself? Was he hot tempered and self-willed? Was his family an asset or hindrance to his work? Did he pay his debts? Did he treat the younger women as sisters "with all purity"? If he was involved in misconduct at the last place, has he made it right? If he has sincerely repented to the satisfaction of the Lord and the church then it should not be held over his head. If the charges of wrong remain, then congregations considering such men would do the last place he worked a favor and the preacher in question one also by insisting that the wrongs be corrected and all charges cleared.

Some preachers have never done a successful work anywhere. They have a record of moving from pillar to post after a year or maybe just a few months. Sometimes that might not be his fault. It could be that he made some seats too warm with his faithful preaching. But when that happens to a man over and over again, then surely wisdom demands careful investigation.

Some men run out of places to preach in this country and decide to become "Missionaries", taking their inept record with them to some foreign field. We are much in sympathy with good and tested men who labor diligently in the far-flung fields of earth and mean no discredit to a single worthy man. I believe most of the men I know anything about in other countries are equal (and in some cases superior) in ability to most of the preachers who labor in this country. But there have been instances of men going to other lands who have made a shambles of every work they have attempted in this country. Brethren interested in supporting a man for such work have every right, to say nothing of responsibility, to be fully satisfied as to the ability, faithfulness of teaching, and character of those who ask for their assistance. If you do not know the man, check with those who do. You are likely to be sorry if you don't!

A Two-Way Street

While congregations have a right to investigate a prospective preacher, gospel preachers have a right to check into the background, work and attitudes of congregations with which they consider working. It is easy to bring a man to town, put him and his family up in fine circumstances, dine him, dazzle him with promises, inflate his ego with flattery and make a local work look like Utopia when in reality that church has a record of mistreating faithful preachers, crucifying those courageous enough to "lay it on the line" and then summarily dismissing them "for the good of the cause." How many young men have such places disillusioned and discouraged from even preaching at all anymore? Only God knows for certain. This editor formed the practice years ago of reminding brethren with whom we were considering work that we were not only aware of being "looked over" but we were "looking THEM over" as well. Are they having a parade of preachers, putting one in competition with another? Churches that want to let the work out to the lowest bidder are not interested in supporting a man to "do the work of an evangelist"; they are simply looking for a cheap employee, and that is how they will treat him when he comes, CHEAP!

Some churches want men to submit what they call a "resume." Well, now, it would be pretty hard for a fellow not to make himself look good under such circumstances. A divine principle is threatened under such a practice. "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips" (Prov. 27:2). Why not ask for references from those who are in position to fairly evaluate a man's work, in cases where brethren do not know enough about a man and his background? Would that not be far better?

We have known of brethren employing a man over the telephone without ever seeing him until the moving van rolled up in front of the house. Both preacher and congregation are "asking for it" in such an arrangement. Some brethren in needy fields come to the point of desperation at times and think they had better latch onto the first fellow that comes along and offers himself without knowing anything about him until they are in trouble. There is a great need for preachers and congregations to act responsibly toward each other and toward the Lord in the greatest work of all. But in both cases prior investigation would save many heartaches and would contribute immeasurably toward causing troublesome preachers and congregations to shape up.

READY JANUARY 1, 1977

The Smith - Lovelady Debate

Orders are already coming in for this debate on one of the most controversial issues of our time. J. T. Smith and Glenn Lovelady met in this debate in the spring, 1976 in Long Beach, California to discuss marriage, divorce and remarriage. Ready January 1, 1977

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ANSWERS for our hope

Send Bible questions to:

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QUESTION: Please answer the following questions: 1) Should "liberal" brethren leave off orphan homes, etc., in order to have unity? 2) Should we leave off Bible classes and multiple containers to provide unity? 3) Should the Bible not be taught in colleges in order to have unity? — L.B.

ANSWER: These questions suggest, at least to me, that our querist is thinking of the tolerance among brethren authorized in Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8. On this basis I shall proceed to answer the questions.

It should be observed, first of all, that the things under consideration in these chapters are matters of *personal indulgence* in the realm of *positive law*. Personal indulgences stand in contrast to collective action. In the latter there is joint participation, and the conscience of many is involved. In the former only the conscience of one individual is involved. The matter of eating meat was not a church function, but rather the action of an individual. Hence, Paul says to both the "weak" and "strong" brother: "to his own master he standeth or falleth" (Rom. 14:4). No one's conscience is involved but his own.

Matters of *positive law* stand apart from those of *moral law*. Brother J. W. McGarvey, in commenting upon matters of each, put it this way: "the former are always such as the moral law does not require, and such as derive their propriety exclusively from the fact that they are commanded" (Justification by Faith, Lard's Quarterly, Vol. 3, pp. 121, 122). Clean and unclean meats, as well as days to be observed definitely fall into the category of *positive law*.

Concerning such, Paul says, "Let us not therefore judge one another any more" (Rom. 14:13). Here, then, is a limited area in which tolerance among brethren is divinely authorized. There is, therefore, a limited area among brethren wherein there may be "unity in diversity." However, to apply what is said here, irrespective of the limitations, to other matters is to pervert the truth!

Both the strong brother of Romans 14 and the brother with knowledge in 1 Corinthians 8 are warned against using their liberty so as to influence another to sin. In Romans 14 the danger is that of a weak brother being influenced to violate his conscience (Rom. 14:13-17). This might be done through rule, jest, intimidation, etc. In 1 Corinthians 8 the danger is that of a brother without knowledge being influenced to sin, not by violating his conscience, but by indulging that which is sin itself. There is nothing wrong in eating meat sacrificed to idols, if it be eaten to satisfy hunger

and without conscience toward the idol. However, it such eating influenced one without this knowledge to eat not only to satisfy hunger, but with a conscience toward the idol, such would be a sin on the part of both (1 Cor. 8:9-13).

It should be obvious in the light of this teaching that Questions One and Two do not fall within the realm of personal indulgences, but rather are matters of collective action or church function. Therefore, the principles of Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 do not apply. Question Three does fall within this realm since only individual action is involved (so far as support among conservative brethren is concerned) and not church action. The principles of Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 do apply in this instance.

Concerning unity on Questions One and Two, all else that the Bible teaches concerning unity must be duly regarded, then, the issue must be settled on the basis of whether it is right or wrong—whether or not there is divine authority for it, either specific or generic. If the deference to ignorant and weak brethren authorized in Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 be applied to church action, the elders would no longer be the rulers and overseers (Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:2) in the final analysis, but rather the weak and ignorant brethren would be. Furthermore, this would result in weak and ignorant brethren subjecting the church to "ordinances, doctrines and commandments of men" (Col. 2:20-23). This seems to have been the sin of the Galatian churches reprov'd by Paul: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Gal. 4:10,11). Here, brethren were seeking to bind the observance of days upon the church as a church function. In Romans 14, the observance of days was considered only as an individual matter.

