

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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MEDLEY OF MATTERS

Regular Articles For Searching The Scriptures

There seems to be less time now to do what has to be done in the Lord's work and in the other responsibilities of life than a few years ago. I suppose the accumulation of years in one's life and the crucible demands of the present times combine to explain the situation. At least I shall use that excuse for the present.

Brother Connie Adams has asked me to write more regularly for *Searching The Scriptures*, and I have promised to do so. I should have been doing this for a long time without having to be "urged" repeatedly to do so. In fact, there are several things that must be said to arouse greater interest in "searching the scriptures" daily to "Prove all things; hold that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21), and to expose false doctrine and practice. This is the reason this religious paper exists, and it is the objective of every writer.

My Meeting Work

I have had a greater number of meetings this year than I have had in any one year in the previous fifteen years. More meetings are being scheduled for the next three to five years. In addition, plans are being made to return to Italy and parts of Europe next year to preach the gospel and encourage the faithful brethren there. I want to do all the good I can in the remaining years of my life. As long as God grants me health and opens the door of opportunity I shall do the work of an evangelist

with singleness of heart. At this writing I am engaged in a good meeting with the Brown Street church in Akron, Ohio where brother Weldon Warnock is the faithful and effective evangelist.

My State of Health

I have received a large number of letters during the past four months inquiring about my health. I believe I am in better condition in every way than I have been in several years. The physical difficulties discovered last March have been normalized by medical treatment and proper diet and right care of myself so far. I am very grateful for the many prayers on my behalf and for the many cards and letters I have received. No words can express my gratitude to you for these expressions of love and concern. I continually thank Almighty God for His great and good gifts day by day.

Reply to James W. Adams

I shall reply soon to the editorial in the August issue of *The Gospel Guardian* by brother James W. Adams. The divorce and remarriage issue is becoming more and more a problem with which churches must deal. This issue has been pressed upon brethren both by open challenges for public debates and by public sanction and acceptance of adulterous marriages until the issue had to be met with the word of God.

Because of the compromising attitude toward the consequences of these adulterous marriages upon the church and others, congregations are having internal troubles and even dividing. The responsibility for this condition must be laid at the door of those who teach that the "divorced" person as well as the one who "put away" their spouse may remarry, repent of their adultery, keep their second spouse and all is well with God. I do not believe it! It is contrary to sound doctrine! But those who teach and sanction this sinful relationship in the church are encouraging adultery among members of the church which faithful elders and brethren cannot scripturally tolerate. The teachers who allow this situation to develop unchallenged by their permissive attitudes must bear the guilt for the problem among brethren.

Sin Is Sin

The very nature of sin is an abomination unto God in any form and to any degree. Somehow most of us catalog sin into classes that make some acceptable and others intolerable. Sin necessarily implies law. Without law there is no sin (Rom. 4:15). The perfect law of liberty (Jas. 1:25; 2:12), is unchangeable (Gal. 1:6-12) and will equip a man unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

There is no middle ground between sin and righteousness. One is either a sinner or he is a servant of righteousness (Rom. 6:16, 17). Jesus said you are either with me or against me (Matt. 12:30). Sin is transgression of the law of the Lord—the word of God (1 John 3:4). Sin is knowing to do good and not doing it (Jas. 4:17). Of course, good is that which is ordained by God (Eph. 2:10). Sin is all unrighteousness (1 John 5:17). It is simply all things that oppose the will of Christ. All that we do is to be done in the name of Christ (Col. 3:17). Sin is anything that is not done from genuine conviction based upon the word of God (Rom. 14:23).

We do not minimize sin by saying or even thinking: "Everyone is doing it." Neither do we make a sinful word or deed righteous by claiming it to be "the lesser of two evils." Sin is sin; evil is evil. If we expect to be saved from the horrible consequences of sin in eternity, we must recognize sin for what it is and obey the truth by which our souls are purified (1 Peter 1:22). This truth is the word of God that lives and abides forever (1 Peter 1:23).

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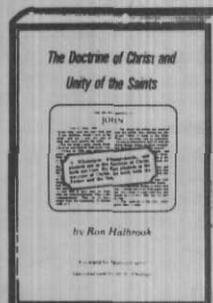
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The Doctrine of Christ and the Unity of the Saints

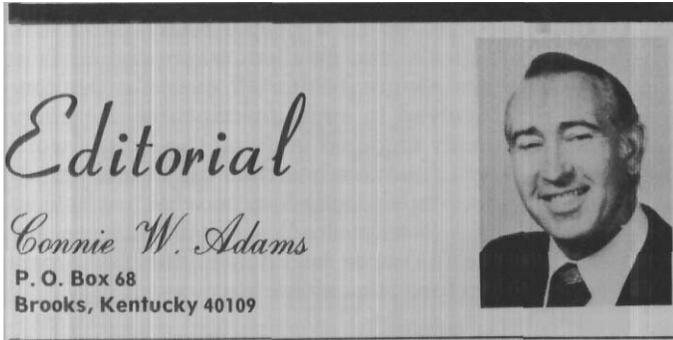
by Ron Halbrook



This new publication will be useful to those who are studying the unity-in-diversity issue. Brother Halbrook gives especial attention to 2 John 9 and the "doctrine of Christ" mentioned in that verse. *Inasmuch as this has been a pivotal passage for those who have advocated a unity-in-diversity, a study of this book will be tremendously helpful.*

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HOW MUCH MORE WILL THEY TAKE?

We have often wondered just how far the leaders of the liberal cause among churches of Christ will have to go before some of the members who say they still respect the Bible, will decide to "come out from among them" and take their stand with congregations which are standing for the truth. Some of the changes from the old paths have been so subtle and gradual that many have accepted them without much resistance or even forethought. But the changes coming now are no longer gradual and they are far from subtle. It is not a matter of some departing them the faith "someday." The evidence is clear that many have already departed and that "someday" is NOW. Consider the following cases.

Ira North and the Inter-Faith Project

Ira North, editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, and preacher at the large Madison, Tennessee congregation is pictured in the Nashville Banner in June of this year along with a Catholic priest and a Jewish rabbi as they together inspected an interfaith project in Dallas. Several religious leaders from Nashville were chosen by the mayor of that city to study and make recommendations for a similar project for Nashville to coincide with Nashville's bicentennial. The press has repeatedly referred to this as an "inter-faith project." This has brought brother North under considerable fire in Nashville and from across the country. In an editorial in the *Gospel Advocate* dated August 10, 1978, he said it was being reported that "we are leading in an effort to establish an inter-faith institution in Nashville. Nothing could be further from the truth."

Well, call it "institution" or "project", the press and the reading public of Nashville think Ira North is a leader in this effort to establish some sort of a religious monument which will be acceptable to people of all faiths in Nashville. He is co-chairman of the project. If it is not a religious project (as Colly Caldwell so well put it in his August 28, 1978 bulletin), why is Ira North involved as a "religious leader"? If it is not a religious activity, why did he need and seek the approval of the Madison elders, which he said he did?

If the teaching of 2 Cor. 6:14-18 does not apply in this case, it would be hard to find one where said passage does apply. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what com-

munion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you . . ."

When Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem sent word to Nehemiah for him to "Come let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono" (Neh. 6:2), Nehemiah would not leave the Lord's work to meet with these compromisers and ecumenical strategists of his day, but Ira North did go down to Dallas with modern-day Sanballats, Tobiahs and Gesheims and even had his picture made with them. Do you suppose Paul would have considered some sort of inter-faith shrine on Mars Hill? He might have been a lot better received had he done so! Brother North's associate editor, Guy N. Woods, has had so many debates with the likes of brother North's companions in this project, that none of them would have felt very comfortable having him along. And by the way, we would certainly be interested to hear what brother Woods has to say these days about such goings on. We know very well what he has said in the past.

Cross Roads Church Buys Fanning Springs

A headline in the Gainesville, Florida daily paper back in July read "Cross Roads Church of Christ of Gainesville Buys Fanning Springs." The article states: "Fanning Springs and some 140 acres have been purchased by the Cross Roads Church of Christ, Inc., of Gainesville. . . . The church plans to have the property and springs open to the public most of the time but also has plans for using it as a gathering place for church groups. Plans call for construction of campgrounds, small camping cottages, a concession stand at the springs and a three-fold convention building which can be used as a cafeteria, a meeting center and a gymnasium. They also have plans for renovating the old motel on the grounds and it is understood the offices of the Tri-County Senior Citizens Association will be moved from the motel to the old Chiefland Restaurant site on Main Street in downtown Chiefland."

May we ask what business a church has with such facilities unless it is committed to the social gospel, lock, stock and barrel? Where is the scriptural authority for a congregation to so use its funds? Interestingly, a few months ago I sat beside a woman on a plane headed for Florida who told me she had visited Cross Roads several times with friends, but then commented "They are just too liberal for me." Oh, by the way, that woman is a Baptist!