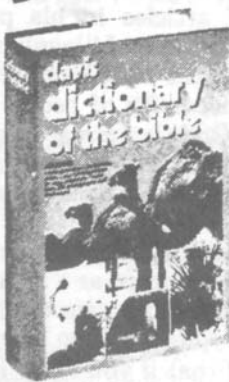
Furthermore, concerning Question One, an affirmative answer should be given for the following reasons: After careful, honest, objective examination has been made of all involved, the facts show that the course of "centralization," the way of "liberal" brethren, even if it were lawful (and it is not) is neither expedient nor edifying (1 Cor. 10:23). The way of *centralization* cost more in overhead expense, involves excessive (wasted) motion in maintaining the intercongregational action, and produces less fruit per ounce of energy expended than the course pursued by "conservative" brethren. While it may minister to pride and produce a sense of satisfaction as one looks upon the magnitude of the centralized effort, nevertheless, when the above examination has been made, the facts show both the pride and satisfaction to be false. Therefore, in view of this and out of respect for the heavenly plea for unity, "liberal" brethren should give up their intercongregational centralized controlled efforts.

On the other hand, in nearly all instances, Question Two should be answered in the negative. While "lawful," it is very inexpedient, hinders the work of edifying, and is very unproductive of the fruit the church is obligated to bear. A careful, honest, objective examination of the facts show a wide margin of dif-

ference between the position of "Conservatives" in relation to Question One and "Conservatives" in relation to Question Two.

Unity is precious and is ever to be desired. We should all "follow after those things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. 14:19). However, unity at the price of compromise with error or the sacrifice of truth is too costly! "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding" (Prov. 23:23).

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(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

Using Great Plainness of Speech

J. J. Smith

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ARNOLD HARDIN, THE BAPTISTS, AND LEGALISM

Brother Arnold Hardin, who preaches for the Scyene Road church of Christ in the Dallas, Texas area, has had a number of articles in his paper, THE PERSUADER, on the subject of "legalism" and those of us who are members of the Lord's church. He ridicules our insistence of the necessity of people being obedient to the commands of God. In this article, I want to review and answer a number of things that brother Hardin had to say in one of his articles entitled "What Is Legalism"?

Brother Hardin begins his article by saying, "Legalism is a legal concept as a means of sinners being justified. It embraces and sets forth the idea that we are saved by a *dependence* upon 'law keeping.'"

It has been said that if you allow a person to give an arbitrary definition of a subject (simply give his *own* definition), he can prove anything by it. Brother Hardin's definition of a "legalist" is certainly quite different from the definition of the word given by authorities. A legalist is "one who advocates legalism, according to the law of works as distinguished from free grace" (Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, Page 975). But who believes what Webster has defined? Evidently from the way brother Hardin writes, you would think there is one behind every tree. I do not know of a single Christian who would be classified as a legalist according to the definition given by Mr. Webster.

After brother Hardin gave *his* definition of a "legalist," he then proceeded to espouse his false theory in harmony with his false definition. He said, "Sinners are saved 'by grace through faith . . . not of works' (Eph. 2:8-9). This is the divine formula. Legalism would put us back under the law-works system; yet, God has placed all men under the grace-faith system because of the cross of Christ. Christ nailed not only the law of Moses to his cross, but, any 'law system' of justification. You cannot prompt men to obey by citing commands and if you do it will not be the kind of obedience that Christ wants. Paul says 'You are not under law, but under grace.' Because you fear that some one will take a statement of that kind and abuse it, do not in turn abuse scripture by saying we are not free from law."

So, with reference to what brother Hardin believes about "law" of any kind, we have the same old sectarian idea, in a new dress, that has been espoused

the sectarians for hundreds of years. Let's examine it.

If there is no such thing imposed on man today as "law," then how could one be turned away by the Lord for practicing "lawlessness"? (Matt. 7:23). If there is no law of any kind, then there is no such thing as sin, for "sin is a transgression of the law" (lawlessness) according to 1 John 3:4. How will we be judged by the "law of liberty" (James 2:12), if there is, in fact, no such thing as law? How could you have a King with subjects and no law by which they are to be governed? The truth of the matter is, you *could not* have any of the above if there is no law.

Just a few passages of scripture will show that there is, in fact, "law" given by Christ; and that obedience to this "law" will free us from our sins. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). Thus Paul calls that which made him free "the law of the Spirit." Again Paul says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). And, James calls this law, of which Paul speaks, "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25), brother Hardin notwithstanding.

Of course, you would think that if brother Hardin was going to take the position that there is no such thing as "law" that must be followed, the old sectarian argument about "no works" that could be performed by man that he might be saved, would soon follow. Well look what we have here in this statement by brother Hardin in the same article. "Sinners are saved 'by grace through faith . . . not of works.' (Eph. 2:8). This is the divine formula. Paul knew what he was saying when he said, 'Saved by grace through faith . . . not of works.' We need to leave it alone!" But with an understanding like brother Hardin has of this passage that there are "no works" that are to be done, someone (namely me) should not leave that alone. However, as if that were not enough false doctrine on this subject, he says, "Brethren speak of God's side and man's side in redemption and equate the two. God forbid such a notion!"

This doctrine set forth by brother Hardin is Missionary Baptist doctrine, pure and simple. He is making the same kind of arguments that I have met with Baptist preachers for years. They build up a straw man, and then beat him to death. Just because we talk about God's side and man's side doesn't mean we are equating the two. It is simply showing that God is the Master, and we are the servants. When the Master commands, the servants obey. Even Christ understood this principle. "Though he were a Son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9). Also, what about passages like Luke 6:46 where Jesus said, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Or Matt. 7:21, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Brother Hardin's doctrine on this matter of someone denying the grace of God because he teaches and practices obedience, is false. If it had not been for the

grace of God in giving his Son, and the Son having the same attitude, we could not be saved. We are entirely dependent on them to provide for us a plan whereby we can be saved. The Old Testament was written for our learning (Rom. 15:4). When Naaman was told to go dip seven times in the Jordan river that he might be cleansed of his leprosy, was he practicing legalism when he obeyed what God told him to do? I contend that he was cleansed by the grace of God even though he HAD to obey the command of God. His obedience didn't change it one whit. But he HAD to obey in order to receive the blessing that was provided by the grace of God.

Brother Hardin's argument is similar to the one that the Baptist have been making for years on the subject of baptism. They contend that baptism is a "work" and since it is, it could not be essential to salvation. (Since brother Hardin has taken the position he has on works, how can he insist on one being baptized in order to be saved?) In Hiscox's Manual for Baptist churches we read on pages 20-21, "Baptism is not essential to salvation, for our churches utterly repudiate the dogma of 'baptismal regeneration,' but it is essential to obedience, since Christ has commanded it. It is also essential to a public confession of Christ before the world, and to membership in the church which is his body." They don't want baptism to be essential to salvation. But they do say *it is* essential to obedience, since Christ has commanded it. However, if it is not essential to salvation, but is essential to obedience, the conclusion would have to be that obedience is not essential to salvation. Also, since baptism is not essential to salvation, according to the Baptists, but it is essential to a public confession of Christ before the world, we would have to conclude that a public confession of Christ before the world is not essential to salvation. And, since baptism is essential to membership in the church which is his body, but is not essential to salvation, we can come to no other conclusion than the fact that membership in the Lord's church is not essential to salvation. Thus, when you get off on the "wrong foot" to begin with (as brother Hardin did with his definition of a "legalist" and with his understanding of "law" and "works"), everything that you say after that becomes more and more ridiculous. How can brother Hardin or the Baptist stress that one needs to be obedient to God and at the same time *deny* that that to which they are to be obedient is essential, or law?

So, a legalist would be one who believes he can be saved by keeping the commandments of the New Testament *without* considering the grace of God and all that it had provided. *Who believes that?* Jesus said, "When you have done all those things which are commanded of you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). Thus how could man's part be equal with God's part?

Now who would have ever thought that one would be having to instruct a brother in Christ on the subject of "works" mentioned in Eph. 2:8-9? Brother Hardin says that it cannot be by "works" because it is by grace

through faith—which is exactly what the sectarians have always said about this passage. The problem is that neither they nor brother Hardin recognize that Paul specified the *kind of works* that he has under consideration. The passage itself says, ". . . not of works lest any man should boast." So, he is talking about *boastful works*. What kind of works are there? (See chart below).

What About "Works"?

Must We Perform Works In Order To Be Saved? Yes!

Works Of The Law? No! Rom. 3:27-28

Works of Man's Devising? No! Eph. 2:8-10

WHAT THEN?

God's Works of Righteousness

Rom. 10:1-3 Acts 10:34-35 Psalms 119:172

So, when we have done all that the Lord requires of us, we have nothing about which we may boast. Why? Because these are "works of righteousness" which God has devised. And as Jesus said, when I have done all these, I have done only that which is expected of a servant (Luke 17:10). But as we have always told the sectarians, so we tell brother Hardin, "read the next verse." Eph. 2:10 says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." If you will excuse the grammar I would like to point out that Paul is saying that we "should walk in them good works." Yet, brother Hardin says there are "no works." I'm going to stick with Paul. So, since David said in Ps. 119:172 that all God's commandments are righteousness; and since Peter said that in every nation one who fears God and works righteousness (which amounts to keeping God's commandments) is accepted with Him, then I am going to continue to try to get people to obey what Peter said *do*, brother Hardin notwithstanding.

If we are not careful, when we begin to emphasize the grace of God and leave off *any* works that are to be done by man, we will come to the conclusion that "once we are saved we are always saved" which is Calvinism pure and simple. How's that? Brother Hardin said what? "So men teach that if we die with just one sin against us we will be eternally lost! Nothing is worse than such legalistic ideas. We ought to shun it like the plague." So, brother Hardin is saying that one who has not repented of a sin can still go to heaven. If that is true, what about two sins. If a person says that if one has two sins he cannot go to heaven, should we shun him like the plague? What about 22 or 102? If one, then who


is too say how many? Paul said, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" (1 Cor. 6:9). Also, John said in 1 John 5:17, "All unrighteousness is sin . . ." Of course everyone will admit that the grace of God, and God through Christ, is the only means by which we can get forgiveness of sin. However, if God's grace is going to cover our sins *without* anything being done on our part, where is the passage that so states. Brother Hardin did not cite it. But I can cite one that sets forth the fact that God said that if our sins are to be forgiven they will be forgiven by the blood of Christ *when* we confess them (1 John 1:9-10). If brother Hardin has a passage that states otherwise, let him produce it. If not, then he will just have to count me (along with Paul in 1 Cor. 6:9 and John in 1 John 5:17) as one of those preachers who ought to be avoided like the plague; because I am sure going to tell people that no unrighteousness (sin) can enter into the kingdom of heaven. And with Paul and John, I think I am in pretty good company.

Conclusion: The doctrine taught by brother Hardin is gaining momentum over the country today. It is as sectarian as any Baptist doctrine ever presented. In fact, if any Baptists read his article, I would not be surprised if they don't try to "vote him into" the Baptist church and ordain him as one of their preachers. If he keeps going the way he is, he will be "with them" before long.

**NEITHER
BE YE IDOLATORS #2**

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In a previous article under the above title, I dealt with the subject of idolatry as it related, 1. To God's people under the Old Testament. 2. To God's people under the New Testament. In this article I propose to deal with.

Its Present Day Application

Certainly no one who respects God's word would dispute the teaching of the New Testament passages of scripture that forbade idolatry, as they relate to the worship of images, and their applicability to the Christians of Paul's day. Their teaching is too plain to permit any misunderstanding. What many fail to realize, however, is that they are just as applicable in this twentieth century. For human nature, being the same in all ages, man has the same proclivity toward idolatry as he had when the New Testament was being written.

I hear some one say, What can the subject of idolatry possibly have to do with us? No one in this civilized land would think of bowing down to and

worshiping an image, nor of offering sacrifices to it. I saw this attitude clearly demonstrated some years ago in a meeting which I attended. Brother Joe Cannon who had labored for some years in Japan, had returned to Canada for a visit. He had brought back with him an assortment of images that the Japanese had worshipped before they became Christians. There was quite an assortment of them, of various shapes and sizes. Brother Cannon then told of how some of the Japanese Christians had expressed deep concern over his taking those images to Canada. They said, Brother Cannon, aren't you afraid that the Canadians might start worshipping those images? Well, we smiled with a smug self-righteousness, and we felt a bit sorry for those brethren over there to think that they were afraid that we might worship images. What! Worship images in Canada? No way!

But have we ever been guilty of idolatry in other ways? Let it be remembered that worship, whether it is the worship of God, or of an idol, is the reverence and homage that one renders toward the object worshipped, or the unremitting service that one renders in pursuing some goal. Moreover worship embodies the concept of sacrificial service as a means of obtaining the favor of the one worshipped, or attaining the desired goal. Idolatry is thus not confined to the worship of images, but inheres in anything that displaces God in our life.

It is for that reason that much of the teaching of the New Testament is directed toward instilling in us a proper sense of values. Jesus said, "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things will be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). Paul said, "Set your mind on the things that are above; not on the things that are upon the earth" (Col. 3:2).