13 Church Supported Hospitals

There is a project called Medical Outreach, Inc. which operates under the oversight of the Scott Blvd.

congregation in Decatur, Georgia. In a recent letter sent out by them appealing for funds they said: "The best estimates that we can gather tell us that there are about 13 hospitals or clinics operated by churches of Christ in various mission areas around the world. At this writing 5 of them have doctors or nurses. They have to limp along with stop-gap staffing . . . waiting for medical missionaries that seem to never arrive. . . . "Medical Outreach is a program under the oversight of the elders of the Decatur church of Christ. It is made up of a group of Christians who have determined that steps can and should be taken to:

1. maintain the commitment of our medical missionaries in training, and
2. facilitate more involvement of our practicing physicians in world outreach through medicine."

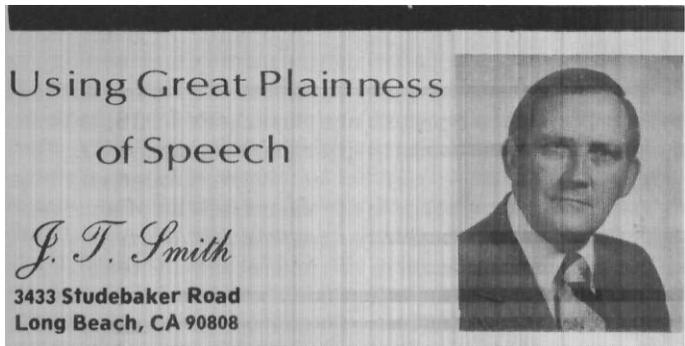
There is no difference in church operated and financed clinics and hospitals in this country and in other countries. If it is right to support, from the church treasury, doctors and nurses 10,000 miles from home, then the same thing would be right in this country. These are called "medical missionaries" which means that the end sought is evangelistic while the means to that end is medical care. This was the basic philosophy which prompted huge give away programs of rice in Japan and pasta in Italy after World War II. None of this converted a soul to Christ. Only the gospel has the power to do that (Rom. 1:16). While it is to be expected of Christians everywhere that they are to be concerned with the plight of the needy about them, physical relief must not become the means to the end sought. This is the same rationale for churches spending huge outlays of money for camp sites, fellowship halls, gymnasiums and things of like nature. We have heard brethren say, "we will not tolerate the church putting the schools in the budget." Well, many who have said that in the past are yet in churches which now have schools in the budget. Some have said "I believe it is unscriptural for congregations to build and maintain hospitals and I will not tolerate it." But there are at least 13 such operations now, and several retirement centers owned and operated by churches of Christ, and the tolerance level seems to be getting higher all the time.

Those Million Dollar Collections

The latest fad among some of the larger congregations now is to have a drive to reach over one million dollars in contributions on a single Sunday. At least three churches have made it and one barely missed. In each case these churches are involved in huge building expansion programs. The proposed expanded facilities are not all just for the purpose of providing seating and facilities for worship and Bible classes, either. They include gymnasiums and other strange facilities for a congregation which claims to be "of Christ" and which proposes to "speak as the oracles of God."

And so, we wonder again, how much more will it take to awaken some to the realization that these are not

churches "of Christ" at **all**, but the empty shells of what once purported to be a people ready to "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent." There are congregations all over the country which are not involved in such unscriptural trappings and which are busily engaged in doing the Lord's work in the Lord's way. You have heard us called bad names now and have been misinformed as to what we believe and practice. Now, why don't you investigate for yourself? How much deeper into denominational errors must you be led before you resolve to come out?



DOES WATER SAVE A PERSON?

I never cease to be amazed at people and how they actually miss and misconstrue what you have said. When we discuss the necessity of baptism in obedience to a command of God, people in the religious world immediately say, "oh, he believes that water is the saviour." In fact I recently received a letter from a person chiding me for teaching that one must be baptized in order to be saved by asking the question, "Did water ever save anyone? NO! It's Jesus's shed blood which saves—not water . . ." Now I want you to very carefully observe my answer. I agree with the above statement 100%. I do not believe there is any power in the water (in and of itself) to save any person! Neither do I believe that baptism alone will save any one. Only penitent believers who are immersed in water will be saved.

Jesus stated in at least two different places that His **blood** is what saves us. If one denies this he denies what the Lord said in Matt. 26:28 and Rev. 1:5. However, it is not a question of what saves us, it is a question of when the benefits of Christ's blood are applied to our souls that we might receive the remission of our sins. Notice the following illustration. Jesus said His **blood** was shed "FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS" (Matt. 26:28). Peter said we are **baptized** "FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS" (Acts 2:38). Is there a contradiction between what Christ said and what Peter said? NO! Christ's blood is **WHAT** saves us, baptism is when we receive the benefits of Christ's blood, for that is when we are said to receive the remission of sins.

But again! John said, "Christ. . . WASHED us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5). Saul was told, "Arise and be baptized and WASH away thy sins . . ." (Acts 22:16). Now is there a contradiction in what John said in Rev. 1:5 and what Paul said in Acts 22:16?

ABSOLUTELY NOT! The blood of Christ is **WHAT** washes away our sins, and baptism is **WHEN** they are washed away by the blood of Christ.

Conclusion

No person has ever been saved without receiving the benefits of the blood of Christ. However, I know of no other point of obedience, according to the teaching of the New Testament, where anyone (who was not a child of God) was ever said to be washed or receive remission of sins **EXCEPT** when he was baptized. I must conclude from this that baptism is the act of the alien sinner that completes his obedience to the commands of God that he might be saved.

If you have not received Scriptural baptism (it's only for believers—the proper subject, Mark 16:16; it is immersion or burial—the proper mode, Rom!" 6:3-6, Col. 2:12; it is to be a burial in water — the proper element, Acts 8:38, Acts 10:47; it is for the remission of sins—the right purpose, Acts 2:38), then I must warn you that you have not been saved according to the teaching of the Word of God. For, if you were baptized as a baby (an unbeliever), and/or had water sprinkled on you (which is not baptism), and were baptized because someone told you that you were already saved (and not for the remission of sins) then you have not received Bible baptism.

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PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK

The world of baseball was recently titillated by the record smashing campaign of Pete Rose. The Cincinnati third baseman hit safely in 44 consecutive games and busted previous National League records right and left (he's a switch hitter) in the process. He fell short of the all-time major league record in this area which is still held by Joe DiMaggio who hit in 56 straight games.

A lot has been written about this matter, and you may wonder why it should be mentioned in *Searching the Scriptures*. Well, I ran across an interesting tidbit in the *Nashville Banner* regarding it that deserves some consideration in the department of spiritual matters.

Ever heard of Sidney Stonestreet?

Rose said, "He played for the Rhode Island Reds in the Chickenfeathers League. You probably never heard of him. I invented him. He hit in 48 straight games back in the 1880's."

Why would Rose invent such a character? The answer is quite logical, and it underscores a very important point: **"You see, after I tied Keeler's record, I got to have something to shoot for between him and DiMaggio. So I just made up Sidney Stonestreet and his 48 total."**

Nevermind that he didn't make it. The fact is, if he hadn't set his sight on some goals, he would have never challenged the record. He knew the necessity of specific, well-defined goals, which were within possible reach! When Mr. Rose stepped up to the plate, his goal was not some vague notion of being a good ballplayer. His goal was to get a hit, and inch a little closer to Stonestreet's 48.

In the Christian life, we need to set goals. Ultimately, our goal should be going to Heaven: ". . . **this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus**" (Phil. 3:13, 14).

But how much easier that will be if we will just set some more immediate goals along the way. What if everyone of us resolved to share the gospel with one lost soul a week? What if each one resolved to thoroughly study some particular subject or book of the Bible during each six months or year? What if each of us resolved to exercise ourselves more fervently unto godliness in some particular aspect in which we know we're falling short?

Goals are essential to success!

Candidates Reward!

"Politics make strange bed partners." That's an old saw I've heard all my life. I have no idea of its historical basis, though one's imagination can conjure up some interesting possibilities.

The truth it represents is a bit more evident, however. One scriptural example is found in Luke 23:12: "And the same day (the day of Christ's crucifixion, K.G.) Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves."

I have mixed feelings about a lot of things, and politics is one of them. On the one hand, I see the need for decent, God-fearing people to become involved in political affairs. On the other hand, I practically tremble when I hear of a Christian running for office. The casualty rate is high!

A clipping was recently submitted to me which describes a candidate's plight of yesteryear. It was taken from an aged Arkansas newspaper. Perhaps you will agree with me that politics haven't changed much:

"Lost four months and 20 days canvassing, lost 1,200 hours of sleep thinking about the election, lost 49 acres of corn, and a whole lot of sweet potatoes, lost two front teeth and much hair in a personal encounter with my opponent, donated one beef, two shoats, and five sheep of barbecue, gave away two pair suspenders, five calico dresses, and fifteen baby rattlers. Kissed two hundred and twenty-six babies, kindled 14 kitchen fires, put up eight stoves, cut 14 cords of wood, carried 24 buckets of water, gathered seven wagon loads of corn, shelled 39 gallons of purple hull peas, pulled 575 bundles of fodder, and churned 164 times. Walked 4,060 miles, shook 9,080 hands, told 10,000 lies, talked enough to make 10,000 volumes, attended 26 revivals, was baptized 4 times, made love to 9 grass widows, got dog bit 29 times and then got defeated."