How much these admonitions are needed in this age of affluence when we enjoy a standard of living undreamed of a few years ago. Yet blinded as men so often are by a false sense of values, they have their mind set only on the things of this world, with God and the things of the kingdom crowded out of their life. It is not that we are expected to show no concern for the things of this life. It is simply a matter of priorities. Things right within themselves become idolatrous to the extent that they crowd God and his kingdom out of our life. To some of these we now give attention.

Cares, Riches, Pleasures.

In the parable of the sower, related by Jesus in the eighth chapter of Luke we have a sad story of idolatry. In his interpretation of the seed that fell on thorny ground, Jesus said, "These are they that have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Luke 8:14). Thus Jesus spoke of three things that can come between man and God, and thus become an idol.

1. Cares. Not that such cares are inherently wrong. There are certain cares that inhere in one's responsibility toward his family (1 Cor. 7:33. 1 Tim. 5:8). But when such cares reach the proportion of

sacrificing to provide his family with luxuries while God is crowded out of his life, they have become the god that he serves.

2. Riches. It is not necessarily sinful to be rich. Some of the great men of the Bible were rich men. Nor is there any inherent virtue in poverty. But when wealth becomes the goal in life and crowds God out it has thus become an idol.

I said earlier in this article that worship embodies the concept of sacrificial service. Will a man sacrifice to the god of wealth? Indeed he will! How often have we heard of some one who died in seemingly abject poverty, and it was found later on that he had thousands of dollars hidden away in furniture and dishes. They were willing to sacrifice the simple comforts of life in order to satisfy their greed for wealth.

3. Pleasures. Christianity is not intended to rob life of all pleasure. However the mad scramble for pleasures of this life is often responsible for empty seats in houses of worship. The absentees will be found at crowded beaches or sports events. They were still worshipping,—but worshipping the wrong god.

Preachers

Yes, sometimes a preacher can become an idol. I recall in my old home congregation some years ago, a member who attended services only when he knew that a certain preacher was going to be there. If he had been worshipping God he would have attended worship services every Lord's day and not just when that preacher was there.

A Fine Meeting House.

Christians are commanded to assemble (Heb. 10:25). Implied in the command is a place of assembly. Since rented facilities are seldom very satisfactory, most congregations own their building. When viewed as an expedient in carrying out the command to assemble, the meeting house is scripturally authorized by general authority. When the attractiveness of a meeting house becomes a prime consideration in one's attending worship it has got out of place and has become the thing that is really worshipped.

A woman from a large city where they had a very fashionable place of worship one time visited some friends living in a rural district. On Lord's day she attended service with them. The building was small and plain, heated by an old coal heater. The woman was heard to protest, I cannot worship in a place like this. Her words probably revealed more than she realized. Evidently she worshipped a fashionable meeting house.

Self

Then there is the old idol of self. Remembering that worship expresses itself in sacrifice, each one of us would do well to ponder this question, How much do I sacrifice for God and for his kingdom as compared to what I sacrifice for myself and my own selfish wants. We sometimes take on a heavy mort-gage to acquire a home. We borrow money from

banks and other lending institutions to buy cars, refrigerators, and freezers, knowing that we are going to have to sacrifice to make those inevitable monthly payments. No criticism is intended of such, if done wisely. But, in the midst of all this splurge of spending, I suggest that we pause and honestly face up to this question. How much have I really sacrificed for God and for his work? Would I be willing to borrow money to make it possible that the gospel might be preached somewhere? Or does our practice cry out that we love ourselves more than we love the Lord?

No, we don't worship images as the heathen do. But idolatry is a distinct possibility, and an ever present danger. It becomes a reality when we allow something, whether it be our home, our business, our occupation, money or pleasure to crowd God out of our life. The words of Paul addressed to Christians of the first century are just as applicable to this twentieth century. "Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry" (1 Cor. 10:14).

I MARVEL

Galatians 1:6

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THE SIN OF PREMARITAL SEX

There is no question but that the Bible teaches marriage as the only scriptural solution to the problem of sex. God made man and therefore knows all about his needs and desires. Satan will get the advantage of everyone who goes outside this divine arrangement. Other writers will explore this from every angle.

Instead of quoting a lot of statistics about the number of pregnant girls in our society and how premarital sex is one of the greatest problems today, let us turn to the Bible and see that the problem is not new. If we could get man, and especially our young people, to just read the Bible and go to it for the solution we would have the answer as only God can give it. Young people today have the feeling that the Bible is out of date and does not deal with the question of sex. Nothing could be farther from the truth. It reads like today's newspaper and recognizes that young people have problems with sex. This is not new but as old as time. There are many people in today's society who must think sex is something just discovered. The Bible not only meets the problem head-on but gives the solution.

King David had a beautiful daughter named Tamar. She was not only the daughter of the king but a virgin. Remember this is a story of young

people, the flower children" of antiquity. Tamar was looked upon with lust by her brother, Amnon. It must be remembered that this was before the day when it was unlawful for close kin to marry. Think of Isaac and Jacob and you will know that this is true. Tamar tells Amnon that he should marry her in verse 16 for this story is found in II Samuel, the 13th chapter. Jonadab contrived with Amnon to get him and Tamar alone, and Amnon being stronger, forced her. Tamar, a girl of unusually good sense made three points that are just as true today as they were at the time they were made.

1. "No such thing ought to be done in Israel." Israel, of all the people in the world, ought to abide by the law of God. This was against that law and therefore should not be done. We do not know how much the example of David had to do with the action of Amnon, but it played its part.

2. "Whither shall I cause my shame to go?" This brings out in graphic detail the price that the woman has to pay for such sex. From the beginning of time it usually is the woman who has to pay for such activity. Girls should remember this for after Amnon had had his way he hated Tamar. We have this in the record in verse 15. "Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her." Amnon could not even remember her name but called her "this woman" and had the servants put her out the door and bolt it after her. Oh, great was the love he had for her and he would have promised her anything. Does this sound like something our girls have ever heard before? The man will make great promises and then fail to keep them. Remember that was young people and it is all in the Bible. Do not let the world tell you that the Bible is an old-fashioned book and does not deal with the problems of today. It is unbelievable that one minute Amnon could love Tamar to the point that he could not do without her and the very next minute hate her even more. That is the way it is and our girls should recognize it. If a boy really loves a girl he will want to marry her. If he simply wants to use her he will insist on premarital sex.

3. "Thou shall be as one of the fools in Israel." The boy has a price also to pay. He never completely escapes. Regardless of how he feels about it he knows all of his life that he is guilty.

This is not, however, the end of the story; but just the beginning. Tamar had worn the robes of a king's daughter; of different colors, bright and gay. Now she puts ashes on her head and rends the garments and cries. Absalom tells Tamar to cause no trouble about the matter for Amnon is her brother, but Absalom does not forget. The Bible says he hated Amnon from that day. Two full years go by and he does not forget. He plans a sheep-shearing at Baalhazer, which was an occasion for a party. At great effort he persuades David to let Amnon go with them. We do not know if David suspected what was going to happen but after two years, perhaps the passing of time had caused him to think that all had been forgotten. At the party that followed, when Amnon was drunk, he was slain by the servants of

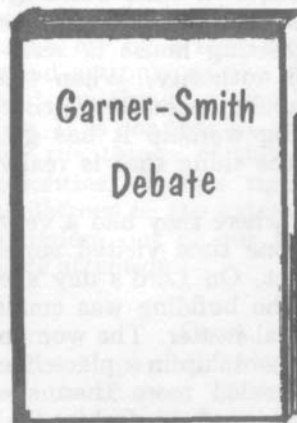
Absalom. Thus we have added murder to the sin of premarital sex. Absalom has to flee and seeks refuge in Talmai where he remains for three years. At the instigation of Joab, Absalom is allowed to return to Jerusalem but does not see David's face for another two years but finally they are reconciled.

Thus we have the ugly story of the forcing of Tamar by Amnon in II Samuel the 13th chapter and yet the modern scholarship of the world says the Bible is not up to date. This sinful act on the part of Amnon cost him his honor and his life. It divides his father's house for at least seven years and spells unhappiness for everyone. Amnon could have married Tamar and it would have been a different story. In verse 16 we have her words, "There is no cause: this evil in sending me away is greater than the other that thou didst unto me." But he would not harken unto her.

Every means of gratifying man's needs in regard to sex has been tried time and time again, for nothing is new. Marriage is the only answer, not only from a Bible standpoint but from the standpoint of society. Young people may think they do not have to pay the price for premarital sex but this is not true. The price is there and there is no escape from it. Young people, consider your bodies the gift of God and keep yourselves for marriage.

Regardless of what the world may say or do, you remember that you are setting standards for the world instead of the world setting the standards for you. Understand the words of Paul in Hebrews 13:4, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

Just Off The Press



This is a 4 night debate on baptism and apostasy between Dr. Albert Garner (Baptist) and Mr. J.T. Smith (Christian), conducted in Gainesville, Florida. We believe the admissions of Dr. Garner on the subject of apostasy are well worth the price of

the book. The prices are, \$3.00 for paper back, and \$5.00 for hard back.

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**COGDELL'S "CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST"
REVIEWED — NO. 2**

Brother Cogdell would justify the "sponsoring church" from the Scriptures because "many congregations sent money to the Church to Jerusalem, to be used for benevolent work (Acts 11:27-30; Romans 15:25-31; 2 Cor. 8,9)". Observe Acts 11:27-30 does not mention Jerusalem. Brother Cogdell, you have the wrong verse here. Acts 11:27-30 records brethren at Antioch sending to the brethren in Judea, not limited to just Jerusalem. This was during the "days of Claudius Caesar". Some twelve to fifteen years later brethren in the provinces of Macedonia, Galatia and Achaia sent to relieve the needs of the Jerusalem saints (Rom. 15:25-31; 2 Cor. 8 and 9). What is needed to justify the "sponsoring church" plan is to find in the New Testament where Jerusalem took the funds she received and began to disburse them elsewhere. Jerusalem supplied the needs of her own members which she had been unable to relieve. Jerusalem did not take the funds and put on a "campaign for Christ".

Evangelism—Benevolence

Brother Cogdell reasons that since funds were sent to a church for relief or benevolent purposes in New Testament times, that such can be done for evangelism today. He mixes the New Testament pattern for benevolence with evangelism.

In New Testament times in evangelism, churches sent wages to the preacher (2 Cor. 11:7-9; Phil, 1:3-5; 2:25; 4:15-20). They did not send to the church for the church in turn to pay the preacher.

In New Testament times churches sent to another church to relieve the saints for which the receiving church was unable to provide (Acts 11:27-30; Rom. 15:25-31; I Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8 and 9). They did not send to a preacher and let him be the one with the oversight. Brethren would do well to respect the New Testament pattern for both evangelism and benevolence.

Brother Cogdell says it makes no difference how it is done whether in benevolence or evangelism. If a church can send to a church in benevolence it can also send to a church in evangelism. He rejects the idea of two New Testament patterns, one for evangelism and one for benevolence.

Brethren understand a difference when it comes to salvation:

**Plan 1
to alien
sinner**

1. Hear
2. Believe
3. Repent
4. Confess
5. Baptized

**Plan 2
to erring
Christian**

1. Repent of sin
2. Confess sin
3. Pray for forgiveness

They understand that the plan of salvation to the alien sinner is not preached to the erring Christian and that the plan of salvation to the erring Christian is not preached to the alien sinner. Yet, if they understood no more about the two plans or patterns of salvation than they do about benevolence and evangelism, they would tell alien sinners to repent of sins, confess their sins and pray for forgiveness. Brother Cogdell, if you can interchange the pattern for benevolence for the pattern of evangelism, why can you not interchange the pattern for the erring Christian for the pattern for the alien sinner? You reject the pattern of New Testament evangelism by confusing benevolence with evangelism. Why do you not do away with the pattern of salvation for the alien sinner, and teach aliens and erring Christians to repent, confess and pray to be saved? One would make as much scriptural sense as the other.

Brother Cogdell says "God has not given us any explicit instructions as to how we shall work together for ... evangelizing the world" and "the basic point, which we have made over and over, is that God has not specified how congregations are to work together".

Brother Cogdell doesn't think what he says would justify a Missionary Society, yet he makes the same arguments J. B. Briney used to defend the society when he debated Brother W. W. Otey in Louisville in 1908. Said Briney, "they are voluntary organizations" (page 160 of Otey - Briney Debate). Cogdell says "funds are given voluntarily" as the elders are "using an organization".

Note Cogdell says God did not tell us "how" to cooperate and J. B. Briney said, "I stated that the Saviour said Go, and that I said there was silence as to how, leaving the brethren to decide as to methods and details in regard to the matter—leaving them largely to exercise their own judgment with reference to it" (page 287 of the Otey — Briney Debate).

Brother Cogdell, if God has not told us "how" to cooperate to preach the gospel, then what is wrong with the organization of the Missionary Society as originally purposed before abuses set in? Or do you endorse it? If God has not given an order, then there can be no disorder. Any arrangement to preach the gospel would have to be endorsed by Brother Cogdell. Let Brother Cogdell describe an arrangement he would oppose that would not condemn his "sponsoring church" arrangement.