Christians who run for office would do well to give special heed to the injunction: "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17b).

Children's Lib

Have you heard about the Children's Lib movement? I have a feeling that we may be hearing more about it in the future. Some are seriously arguing for "civil rights" for children. Before you decide that such sounds O.K., it might interest you to know that they have in mind making corporal punishment illegal, legislating full citizenship for children (which would eliminate compulsory education, and give them the right to vote), giving them the right to drive automobiles, enjoy sexual freedom, handle their own finances, and choose all sorts of options for themselves.

All of this and more has been advocated by psychologist Richard Farson and other advocates of "children's liberation." The results of such thinking are frightening to say the least!

Bruce Foster mentions in his *Sword of the Lord*

column a couple of news articles which reflect this mentality:

Portsmouth Times, May 1, 1978: "Son Files Parental Malpractice Suit." Mr. Foster says, "This article tells about a young man who, because he was kicked out of school at age fifteen for smoking pot, was disciplined by his father for an entire week. The discipline consisted of pulling weeds, mowing grass, etc. The 'mistreated' boy figures he has gone through ten years of emotional distress because of his father's actions and has, therefore, filed a \$350,000 damage suit against his parents."

Another article is cited from *The [Jacksonville] Florida Times-Union*, March 7, 1978: "Home Not Too Bad, Boy Finds." We are then told of a Chattanooga 9-year-old boy who told his parents if they whipped him, he would call the police and report that they were child-abusers.

"I finally got tired of it all and decided to call his bluff," the mother reported. "I called the police myself."

Mr. Foster says: "The boy was told by the police that he could be made a ward of the court and be sent to a juvenile home where he would have to share everything with the other 100 children."

"The boy calmed down when he realized we weren't kidding and found out he had a better home than he thought," the police stated.

Yes, children certainly have rights! They have rights to parents who will love and discipline them. The Bible still says: "He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently" (Prov. 13:24 NASB).

May we raise our voices with others against the sickening spectacle of genuine child abuse. But keep an eye out for the approaching danger of this other extreme.

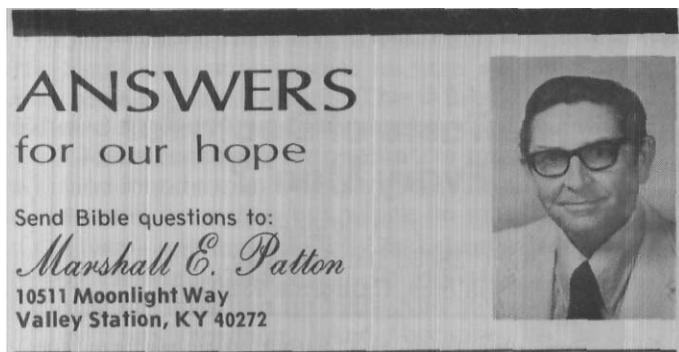


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THE GRACE—FELLOWSHIP ISSUE— No. 5 FAITH AND WORKS

Those of the New Unity Movement (NUM) not only misunderstand the law passages of the Bible (See "LAW AND GRACE", September Issue), they also misunderstand the work passages as well. They also have a misconception of what the Bible teaches on both grace and faith. They see every human effort, if made essential to salvation, as a work of merit. Hence, they conclude that salvation does not depend upon patterns, conditions, works, etc., but rather upon faith, which faith they define arbitrarily. We are told that like "law and grace," "faith and works" are incompatible. Proof texts (?) relied upon are: Rom. 1:17; 4:5, 20-24; Gal. 3:11; Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5.

In all fairness, however, it should be pointed out that the NUM hesitates to minimize obedience. We are told that such will just naturally flow from a heart of faith. Yet, at the same time we are told that salvation does not depend upon exact obedience. This simply means, in the final analysis, that justification is by faith only. Some say so forthrightly, others hesitate to say as much, but the conclusion is inevitable.

As proof of this position, note the following: "It is not that God keeps up with all our issues and enlarges His list daily of things to check us on in judgment and see if we got it figured out right or not. Rather God does keep up with our daily constant life-long FAITH or UNBELIEF" (Edward Fudge, *A Journey Toward Jesus*; p. 17). Fudge points out further that the man of faith will always strive to please the Lord. Yet, whether or not he is right or wrong in rendering exact obedience is inconsequential; it is the heart of faith that counts. This faith, according to the NUM, is really in the "perfect doing and dying of Jesus," whose righteousness is imputed to us vicariously. (This concept will be covered more fully in our next article under "**Imputed Righteousness**")

One of the influential factors in the NUM is the book *"The Way of Salvation,"* by K. C. Moser. This book sets forth the same view of faith as affirmed by the current NUM. Note the following: "Man's faith receives God's grace. Then why is some other act than faith made a condition of salvation? Where is the place for it? What can it do? Has chaos joined hands with order? Have the compatible and the incompatible found fellowship?" (K. C. Moser, *The Way Of Salvation*, p. 97). Again, " (Indeed, it seems to be difficult even at the

present time for many to grasp the idea of a righteousness that does not depend upon human effort. To them a righteousness not based on good deeds seems impossible and unreal)" (Ibid, p. 115).

R. L. Whiteside in his commentary on Romans says concerning the above statement, "Surely the author did not properly consider the import of his words. If a Universalist or an Ultra-Calvinist had penned such words, we would not be surprised. Not only am I not able to grasp the idea of a righteousness that does not depend on human effort, but I do not believe there is such righteousness in any human being. If a human being is made righteous without any human effort, then why are not all righteous?" [*Commentary on Romans*, R. L. Whiteside, p. 93). Brother Whiteside says further, on Rom. 4:4, 5: "Only perfect works, works without any guilt of sin, can bring salvation as a debt. The one 'who worketh' is, therefore, the one whose works are so perfect that he has no guilt of sin. But no one has so lived. Hence, to the one whose work is not perfect, but who believes in Jesus Christ, God reckons, or counts his faith for (*eis*, in order to) his righteousness—that is, in order that, on the basis of his faith, he may forgive his sins and thus constitute him a righteous person. Let us not be so unjust with Paul as to switch his language from his line of reasoning and make it apply to the acts of obedience required in the gospel" (Ibid, p. 94).

A very grave mistake made by the NUM is a failure to understand that different kinds of works are under consideration in the work passages of the Bible. That different kinds of works are involved is evident from the fact that if "not of works" excludes every human effort or act of obedience (as essential to salvation), then faith itself is excluded, because it is a work: "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:29). Calvinists say this work is not one appointed by God for man to do in contrast to that which man appoints for himself, but rather a work that God performs in the heart of the individual. Will those of the NUM go all the way with Calvin and say that even faith is a gift of the Spirit?

Denominationalism has long faced a problem in the work passages of the Bible. On one hand they read that acceptance with God, regardless of nationality, is conditioned upon "working righteousness" (Acts 10:34,35); that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (Jas. 2:24). On the other hand they read: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9). Again, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).

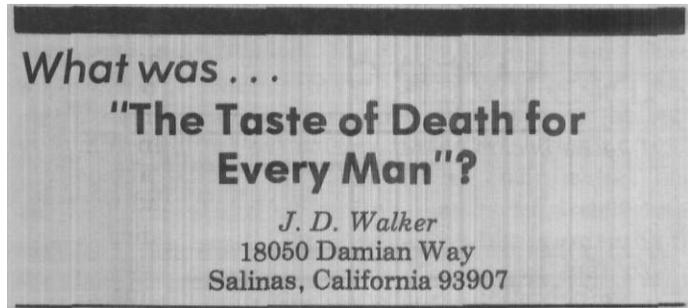
This was a real problem for Martin Luther who thought that Paul and James contradicted each other: "The epistle of James however only drives you to the law and its works . . . perhaps the epistle was written by someone else who made notes of a sermon of his. He calls the law a law of freedom (Jas. 1:25; 2:12),

although St. Paul calls it a law of slavery, wrath, death, and sin (Gal. 3:23f; Rom. 4:15; 7:10f) . . . I therefore refuse him a place among the writers of the true canon of my Bible; but I would not prevent anyone else placing him or raising him where he likes, for the epistle contains many excellent passages" (See *Introduction* to epistle of James, by William Barclay, p. 8).

The answer to the problem is to be found in the fact that different kinds of works are under consideration, namely, works of faith and works of merit. The latter involves perfect obedience—a sinless life—whereby the reward is earned and received as a matter of debt. No grace is needed. The former involves manifesting one's faith while at the same time coming short of perfect obedience. It involves perfect obedience to conditions of faith, but not perfect obedience to the whole of God's perfect law. Works of faith are not meritorious. They simply make manifest one's faith. For example, if one were to work at manual labor all day in the hot sun and received a wage of fifty dollars, he would likely say, "I earned every dime of it." We could appreciate his statement. He merited the fifty dollars—his was a work of merit. On the other hand, if while preaching, I were to say to Bill, sitting on the front seat, "If you will stand up and sit back down, I'll give you fifty dollars," Bill would likely do just that. If so, who would say that Bill received his fifty dollars on the basis of the amount of work done? He would not have earned his like the man who worked at manual labor all day. His work would be a manifestation of faith in me. Hence, a work of faith. Such work does not invalidate its being a gift or of grace.

So it is with salvation. There are conditions of faith to be met by the alien and the saint in the matter of forgiveness. There are conditions of faith the saint must continue to meet (2 Cor. 5:7). These conditions involve God's pattern for the worship, organization, and work of the church. These conditions are absolute, yet they are within reach of man. Whether or not one obeys is a simple matter of faith. Some conditions are relative. In character development and spiritual growth, the condition of faith is that we give "all diligence" in such growth (2 Pet. 1:5). Our obedience is determined in relation to our time, opportunity, and ability (Cf. Matt. 25:14f). (Absolute and relative commands will be covered more fully in another article).

A long time ago, Moses E. Lard, in commenting on Rom. 11:6, put it this way: "Partial obedience to the law is the only obedience possible to man; perfect obedience to conditions is the only obedience acceptable to God" (Moses E. Lard, *Commentary On Paul's Letter To Romans*, p. 350). Paul put it this way: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9). This is just another way of saying that salvation is not by works of merit, but it is by works of faith.



Let us resolve from the outset that we are considering a figure of speech known as *metonymy*.¹ Both Thayer² and Arndt and Gingrich³ list two ways in which the word "taste" is used. We are concerned with the figurative use as a metonymy which Gingrich lists as ". . . to come to know something . . ."⁴

Jesus had told the disciples many times that he would undergo this taste. Yet they never comprehended his words (Jn. 12:32). Certainly Jesus did taste of all the hours that lead to the trial and condemnation. Even on the last night in the garden of Gethsemane he was tasting of the human element of a dreadful expectation (Matt. 26:37ff). Yet we still can taste this aspect.

Taste of Betrayal

Even of those who were his very chosen and were with him in many trying and emotional moments, yet Judas turned his allegiance from him to the lust of this world (Jn. 18:2). Yet again, we can still taste this aspect of death today, or at least are subject to it happening.

Taste of Rejection

Not only was he rejected by one close to him, but was then arrested and mock tried by those whom he had tried so hard on many occasions to move from their show religion to one of meaning and substance, the chief priests and Pharisees (Jn. 18:3). In the proceedings to follow, he tasted of the rejection of all that he had taught them concerning truth and justice (Matt. 23:23). Yet this is also possible for us to taste today.

Taste of Cowardice

Certainly not that Jesus was the coward, but that he did witness while bound by the guards, the cowardice of Peter as he denied that he knew Jesus (Lk. 22:60f). Thus the dark shadow of loneliness begins to fall as all now have forsaken him. Yet this is within our scope to taste today.

Taste of Condemnation

After false witnesses (Matt. 26:59), and being found not guilty of anything by Herod and even Pilate at least four times (Matt. 27:24), then he, the innocent, heard the condemnation for the guilty passed upon him (Jn. 19:15f). Yet we can still taste such a condemnation today passed on us, though we are never innocent. But there seems to be a crossing line here that mere man could not or would not cross. Because death now is

certain. From the Place of the Pavement to the Place of the Skull, he portrays what no man ever had before, ever has since, nor ever will. This is brought out well by Edward Fudge in his commentary on Hebrews 2:9; "Jesus became a representative man. In him, God found a man who gave what he had always wanted from man but which no man had ever given—a human life fully and always dedicated to pleasing God . . . It was the Creator's original intention for man. And now one man is in that position. And because he is a representative man, acting on behalf of all mankind, his people will one day enjoy the same position of glory."⁵

Truly, what man could ever face death and **fully** taste it as our Lord did? And what more can a man taste and give than his physical life? Jesus said this was the greatest act of love at John 15:13. But was there something more that Jesus would give?

Taste of Physical Suffering

As we approach this aspect, we begin to speak on a subject of which we are all ignorant in reality. We only begin to comprehend that with which we have connection. Lenski on his comment to "taste of death" said:

". . . is to undergo all its dread bitterness; it is not a softening but rather a strengthening of the simple verb 'to die'. Jesus tasted death, not by merely sipping, but by fully draining the cup."⁶

To this experience none of us can lay claim. Yet we shall all in some degree experience something of the physical death (Heb. 9:27). Of the seven things that Jesus said while he was on the cross, each shows us his perfection even in this condition.

1. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34).

When a mere man would have cursed them, he prays for them.

2. "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23:43).

When a mere man would have viewed the end, he gives a promise for the future.

3. "Woman, behold thy son" (Jno. 19:26)! When a mere man would think of himself, he pur poses for his mother.

4. "I thirst" (Jno. 19:28).

The very process of death now sets firmly in motion. This is a fulfilment of Ps. 69:21. It depicts the processes of the body as they cease to function.

We want to remember here that the first three things he said were during the period of light, 9 a.m. to noon. This one and those to follow now are said in the period of darkness, noon to 3 p.m..

5. "It is finished" (Jno. 19:30).

When a mere man would have died in defeat, Jesus cried a word of victory. This is the Greek word *tetelestai* of which Barclay says:

". . . 'It is finished,' is one Greek word

— *tetelestai*—. . . He said it as one who shouts for joy because the victory is won."⁷

This would have been a familiar cry to the Roman soldiers standing by. It's what they would cry after the battle was decided in their favor.

6. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:45).

After stating that God had forsaken him, which we will come back to, now he trusts his destiny to his Father. And so now he tasted the final physical pain, the spirit as it departs from the body (Lk. 23:46). It is fitting that it may have been at this very hour, 3 p.m., that the lambs were being sacrificed in the temple.⁸ And thus our passover was sacrificed, (I Cor. 5:7) the "Lamb of God" (Jn. 1:29).

But was that the height of it? I do not mean for a second to minimize the physical aspect of his death. But I do want to look at the one saying that we have omitted thus far.

7. "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Mk. 15:34)?

While this cry has been thought by many to be the most difficult to understand, and by others the darkest hour, it is the climax of his sacrifice and the brightest moment in history. Not that he was separated from his father for the first time, but that it was at this very moment that he "became sin" for us (I Peter 2:24, II Cor. 5:21).

The penalty for sin is separation from God, (Isa. 59:1f) not physical death alone. Physical death is a result of sin, it is but momentary. Spiritual death is the penalty for sin and it is everlasting (Matt. 25:46). To this very point Lenski comments:

"Jesus did not die and suffer in a general way, merely die some kind of a death as all sinners suffer more or less and finally die. Of such suffering and death it could not be said that 'because of it' a person is crowned with glory and honor. The soul that sinneth it shall die."⁹

The soul (inner spiritual man) is supposedly in control of this flesh, not the flesh in control of our soul. Thus the soul (or spirit) must bear the ultimate penalty, separation from God. To this cry the learned J. W. McGarvey comments:

"Suffice it to say, that this was without doubt the most excruciating of all Christ's sufferings, and it, too, was a suffering in our stead."¹⁰

Conclusion

Jesus said, "I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. . . . Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil, . . . and thou sayest, If a man keep my sayings he shall never taste of death" (Jn. 8:51f). Yet he also said, "Many of you standing here shall in no wise taste of death, till you have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mk. 9:1). Now which is it? I understand it to be both. If we will keep his sayings we will never "taste" of spiritual death, separation from God eternally. This is

the "second death" (Rev. 20:14). But what Jesus said in the second quote was that some of them would not "taste" of physical death until the kingdom of God should come on the day of Pentecost recorded at Acts 2.

Thus we understand the Lord at John 8:51 to mean that we will never experience the penalty for sin, spiritual death, as long as we continue in his words. This is the only understanding I can deduct from this passage and our theme text of Heb. 2:9.

In this "tasting" of death for us, another example is seen of how . . . he was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

Footnotes

1. Dungan, D. R. *Text Book on Hermeneutics*, pg. 270.
2. *Thayer's Greek English Lexicon*, pg. 114.
3. *Arndt & Gingrich's Greek English Lexicon*, pg. 156.
4. Op. cit.
5. Fudge, Edward *Our Man In Heaven*, pg. 29.
6. Lenski, R. C. H. *The Epistle to the Hebrews and James*, Pg. 77.
7. Barclay, William *The Letter to John*, pg. 301.
8. McGarvey & Pendleton, *The Fourfold Gospel*, pg. 731.
9. Op. cit. pg. 76.
10. Op. cit. pg. 730.

SANTA AND SATAN

O. E. Watts

Say that I get my child to believe in Santa Claus. Then suppose that one evening I hear him praying, "And, please, God, help Santa to come down the chimney safe." The Christian adult recoils. We are shocked. The reaction is, "His thinking is mixed up. He should know better."

But, why should he? Has not a hodge-podge of both "God" and "Santa" been "fed" to him indiscriminately? Both are beyond his sight and hearing. He depends upon older persons to distinguish for him between reality and pretense. If such a distinction is not made, how is the child to know whether one, or both, or neither are truth? How could he tell? And since his conceptions are exactly what the overwhelming odds indicate that they would be, whose fault is it?

Someone may be concluding, "This was written by an old fogey who does not want the kids to have any fun." Not so, my friend. We are aware of the value of "pretend" and "play like." Those who have raised families, and especially those who have studied and taught children's literature, know of the worth and positive benefits of make-believe.