(More to Follow)

MY SECOND TRIP TO THE PHILIPPINES

Jady W. Copeland

In early May, as Wallace Little, Frank Butler and I flew over the blue Pacific after a tiring and profitable trip to the Philippines three years ago (1973) Wallace said, "Let's all go back in 1977." I really never expected it to happen, but last year when Frank wrote me to go back with him, I gave it serious consideration and finally said "no." He then got Harold Tribble of Bremerton, Washington to go with him, but when Frank had to back out Harold called me, wanting me to go with him since he wanted one to go that had previously been. I finally consented to go.

Thus on April 6, 1976 (a year earlier than Wallace suggested) I boarded a plane in Fayetteville, and after a stop in Honolulu, where I preached on Wednesday night at the Leeward Church (where John Miller now preaches) I proceeded on to Manila, arriving there on Friday morning, April 9. As usual, a goodly number of brethren were at the airport to meet me, including Harold Trimble who had preceded me to Manila about a week. So we were "off and running" on a very tight schedule (the Filipinos don't want you wasting time while there) that saw me preaching in 14 churches a total of 36 times in 25 days, and taking into consideration the time of answering questions after many of the services, I suppose I preached the equivalent of 40 to 50 sermons, sometimes preaching three or four times per day. I visited only one church that I had visited three years earlier and that was in the city of Baguio, where Andrew B. Gawe is the very capable preacher.

Since much has been written about the work in the Philippines, I will not give a detailed account of our trip (and Harold preached as much or more than I) but it might be good to have brethren know our opinion of the work there from year to year by those who visit the country. Since I had been before, I think I can see things more objectively this time, since the newness of the trip had worn off the first time around. However, it was still a very interesting trip.

Improvements

I could see much progress the second time around. There are more and larger churches, more buildings, more preachers and a fine attitude among brethren there. Brethren are having much success in converting people — not only from the rank and file of people, but preachers, teachers and capable and educated men and women. We baptized (among about 55 or 60 baptisms) two sectarian preachers while there this time. In the main, preachers work hard, talk to a lot of people personally, and do a fine job of preaching the gospel. We visited a few churches that had a regular attendance of about 100 souls. They have the custom there of counting only the adults in the congregation, so the record boards portray only the actual members or adults who have been baptized. If they included the children in their attendance in such places as Lam-

bayong (where Virgil Villanueva preaches) the board would show well over 100 people. We had upwards of 200 in attendance there over the week-end we were there, but two or three smaller churches came in on the particular day to worship with us during the meeting. Virgil is doing a very good work there in the heart of the Moslem country, where we could not go three years ago. There is still some fighting near there, and we heard gunshots a couple of times when we were there, but they told us it was simply the police "keeping the citizens alert." I don't know about the "citizens" but it certainly alerted this, "non-citizen."

Some Needs in the Philippines

I had debated with myself before I made up my mind to go as to whether we should go. The question in my mind was, "Is it worth the expense and trouble?" I think it is, but I also would like to sound this bit of warning. As I told the Filipinos, "I did not go to Americanize the Filipinos." And they need to realize that eventually the churches there must (to a degree at least) become self-supporting. We did some work along that line while there, and others who have gone have done the same. However, I do not see in the near future, many churches there supporting their own preachers. This is simply a matter of economics. The people are very poor in the main, and they are not able to support a man. Many are barely able to survive. But sooner or later, American brethren will tire of sending all the support to a man and they need to do some work along that line. I have written a number of Filipino brethren to this effect—especially those who have written for support. I am not saying churches and individuals should stop the support. In fact I would strongly urge others to send more support than is now being sent. But I do believe they need to begin to realize that support from the states may one day drop off, and they will have to make it "on their own."

And this brings up another problem. There is always the danger of a man wanting support just as soon as he is baptized. He sees the preacher who baptized him making \$200 a month from the states, and he wants that support too. This is the reason we have (even though it puts an extra burden on them) to rely on some of the proven men to give us recommendations for supporting a man. I talked with Romulo B. Agduma about this problem, and he recognizes it is there. But he is willing to take all the "brick-bats" so that worthy men may be able to get support. If he does not recommend a man for support, then he is criticized. If he does, and then the man turns out to be unworthy (and this happens), then he gets the "brick-bats" from the states. So caution is needed along the line to be sure. And brethren in the states who support men need to realize that Romulo B. Agduma's judgment might be something less than perfect just like mine or yours may be. He might recommend a man who turns out to be unworthy ... and I might do the same thing. But I assure you in the case of Romulo B. Agduma, it would be a mistake of the head and not of the heart.

Should Americans Continue To Go?

Often this question arises. In my judgment it is

worthwhile for American brethren to go to the Philippines if caution is exercised. As stated, we must not try to "Americanize" them. Their customs are different and I caught myself asked if the things they did in their worship (that differs from our customs) were right or wrong. And after careful consideration, I concluded in most cases that it was purely a matter of custom. And the Lord did not bind custom on us.

Americans do not need to go to the Philippines to convert souls, though there is nothing wrong with preaching "first principles" there. The Filipinos can convert their own people better than we can. But to go to encourage, teach young preachers, get information as to support, etc., I think trips are worthwhile. I do believe we need to stay out of their problems as much as possible. And they do have problems and about the only thing I know to do is to preach the gospel like I would at home. For example, there is the problem of "preacher jealousy" there. And I preached along that line several times while there. Good men can be of great aid in the matter of teaching dozens of young preachers along the line of the deeper things of the gospel. The encouraging thing about the churches there is that there are many young men who are capable and willing to preach the gospel.

Need For Materials

Besides the need for support for preachers, nearly every church needs tracts, song books, literature for their teachers (even a book for the teacher only) and Bibles. Many do not own a Bible. It is far better to send money to the man there to buy Bibles for they can purchase them in their own dialects and besides you can send the check for thirty-one cents whereas it would take several dollars to send a Bible air mail. If churches or individuals are of the disposition to send such materials, many of us can furnish the names of churches who can use them. Also a devastating flood has hit Manila since we left, and much suffering to brethren has come as a result of that. So your dollars can well be used in the Philippines. Souls as well as mouths are hungry there—some for the gospel and some for food.

Earthquakes Hit Philippines

On August 17 an earthquake measuring 8.0 on the Richter scale struck Mindanao sending ashore a 30 foot tidal wave in Zamboanga. The Philippine government reports over 3,000 dead, over 3,000 missing (and presumed dead) and 175,000 homeless. Prominently mentioned in the news releases is Pagadian City where Eduardo Ramiro, R. G. Carino, D. L. Aennle and other faithful brethren labor and where there are a large number of brethren. Cotabato Province also suffered damage. We have received no word yet as to damage suffered by our brethren. Pray for them and stand by to help, if necessary.