But, we can also see that anyone who lives near a wood should not teach "The Three Bears" or "Little Red Riding-Hood" as absolute fact. Unless you want to scare your little youngsters, you should not! Some of us recall our first idea of Santa. In some cases this was one of fear. To a three-year-old the thoughts of a fuzzy-faced character prowling about him while he sleeps can be disquieting.

So, we recommend candor and honesty. The "play-

like" can be just as much fun as lies which are told to a child as truth. Children should know that the birth of Jesus was fact, truth, and real history. It can be made clear that Santa, etc., are "pretend" and "just for fun."

In the lobby a five-year-old boy engaged in conversation a kindly, well-meaning, older lady. He asked, "Is Santa Claus really true?" She answered, "Yes, really true!" His response surprised her, "Well, what a liar my daddy is!"

In view of long-range effects what is being done to our children is neither innocent nor harmless. How better could Satan promote an air of childish fantasy and myth about God and His Son than by having people teach the little ones exactly what they are teaching them now?

If you do not reach a decision about this before the Christmas season then consider what your children are hearing and seeing. At a school program, pupils and pre-school visitors are treated to nativity scenes, closely followed by, and often sandwiched in between, numbers depicting elves, talking animals, and other imaginary and legendary material.

Look at your *TV Guide* or at the listings in the newspaper. Note the titles of the "children's specials." Now, listen to the songs played on the radio. Such a sequence as the following is not uncommon. "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," will be followed without a pause and without comment by "Silent Night," "Up On the Housetop," "Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem," "Rudolph . . .," etc., etc. If anyone reading this does not believe that to be true, then please for yourself write down in order the names of the songs aired on your local radio station at Christmas time.

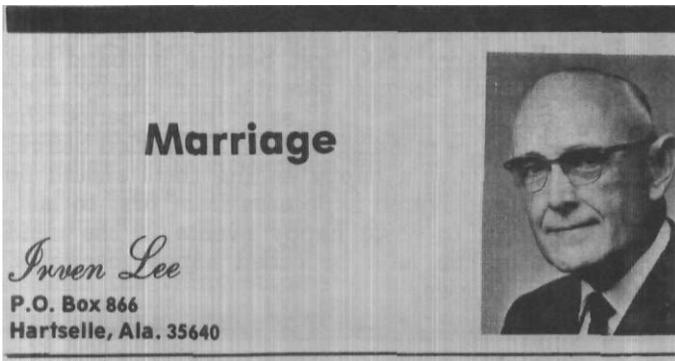
In such mixtures pointed out above, if a parent does not have the good sense and courage to sort out and make clear the fact and fancy, no one else is going to. This is a contrived and planned mixture. It is the thought, scheme, and device of the enemy of our souls, who is also the father of lies (John 8:44). He is getting at our children early. "We are not ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11)." Or, are we?

Some mother who is reading this may still be holding to the advisability of teaching "Santa" to her little girl as truth. If so, please reason carefully about it. See it from the eyes of your daughter. She is taught the myth about Santa by you as an absolute fact. She trusts you implicitly just as she does when you tell her about the baby Jesus. She is sooner or later going to learn that Mommy lied (or substitute a softer word) about Santa. What is to keep her from thinking, "Maybe she lied (or substitute your softer word) about Jesus, too!"

Christians have a duty here. Especially should parents take seriously and intelligently their responsibility in connection with this. Whenever God's people see their given task they should have the courage to do it. This one involves the welfare and the certain future attitudes of little children.

Perhaps it is not altogether an "accident" that the five letters in "SANTA" can be arranged so readily to form another word.

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We often speak of youth, middle age, and old age. The Bible speaks of youth and age. However we may word it, we all realize that there is a time in one's life during which one is wholly dependent on his or her parents. In the normal course of life, as God recommends, there comes a time when two young people leave their parents to be dependent upon one another. They do not give up their love for their parents nor do they ignore their parents' advice, but they make their own plans and face life's responsibilities together in a new relationship. A new home is formed with the approval and under the loving observation of the parents. The two who form this independent and separate unit are said to become one. The marriage tie is so precious in God's sight that His word mentions it as a type of the relationship between Christ and His church. We are married to Christ. The church is His bride which He loves and for which He gave Himself. The church is to recognize Christ as Head in all matters that pertain to it. In marriage the wife is to be subject to her husband in everything, while the husband leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife.

In the beginning God created man and said that it was not good that he should be alone. Marriage is honorable in all, so any one who would forbid such is in conflict with the revelation of God's will. A bishop in the Lord's church is to be an example to us all, and he must be the husband of one wife. To the young widows Paul sent the inspired suggestion that younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, and give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. Much is said in both the Old and the New Testaments to encourage the uniting of husband and wife in the holy bond of matrimony, and He has laws and wise suggestions to regulate and preserve the home as a sacred unit of society. This contract is registered in government offices, but it is also noted and recorded in the heavenly records. It is taught in scripture that God binds the two together, and it is made very clear that man is not to break this bond. Only death or grievous sin can break it. In happy marriages the relationship becomes even more meaningful with the passing of the years. Each is blessed by the other. Together they often provide a haven of peace and joy to others who come their way, for the home is not meant to be a lonely island of happiness for only two people.

Children are to be expected and loved. The parents are the official guardians of these children to teach,

train, encourage, protect, and guide them through their periods of infancy, childhood, and youth into happy and stable adulthood. The responsibilities are many, and so are the joys of parenthood. Something is lacking in the home if there is never the laughter of children to add purpose and hope in the hearts of the parents. The horizon is pushed farther out in all directions so that more of the beautiful light of the heavens can be seen when children become part of the family circle.

Faith, hope, and love are three wonderful, abiding, motivating principles that keep people faithful to God. The loss of either may cause one to depart from the living of God to become a servant of sin. These three essentials to the life of a Christian are very effective in preserving the marriage tie. There is an alarming number of divorces in this generation, but these sinful failures in marriage come as people turn their backs upon God and walk away from Him. Those who are pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus make good marriage companions. Love for God and proper love for people are very closely related, wholesome influences. When there is the loss of faith and respect for God and His word, hope is lost, and the home is almost certain to break. Souls are defiled and hearts are broken. Several lives are permanently scarred by this sad loss which is all too common in America. An age of skepticism is an age of divorce.

Love of the world and love for God cannot abide in the same heart. If we love God we keep His commandments. If we love the world the lust of the flesh will dominate our lives. With the loss of faith in God and love for Him, the love for the marriage companion is not likely to last. Lust takes the place of true love. There is great hope for a happy marriage and for its continuing success if faith, hope, and love abide. Let each member of the new family walk with God, so that the two may walk together in happy concord and peace.

Confidence in God's word fills one with a realization of the depth of His wisdom and knowledge and gives one a good view of the beauty of holiness. The one whose life is pure and holy will not break the marriage tie in a search for happiness in sin and rebellion against God's law. Some may seem to be religious for a while after money has become their god, or after faith has become so weak that there is no fear of judgment. There are thorns such as cares, riches, and pleasures that often crowd out fruit-bearing faith, hope, and love. Each should take heed lest he fall. With fear and trembling one should give diligence to make his calling and election sure. Such efforts will bless the individual, the church, and the family, and the doctrine of God our Savior will be adorned. The godly have the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

It is not a strong faith in God and a living hope for heaven that break the marriage tie. It is not faith that works through love that leads to divorce and desertion of children. Adultery and fornication are works of the flesh, and those who are guilty are enemies of God. Their homes break, their hopes are

blasted, their children are harmed immeasurably, and the inheritance promised to citizens of the kingdom of God is beyond their reach. They are disinherited by God if they were ever His children.

Honest labor is not a thing to be avoided. It is honorable, and it is a part of God's original plan for man. The unwillingness of a husband or wife to face the more difficult responsibilities of life often leads to the undoing of the marriage tie. Unselfish and diligent efforts to make the home better and the companionship a greater joy should be characterized by zeal. We get more out of a wonderful relationship if we put more into it. Laziness and unconcern for the welfare of the family unit are sins against society and in God's sight. This is one realm where special efforts toward success pay great dividends. Marriage is a partnership, and the worthy efforts of one bring joy to both.

In the family unit each belongs to the other. The two become one. He gives himself to her in true love and devotion. She gives herself completely to him, and his welfare and joy are her delight. God planned marriage and made the two to complement each other. Neither is complete without the other. Together they make a home for children, for friends, and for themselves. The faithfulness of each to the other is one of the beautiful aspects of holiness. It is one of the essentials of eternal bliss because God demands faithfulness to the marriage partner.

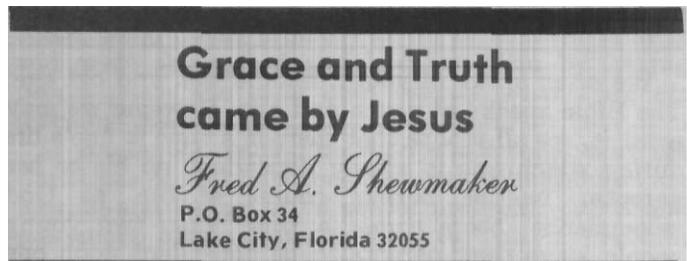
The happy marriage brightens the countenance of each companion to such an extent that years later people may observe this evidence of joy and mention it to others. It is kindness with sympathetic understanding that can keep this glow in the heart. Trivial differences and delight in the hearts of the two lovers. They know how to forgive, and they know how to express gratitude. Good will is to be a bright star that is forever visible. There will be no dark nights where such abounds and where it is fully expressed.

Full confidence and the absence of jealousy are jewels to be desired. This confidence in each other is one of the things that draws the two together in the first place. It is one of the strong cords that holds them together through the years. It is earned and maintained by shunning the very appearance of evil. Let no relative, ungodly person, or the devil himself induce one to jealousy or to the loss of that trustworthiness. No person, habit, or attitude must be tolerated that would endanger this very foundation of a beautiful structure that is to last a life time. False charges and unfounded doubts are to find no place in the heart of either home builder. Let each be willing to come to the rescue of the other. They stand or fall together. Any one who would prejudice one partner against the other is a common enemy. Such a person must be shunned.

If each and every day can be kept free from words and deeds that will be regretted, the whole of life can be lived on this plane of peace; for all of life is but a total of the hours and days that pass so swiftly. Put something good into each unit of time. Since life is made up of the many little things that are said and

done, let the big thing be faithfulness and unselfishness in all the little things that fill your days.

When two marry they first become husband and wife. Later they become parents, and finally they become grandparents. Let each such period be brighter and more meaningful than the period before. For a story to have a happy ending there should be deserved and cultivated happiness from first to last. Spare no effort to write happy events in the mind each day that can later be called happy memories. This is good success.



"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn. 1:1). "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14). There can be no doubt about who is the one under consideration, because the author of the book went on and wrote, "The law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:17).

In verse 17 it is affirmed that "Jesus Christ" brought "grace and truth" which can only mean that He was the one "full of grace and truth" (v. 14). It is, therefore, the affirmation of these verses that "Jesus Christ" is "the only begotten of the Father," "the Word. . .made flesh" and that He "was God."

There is some confusion among brethren regarding the "grace and truth" with which the divine Son of God is said to have replaced the "law . . . given by Moses." Certain brethren are making the old threadbare denominational argument which says, "We are now under the grace of God and no longer under law, because 'the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' "

The fallacy of this assertion lies in the fact that it does not give consideration to the whole statement. In the verse there are three words that must be given equal consideration. These words are: law, grace and truth. The argument which brethren have obtained from the denominations completely ignores the third word. The failure of brethren to deal with the third word, "truth," when they tell us, "We are no longer under law; we are now under the grace of God," substantiates my assertion that there is some confusion on the point.

It appears that brethren are ignoring the word, "truth," either because they are unaware of the idea for which it stands or because they have the erroneous idea that grace and law are incompatible with each other. The careful reader will have observed that the preceding sentence makes the suggestion that the word, "truth," stands for the idea of law. If

this suggestion could be proven, it would show that the law which came by Jesus Christ is a law of grace. When one suggests an idea or asserts a point, he is obligated to submit evidence to support his suggestion or assertion. (Some also need to face up to this obligation in connection with the point at issue.)

If we are willing to allow the New Testament to speak for itself, it should be a fair way to deal with the matter. Also it seems to me to be an easy way to establish the thing suggested — the word, "truth," (Jn. 1:17), refers to the law under which we are to serve God today. When Jesus prayed to God the Father for his apostles, He said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). John had previously recorded the words of Jesus: "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (Jn. 12:48 - 50). It should be not difficult to understand that "the word" which Jesus spake was the word of God and, therefore, "truth." Notice also, we are to be judged "in the last day" by the word of God which is "truth." Proof that this "truth" is law lies in the command, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (Jas. 2:12).

Now that it has been established that the word, "truth" as used by John stands for the same thing as the word, "law," we can readily see that John 1:17 actually links grace with law. Those who contend that grace and law are incompatible ideas manifest their confusion regarding John 1:17.

Some who have denied that we are under law make their contention absurd, when they indicate that we can sin. The absurdity lies in the fact that where no law exists sin is an impossibility. The very nature of sin requires the existence of law before it can occur. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 Jn. 3:4).

The connection between sin and law may be seen in the book of Romans. We have noticed that Jesus spake the word of God, when He was upon the earth. His words are also called the gospel (Mt. 4:23; Mk. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:25 and etc.). After the introduction of Romans chapter one, Paul shows that the Gentiles have sinned and, therefore, are in need of the gospel. We have already observed that the gospel is the law of liberty in preceding considerations. In Romans chapter two we are shown that the Jews also have sinned and, therefore, are in need of the gospel. Romans chapter three shows that all have sinned and are in need of the gospel. Romans chapter four shows that both Jew and Gentile have sinned, because mankind has never been without law from God which every one must either obey or else transgress: "For where no law is, *there is no transgression*" (Rom.

4:15). If we will consider this verse in the light of the context of the book of Romans, we will not find in it the remotest hint that anyone ever was, or that anyone ever will be, in a situation where he is outside of law from God. This verse also proves, beyond any sensible contention to the contrary, that where sin occurs law existed.

Let those who contend that we are not under law be consistent. Let them also contend that we cannot sin. To do less is inconsistent, if not downright dishonesty or moral cowardice. It is plainly ridiculous to say that man can sin while denying that he is under law. Some brethren need to start making sense. They need to leave the denominational pastures, where they have been feeding on the devil's tares (loco weed), and return to the pleasant pasture of God, where they can feed on the good wheat which is His pure and holy word — "The perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25 and 2:12).



REPORT OF 1978 PHILIPPINE BENEVOLENCE TRIP

On 29 July I returned from 3 1/2 weeks in the Philippines. This trip was in response to an appeal from Brother Ruben C. Notarte, whom I have known for a lot of years, concerning nearly 600 brethren who were close to starvation. These were of the cultural minorities. Several years ago, Muslim rebels had driven them from their lands, destroying their farm implements and killing or stealing their work animals. Along with several thousand non-saint refugees, they moved into the mountainous area north of Davao City, Mindanao. The only work available was as tenant farmers. As they no longer had either tools or work animals, they farmed entirely by hand. Each man worked approximately one hectare. In a good year, this would sustain a family of 4 to 6, even after the landowner's share was paid. But a good year in these uplands where they farmed means enough rain to provide for the crops. Unlike in the lowlands, irrigation is not possible. A drought occurred early in 1978, resulting in all the tenant farmers, including the brethren, missing this year's first harvest. They had no money for food. Only the food speculators would lend to them. These "sold" them rice at three times the going retail price. It was to be paid back with the second harvest. But the pay back rate was not at the inflated price charged by the speculators, but by whatever price the growers could obtain in the wholesale market. This would have taken at least one half of the second har-

vest, setting the stage for perpetual economic slavery to these speculators. To minimize their borrowing, the brethren cut back their food drastically. Additionally, much sickness had been brought on by inadequate and insufficient food, and other causes. These brethren had completely exhausted their own capability (Acts 2, 4, 6 and 11).

A total of \$9865.07 was contributed for benevolence.

It was disbursed as follows:

Benevolence:	\$7342.62	74.43%
Round trip airline travel to Manila:	\$1449.00	14.69%
In-country airline travel:	180.97	1.83%
Overseas telephone call:	57.01	0.58%
Stolen from me in Manila:	40.00	0.41%
	\$9129.60	
91.91 Remaining balance:	<u>795.47*</u>	<u>8.09%</u>
	\$9865.07	100.00%

*Received after my departure; deposited in special account, to be used if necessary.

I will hold the balance for a time to insure the need has been fully met. If needed, I will send the additional money to the man (brother Notarte) who with me acted as a messenger. Any further distribution will be made on the basis all agreed to and used while I was there. All the distribution was covered by witnessed receipts and doubly-verified counting, satisfying 2 Cor. 13:1. Funds were placed in the hands of the elders/men of each congregation, by the messengers. These in turn, redistributed to the individual needy in each church. If the additional monies (remaining balance) are not needed, I will return them to the contributors on a basis proportionate to the contributions of each.

Several sent funds for benevolence and additionally, for my personal living expenses. These exceeded my need, so I put the remainder into the benevolent funds, listed above.

As a retired military member, I am permitted to travel "Space-available" on military contract airlines. I tried to do so, to save as much as possible for the need. However, no space was available. Two striking commercial airlines greatly reduced the seats available on all the operating airlines. I stayed in California for four days trying to get on "Space-A". But due to the backlog demand for commercial seats, duty passengers who might have gone commercially were forced onto military contract travel. On one typical flight from Travis AFB, all seats were filled with duty personnel; another 14 duty passengers were in the terminal with standby boarding passes, and I was number 7 on the "Space-available" list. For me to get a seat, 21 duty passengers already present with boarding passes would have had something happen to prevent them from filling their assigned seats. Such was too unrealistic to expect.

Airline travel was very tight. Anticipating such a possibility, I was on Pan Am's priority waiting list for three weeks to get a cancellation for firm reservations. I took this precaution in the event I was unable to go "Space-A". The situation in Tokyo on my return illustrated this: there were about 100 people on standby

for a seat on any airline going to the US. One woman asked to be placed on the waiting list for any US city; a man said he had been stranded in Tokyo for three weeks trying to get a seat on any flight to the US.