Restoration Footnotes

Earl Kimbrough

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WHERE THEN IS THE BODY?

Jacob Creath, Jr. was in Gaston, North Carolina on October 15, 1868, but he planned to be back in Missouri a few weeks later. In a brief note to D. T. Wright, editor of the *Christian Pioneer*, he wrote: "Dear Bro. Wright: Please publish that I will preach what is called a funeral Sermon in Shelbyville, Mo. the third Sunday in Nov. next at 11 o'clock A.M."

Considering the distance between the two states, the slow modes of communication and travel, and the absence of Ancient Egyptian embalmers, the letter might give one pause to wonder about the body of the deceased. However, Creath's notice perhaps reflects a lingering custom of pioneer times. "An old-time country funeral was an occasion of no ordinary importance. A simple service of song and prayer was usually held at the grave, but the regular funeral sermon was preached at a place and time duly appointed and widely advertised, weeks and often months after the burial." (F. D. Srygley, *Seventy Years in Dixie*, p. 187.)

This explains the long delay in the funeral sermon, but what about the time of the service? Eleven o'clock Sunday morning! Surely a man of Creath's conservative bent would not take the worship hour to eulogize a man. There are two apparent explanations. Since Creath doesn't identify the dead, it may be that the funeral was intended for the church. (We know some that seem about ready for a funeral.) In this case, the Sunday morning hour would be an appropriate time. But more likely, the eleven o'clock hour was not the time for "the regular worship." Brethren in those days often met on Sunday morning to hear a sermon, then dismissed for lunch, and reassembled in the afternoon for observing the Lord's Supper. Of course, Creath's method of preaching "what is called a funeral Sermon" may have simply been to preach a gospel sermon that would be appropriate in any gathering of Christians.

Anyway, Creath's funeral advertisement provides us with an interesting view of how funeral customs have changed in the last one hundred years. Customs still differ in the various parts of the country, but we are glad the prolonged wait for the funeral sermon is a thing of the past. By the time it came around the preacher might forget which way the deceased went.

Oaks Gowen Passes Away

With much grief, we report the death of another stalwart soldier in the Lord's army. Oaks Gowen of Orlando, Florida passed away on Sunday, August 15 after suffering for two years. The last 20 years of his life were spent preaching in Bradenton, Jacksonville and Orlando, all in Florida. Our sympathy to his wife, Bernidine and their two children.

Please Help Us

Once again, the Postal Service has thrown us a "curve." Now we must pay 25 c for every address return. We have to pay for 50-75 of these each month. PLEASE — send us your change of address **before** you move so you will not miss an issue of the paper, and so we will be **spared this** expense.

CORRECTION—Berwyn, Illinois meeting date is October 11-17.

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

J. EDWARD NOWLIN, 109 Cedar Rd., Perry, Florida 32347 —The work of the Lord here goes well. We now have more men in the church than any time since the liberals pulled out and split the church over the church's refusal to support human institutions over twenty years ago. We occupied our new building in February, 1972 and last Sunday we burned the mortgage note on it. This opens the way for us to be self-supporting soon. I have preached in meetings at Crossville, AL and Palatine, IL this spring. In fact, we saw red buds blooming and leaves putting out three times this year, including here in February, Crossville in March-April, and Palatine (Chicago area) the second Sunday in May.

ATTENTION CHRISTIANS IN VAN BUREN — ALMA, ARKANSAS AREA

Families who hold fast the faithful word are needed to move to the Van Buren-Alma, Arkansas area to help in establishing a church. At present there is not a church in Crawford County that does not support the institutions. For further information, write Mrs. R. A. Roe, Route 1, Box 360, Alma, Arkansas 72921. **JIMMY TUTEN**, 111 S. 19th Court, Dade City, Florida 33525—During the week of June 7-13 I conducted my second gospel meeting at Richlands, Virginia. Herb Braswell supports himself and is doing an excellent job of preaching full time for this little band of disciples meeting at 203 Henderson Street. Though the membership numbers about 25, they are loyal, devoted and zealous and an inspiration to larger groups. Interest was excellent throughout with the number increasing Monday night through Saturday without exception. It was a pleasure being with them again. I look forward to being with them in the future. Since my last report on the Dade City work, we have had five restorations.

DEBATE IN ATHENS, ALABAMA

A debate on Bible classes and women teachers will be conducted in the auditorium of the Middle School in Athens, Alabama September 13, 14, 16 and 17. On Monday and Tuesday nights, Hiram Hutto will affirm: The scriptures teach that a local congregation may arrange for the teaching of the word of God to be done in simultaneous Bible classes, with women teaching some of the classes. Jerry Cutter of Oklahoma City will deny this. On Thursday and Friday nights Jerry Cutter will affirm: The Scriptures teach that an assembly of the church of Christ for the communion must use only one cup (literal drinking vessel) in the distribution of the fruit of the vine. Hiram Hutto will deny this. Carroll Sutton is to moderate for Hiram Hutto while Bobby Pepper will moderate for Jerry Cutter.

DEBATE IN WARREN, ARKANSAS

Hubert C. Wilson of the south Martin St. church of Christ met Marvin Hicks of the United Pentecostal Church in Corpus Cristi, Texas in a debate in Warren, Arkansas August 2, 3, 4 and 5. The debate covered the subjects of the Godhead, Holy Spirit Baptism and Tongue Speaking today. We are sorry we did not get this notice in time to announce it before the debate took place.

WORD FROM GUTHRIE AND MURIEL DEAN Nashville, Tennessee—After two trips to the hospital and open heart surgery, I am up again and back into the work as of July. The Lord and the brethren have been mighty good to us. The people of Franklin Road have been extremely kind and generous. They have borne the major part of the expenses; even though churches and individuals from elsewhere have personally helped us with bills. In fact, even though all hospital and related costs have still not been tallied, we are happy to announce that we need no more financial aid for this illness. "Our cup runneth over."

We thank all of you from the depth of our hearts for your love, your interest, your cards, your calls, and your prayers. We are humbled, and felt so unworthy as the "best wishes" came pouring in from many interested friends, including scores of churches and fellow-preachers. If we can ever be of service to any of you, in any way, and at any time, please call on us. Continue to pray for Muriel and me that the Lord may have further work for us to do in His kingdom here below. We have such a good God, and we certainly want to leave this world prepared to meet him. And in as much as possible, we want to be at peace with all men, when that time comes. Thanks again, and may God richly bless each of you. And thanks again, Lord.