Because my travel days were dictated by the cancelled airline reservations I obtained, I spent more time in the Philippines than I had planned. I used this in God's service to do what I could do to help straighten out several situations. I will advise individuals and churches concerned what was accomplished. I believe the time was profitably spent.

A final contribution of \$500.00 arrived after my return. I will add this to the remaining balance. I want to thank all who had fellowship in this. The brethren are very grateful, as I am also. And, God is pleased. My personal best to all God's faithful. May God continue to bless you in His service in His vineyard. Wallace H. Little 4 August 1978



In the city of Athens Paul saw an altar "with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD," (Acts 17:23). One historian estimates that there were at least 30,000 different deities worshipped among the Athenians and yet, fearful of missing and offending one, this altar seen by Paul had been erected.

And, just why shouldn't each Athenian be allowed to have the god of his own choice? Can't you hear some broad-minded Athenian saying, "The god that one serves makes no difference for one god is just as good as another." To this another replies, "I've always felt that it isn't the god to whom one belongs that is important but how one feels in his heart as he worships."

My friend, does this have a somewhat familiar ring? It should, for the reasons offered for each Athenian's having the god of his choice are those so frequently given in defence of each person's having a right to the church of his choice. Why would these constitute a valid defence for one and not the other when the same Bible that teaches that there is one God (Eph. 4:6), also teaches that there is one body (Eph. 4:4) and identifies it as the church (Eph. 1:22-23).

Since the Bible teaches this, what makes it all right for every person to have the church of his choice but sinful and wrong for him to have the god of his choice? If one church is really as good as another and the thing that is of major importance is how one feels in worship, not the church, why are not the same things true in reference to gods?

Frankly, I do not believe that there is an argument that can be made for the existence of denominationalism that cannot be made with equal force for paganism. Where is the consistency in believing that one means only one when applied to God but that it does not mean that when applied to the church?

The Gathering Storm

Charles E. Littrell

Affton Rd.
St. Louis, Missouri

With the fearful anticipation that a great conflict between the states was inevitable, Abraham Lincoln said, "If God has a place for me in this, and I believe he has, then I am ready."

What a joy it would be if more good people would display an attitude such as that of Lincoln. Far too often so many of us do as David of old and let others go forth to battle while we remain behind in safety.

When I was a boy and my family lived on a farm, I well remember my father standing on the porch and watching the gathering clouds in the late evening. He often would remark that we should be ready to go to the storm cellar for surely there was a storm brewing. More often than not he was right.

While not aspiring to be a prophet and often hoping that I am wrong, I nevertheless fear that there are dark clouds gathering which shall threaten once more the people of God. I speak with regard to the sanctity of marriage and lax attitude among some brethren concerning divorce and remarriage. It would appear that some are finding it more convenient to give way to the desires of the flesh than to preach the Lord's will on the subject. One preacher was quoted as saying that "if the church does not take a more lenient attitude toward divorce and remarriage, that it will not be long until there will be no one to preach to". May I respond by saying, "So what!" I for one would rather dig ditches than to be in a situation where I had to ignore a part of God's divine word. I believe that Paul had in mind for us to preach all of the Word (2 Tim. 4:2).

I continue to be amazed (although perhaps I should not be) at the efforts of men who seek to alter God's laws to meet their own whims and fancies. Consider the idea which is resurfacing (it has been around a long time) that baptism will release one from the stain of sin brought on by a second marriage which is not recognized by God. It really matters not whether it be one marriage or ten. The idea seems to be that baptism will make null and void all previously existing relationships and make the present relationship pure and whole.

If this be true, then consider the following: repentance is only a matter of being sorry and does not necessarily involve a turning away from sin; or that God does not recognize a marriage made between those who have never been baptized. I deny either or both of these assumptions. Repentance may be defined thus: "to feel self-reproach, compunction, or contrition for past conduct; change one's mind with regard to past action in consequences of dissatisfaction with it or its results." "To feel such sorrow for sin or fault as to be disposed to change

one's life for the better; be penitent". (The Random House American Dictionary, p. 1028). "To amend or resolve to amend one's life as a result of contrition for one's sins". (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 5th Edition, p. 844). The greek verb, METANOEO, means to perceive afterwards; the changing of one's mind or purpose. The word METANOIA (which corresponds with Metanoeo) means afterthought; change of mind, repentance. Repentance involves action on man's part as required by God (Matt. 3:8; Luke 3:8; Acts 20:21; Acts 26:20). The mercy of God is seen in the giving of repentance or leading men to it (Acts 5:31; Acts 11:18; Rom. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:25). No place in the sacred writings is it remotely suggested that man may seek and obtain forgiveness while continuing in a sin or sinful relationship which was perpetuated before forgiveness was sought.

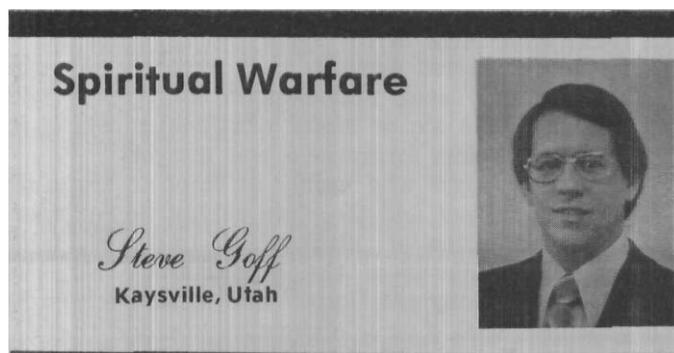
There are some who vainly attempt to argue that adultery is an act and therefore cannot be considered a state, condition or relationship. In 1 Cor. 5, the apostle Paul discusses the report that there was fornication among the Corinthians in that a man had his father's wife. I have always understood that this man was living with his father's wife. But more clearly in verse 9, Paul says not to company with fornicators. In verse 11 he says if a brother be a fornicator that with such a one not to eat. Am I to understand that in order for me to have company with a fornicator I must be present during the very time that an illicit sexual act is being committed? According to such reasoning I could scripturally associate with a drunkard as long as he was not drinking; with an extortioner as long as he was not extorting; with a railer as long as he was not railing; and so on. It would be interesting to know the difference if there is one.

The people were commanded on Pentecost to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38; and then later to repent and be converted (Acts 3:19). Since repentance is a turning away from sin and turning to God, the washing away of sins by baptism cannot be accomplished without repentance being made. One cannot therefore be cleansed from sin while at the same time continuing in sin or sinful relationships and this applies to a sinful marriage as well as anything else.

With regard to the second matter of marriage being recognized by God, I believe it is sufficient to point out that marriage is the oldest institution we know. It goes back long, long before the church. In the beginning God ordained the sacred union of man and woman. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). The Hebrew writer restates the importance of such by saying, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). Jesus further stated in Matthew 19:4-6 ". . . have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one

flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Truly God recognizes a marriage whether it be a heathen or a Christian. Baptism will not cleanse a situation which has been brought on by a failure to recognize God's provision for a separation (Matt. 19:9).

Let us pray that we may weather the storm and stand upon that rock which is Christ. If no man stands with us and yet we stand with God, we do not stand alone.



The child of God is called to war against the wiles of Satan (Eph. 6:10-13). A constant battle is fought, between good and evil, which involves every man and woman on earth. The war is not a physical one, fought on an earthly battlefield, visible to the human eye. It is a spiritual war, a battle within the mind of man. Of course, the results of that struggle will be seen in our actions. But the struggle itself takes place within us. James teaches that we are tempted by our own lusts, and we sin by submitting to evil desires (Jas. 1:13-15). Paul described the war within himself, saying, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:19). Everyone of us knows what it means to do that which we know is wrong.

Its Reality

The reality of this inner struggle is denied by some, who think that a true Christian will be free from all problems with sin. Perhaps they fear that an admission of an inward battle will be cause to question their conversion. However, the opposite is true. If one has no struggle with temptation, he must have already surrendered to Satan. Only those who fight against sin will feel an inward war. If the apostle Paul was forced to buffet his body to bring it into subjection (1 Cor. 9:27), should we not also? If Timothy needed to fight in order to lay hold on eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12), can we expect less?

Its Importance

The importance of the inward war in God's scheme of redemption should be realized by all Christians. God could have forced our perfect obedience; or at least could have made righteousness easier by eliminating temptation. But God's love is seen in that He gives man a choice between sin and righteousness. And by means of this choice, God's children are separated from the children of Satan. If no inward battle existed, no blessing would be given

in overcoming temptation (Jas. 1:12). Without this struggle salvation would have no meaning and heaven would be no reward.

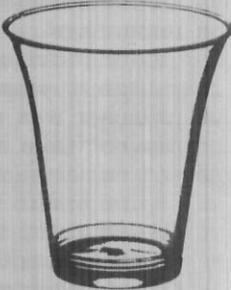
Victory

The one refreshing part of the spiritual war is that victory over sin is possible for all. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1). Paul was comforted in his final years with the expectation of receiving a crown of righteousness. We too can anticipate such a reward if we fight a good fight, keeping the faith (2 Tim. 4:6-8). Salvation is within our grasp. Victory, though not an easy goal, can be obtained by faithfully serving the Lord. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).