JACK GIBBERT, Route 4, Box 66, Newport, NC 28570—After almost 7 years with the church in Virginia Beach, VA I have moved to work with the church in Newport, NC. Doug Lyle of Richmond, VA follows me in the work at Virginia Beach. Brother Lyell's address and phone number will be the same as ours has been for the past 7 years, so please put him on your bulletin mailing list.

IRVEN LEE, P.O. Box 866, Hartselle, Alabama 35640—As of July 1, 1976 I have decided to accept no more invitations for gospel meetings out of this immediate area except on rare and unusual occasions. I do not plan to cancel the meetings that I have already promised. It has not been easy to make this decision because meetings have always been very pleasant efforts for me. There has been no further set back in health since the heart attack and heart surgery of 1974, from which I have made satisfactory recovery. I just do not have the strength to do proper local work and be away part of the time in meetings.

GARY HARGIS, Box 715, Byron, Minnesota 55920—The past two months has been a time of elation here. We have had six baptisms and three restorations. One we are especially proud of is Pat Johnson's husband, Jerry. Pat was one of the original members here. She wrote a much questioned letter that brought us here in the beginning. Many preachers who read her article were upset at it because of her bluntness. The membership is now 34 with attendance 46-50. Contributions last month with five Sundays was \$950. We have purchased a lot on which to build and plan to start next April. If you know of anyone with money to lend on church bonds please contact me as soon as possible. We will pay 8% interest on such bonds. Three months ago two families left us to start meeting in Red Wing (50 miles north of

here). They have had 4 baptisms and 3 restorations lately bringing their total to 23. Two of the members are doing the preaching.

DEATHS

RUSSELL H. PARKS—It is with deep sorrow that we report the untimely death of Russell H. Parks, preacher for the church in Terre Haute, Indiana. Funeral services were conducted in South Bend, Indiana by the writer on March 15. He began preaching late in life and desired to work with a small church that could provide a place to live while he lived on his retirement income. In October, 1975 he began work with Central church in Terre Haute. On March 4 he was returning home when he became sick. Stepping from his car to the sidewalk, he was attacked and brutally beaten by some one or ones who placed him in his car and drove him to another part of town, taking his billfold and leaving him paralyzed from the neck down. Some 12 hours later a child heard his call for help and summoned assistance who took him to the hospital. He passed away one week after the brutal attack. Our sympathy is expressed to all his family. His cheery smile and encouraging words will long be remembered. —Cecil Belcher, South Bend, Indiana

MAJOR R. QUALLS—We lament the loss of Major R. Quails, a faithful Christian and an elder of the Boston Street congregation in Aurora, Colorado. Although we weep over his loss, we rejoice over the fond memories of this saint. He departed this life on May 27, 1976 and funeral services were conducted by this writer, May 29, assisted by Roy H. Lanier, Jr. and John Flannery. Major Quails was born in Hillsboro, Texas in 1895, one of twelve children. He met Myrtle Thompson in 1923 at the old South Denver church in Denver, Colorado and they were married. To this union were born two children: Richard and Norma Jean. Richard Quails serves as one of our deacons at Boston Street. The Quails family attended the Sherman Street church in Denver until 1954 when Boston Street had its beginning and they began meeting with it.

Major Quails had served as an elder at Sherman Street and was serving as one of the elders at Boston Street in Aurora at the time of his death. He was generous, always ready to help those who were in need and he spent much time studying the word of God. He was an encouragement to me as a gospel preacher and J. C. Moody and I, who presently remain as elders at Boston Street, will miss his counsel.

Our work at Boston Street continues to be pleasant and fruitful. We have just concluded a good vacation Bible school. This church presently aids in the financial support of four gospel preachers in addition to me, and commitments are made for the support of some additional men. We have many visitors from all over the nation. When in Colorado visit us at 1297 Boston Street in Aurora. —Hoyt Houchen, Aurora, Colorado.

JAMES W. MIDDLETON, SR.—At the age of 75 years, this beloved brother departed this life June 11, 1976 at Kermit, Texas where he had preached the last two years for the Parkview church. He died of lung cancer. Brother Middleton and I labored together in the states of California, Oregon and Texas and were close personal friends. He was a lover of poetry, and had composed

several poems, some of which were published, not the least of which was the Book of Genesis in poetry and the Book of Acts in poetry. But he will be best remembered for his great love for the truth and his insatiable desire to preach and teach it. His body was interred June 14, 1976 in the Rosemont Burial Park in Wichita Falls, Texas —Choice L. Bryant, Arlington, Texas

PREACHERS NEEDED

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA—The church in Anchorage needs a full-time gospel preacher to work with a growing and stable congregation. The meeting house is paid for. Attendance averages 100 or more. We are able to furnish full support. We would prefer a man around 35, married, who would agree to work with us for at least three years. If interested, write to Dwayne Lee, Box 20, Caryboo Street, Eagle River, Alaska 99577.

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA—This small congregation is looking for a full-time preacher who can supply or locate much of his own support. Some congregations in the area may help. Contact: Ed Fielding, 5166 Laird Lane, Jupiter, FL 33458. Phone (305) 746-0343.

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA—The Lower Richland church in Columbia is in dire need of a preacher. He must bring the majority of his support. Columbia is the capital of South Carolina. The church meets in a small but new brick building on a 1 2/3 acre plot and will be debt free by January, 1977. If interested please write or call: Ernest W. Porter, 7268 Fontana Dr., Columbia, SC 29209. Phone (803) 776-2229.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, ENGLAND—The church in Tunbridge Wells, England is looking for a preacher willing to come here and help us. We have our own 12 year old building which is free of debt. There are 12 local members with 2-3 who meet with us as possible. At present there are three American families in membership with us. We in turn help where possible in a small church in Brighton (Sussex) of 8 members, and Kentish Town, London where R. B. Scott preaches. Two preachers (and family) have helped here over the past 6-7 years. Fred Melton was here from 1971-74 and then in Bristol for 8-9 months. Since February, 1974, Billy Murrell has been here. They are returning to the U.S.A. in mid-September. There is a desperate need for preachers throughout England and especially in the Southeast. There is a population of several million within a 30 mile radius and just two small congregations. Who can help? Who can come? Churches of the New Testament order go back over 170 years in the United Kingdom. At present there are about 70 churches, mainly in the Midlands and North. Basically they are conservative but with a growing influx of liberal support and preachers from the states, there is a growing tendency to become more addicted to liberal ideas. Anyone interested should contact: Derek L. Daniell, 34 North Farm Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 3XD, England. **JULIAN R. SNELL**, 4724 E. Manslick Rd., Louisville, KY 40219 — I need the following back issues of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES to complete my set and will pay a reasonable price for these: Volume I. Numbers 1, 2, and 3 (January, February and March, 1960); Volume VI, Number 4 (April, 1965), Volume XI, Number 3 (March, 1970).