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THE LEFT OVERS

Now and then we need a page just to catch up a few odds and ends, say something about future plans and also do some promotional work for the paper. This is just such a page.

GOOD THINGS TO COME

We have already announced that Eugene Britnell has returned to our columns with a regular feature. Articles from him appeared in July and August and his material will soon appear with regularity. He is not only an excellent writer but one of the best promoters of new subscriptions we have ever had. If all of our writers and a few of our readers would help as he does, we would have those 10,000 subscribers by the end of 1979, hands down.

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MARK, THE PHYSICIAN

Bible students are accustomed to hearing about "Luke, the beloved physician. Well, beginning in January, 1979 we will begin a new feature in this paper written by Mark, the physician. He is Mark Lloyd, Sr., M.D. of Gainesville, Florida. He is a rheumatologist, a faithful Christian, an able Bible student and a deacon in the Northeast congregation in Gainesville. He and his good wife are also personal friends and their parents have been friends of long standing. He is well trained, competent and highly respected by his colleagues in the medical profession in his area.

He will write several articles a year dealing with Bible diseases, health problems as they relate to Bible passages and principles, and hopefully will give us all a better appreciation of the body God gave us and how we can better preserve it and make it fit for the Master's use. He will not have time to correspond with readers nor offer free medical opinions. He will simply help us to "search the scriptures" in the areas defined. We look forward to this new and interesting column from "Mark, the beloved physician."

GROVER STEVENS ON CATHOLICISM

Also in January we plan to begin a series by Grover Stevens on Catholicism, one which will run for a year or more. With the recent election of a new pope with all the publicity that received, this is an appropriate time for such a study. Brother Stevens is well equipped to present this material. It will cover a wide range of Catholic doctrine and practice—the kind of material you will want to keep for future study and use.

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THE AUGUST SPECIAL

Our August special issue on "The Church—Live Issues Old and New" has now sold out two printings, orders are still coming in and we have ordered a third printing which will be ready in October (when this issue of the paper is run). This will likely be the final printing. If you still did not get those extra copies you wanted to give to friends caught up in institutionalism, then get your order in soon. We have been pleased by the eager reception given this special issue. It looks now as if our circulation of this one issue will exceed 18,000, or possibly 20,000. We are sorry some had to be put on back-order to await re-printing.

PURELY PERSONAL

Many have inquired of our health since the word got out that we spent some time in the hospital in Gainesville, Florida in July. The problem is arthritis involving three cervical disks, aggravated by stress and muscular tension, bursitis and tendinitis in one shoulder and arm. I have been "told" (not "asked") to cut back on some of my meeting work and am trying to rearrange my schedule so that I will not have more than two meetings in any one month instead of three, which had become the case nearly every month from March through November. Medication, exercise and regular therapy seem to have things under control presently. But thanks for your inquiries, prayers, calls, cards and other expressions of concern.

Help Our Subscription Drive

We are expecting to have a mailing list of 10,000 each month by the end of 1979. That will complete twenty years of operation of the paper. Not many religious journals survive that long. There are yet many homes of Christians in this land which receive no religious paper whatever. Oh yes, they take daily newspapers, all sorts of magazines, have expensive television sets (sometimes two or three to keep down conflict among children over what program is to be seen when), have boating, fishing, camping and golfing equipment—but not one good religious paper.

Not only would it be good for YOU to receive such a paper monthly, but such a paper makes an excellent gift for a friend or relative. The single subscription rate is \$6 a year in advance. In clubs of four or more the rate is \$5 a year. You can send it to 15 of your friends for \$5 a month (\$60 a year) dropping the price to \$4 a year in these special groups.

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

PREACHER CHANGES CONVICTIONS

CHARLIE GARRISON, % Ollie Garrison, Rt. 5, Box 292, Murfreesboro, TN 37130 — Since I graduated from preacher school in 1972, I have tried to preach sound doctrine while at the same time uphold some parts of institutionalism. As you might guess, I have invariably clashed both with myself and with those with whom I have worked. Finally, I saw the obvious: I needed to stop and take stock. I have made an honest and thorough research and find that I have been wrong. In spite of my best efforts I could not find one scripture to uphold the following:

1. Where one church could oversee the work of another church.
2. Where one church sent money to another church for a work to which both were related.
3. Where the Lord's church has any right to make donations to any kind of human institutions.
4. Where the Lord's church has any right to spend its money for the entertainment of anyone.

Brethren, though it is hard to find myself at odds with some of my best friends, I believe it right and fair to the brotherhood that I take my stand for truth and put it in print. I am now ready to go to work with a congregation involved in scriptural work while opposed to these errors I have repudiated. I shall need your help and prayers. My thanks to Connie W. Adams and those who write for *SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES* and to several good debates on the subject, for helping me to see the truth. Call me at (615) 890-6070.

New Workbook Recommended

J. T. SMITH, Long Beach, California — I recently received a copy of a workbook on the subject of "What Must I Do To Be Saved?" written by Keith Sharp of Conway, Arkansas. There are thirteen lessons in this book of 108 pages, with charts and diagrams by Charles Nelson. It begins with a study of what the Bible is, then leads up to what one must do to be saved, and concludes by discussing the destiny of man and why one should be a Christian. It is a complete book in every respect for class study with reading material, questions for review, and an open Bible examination. It may be purchased for \$2.00 from Religious Supply Center, P.O. Box 13164, Louisville, KY 40213. I believe it is an excellent book for class study.

California Spanish Work

MEL ROSE, 8221 Somers Dr., Anaheim, CA 92804 — The new Spanish church is now in its fourth month and doing quite well. The new converts are growing spiritually, and becoming more faithful and dependable. Some were in the habit of arriving late, even very late, to most of the services. When private exhortations were

unavailing, we took the matter "to the pulpit" one Sunday morning, using 1 Cor. 14:40 as our text. Some of the offenders were "stung" by the rebuke, and one even said he was going to "quit the church!" However, we talked to them privately afterwards, and exhorted them to consider the harm their practice (and bad example) manifested. I am pleased to say that we no longer have the problem! It is a pleasure to work with brethren who are teachable. (Editor's Note: With such success for this common problem, I predict that brother Rose will now be besieged by brethren throughout the country to find out exactly what he said in the pulpit and privately afterwards which brought such favorable results. Some of us have had some experience with brethren who were not quite that teachable.)

New Congregation in La Grange, Kentucky

On the afternoon of April 16, 1978 the Walnut Avenue church of Christ had its initial service in Production Credit Association building in LaGrange, Kentucky. With twenty-seven in attendance all were encouraged that a congregation of saints might indeed be commenced and perpetuated in this rapidly developing area near and northeast of Louisville. The following Lord's Day, services were conducted at our present location at 201 N. Walnut Ave., LaGrange, KY 40031.

By the dedicated work and prayers of the members, and with the assistance and encouragement of individuals and sister congregations, the work has shown steady progress. Presently, attendance is in the mid-thirties, with good promise of being in the forties in early fall.

Not wanting unstable growth, the members determined two things: first, to get to know one another better; and second, to make a diligent effort to contact any and all members of the Lord's body who would, or might be, interested in being a fellow-laborer with them. Part of this was accomplished by having a four-day meeting in May with Ed Rhodes (the present preacher! speaking in that series. Having already manifested an ardent and sincere desire to seek only that truth which makes man free, the membership believes many souls will be brought to the Savior. We meet on Lord's Day for worship at 10 AM with Bible study following and at 6 in the evening. Bible study is conducted at 7:30 on Wednesday nights.

JIMMY TUTEN, JR., 8169 Greenridge Rd., Charleston Heights, SC 29405 — The past two months have been good to us in spite of a real serious "summer slump" which hopefully will end after Labor Day. Our home studies and outside efforts to reach the public have been hindered by vacations. Yet, two have been baptized in the past two months. In August we started a Ladies class which promises to be another highlight in the work here. Needless to say, there are disappointments. The work is slow and very, very difficult. Growth

will not come easy in an atmosphere of transmigration brought about by military complexities. The "here today, gone tomorrow" philosophy causes people to refrain from making even spiritual commitments.

The Ashley Heights church, though small, is dedicated and for the most part united in all aspects. There are no serious problems facing us and we have some of the most faithful saints to be found anywhere with which to work. We have had a number of summer visitors to historic Charleston. Several out-of-staters have sent names of prospects. Please continue doing this.

My fall meeting schedule is as follows: Sept. 4-10, Plymouth, N.C.; Sept. 18-24, Richlands, Va.; Oct. 2-8, Gordon, Georgia; our own meeting here Oct. 23-29 and then Nov. 6-12 will find me in Chicago, Ill.

SONG LEADER AND TEACHER NEEDED

SEMINOLE, TEXAS — We are very interested in locating a young man with family to move here and help us by directing the song service, helping in home Bible studies, preach some, and generally help this congregation. We will help in supplementing his livelihood and with moving expenses, but he will have to work at secular work also to have adequate support. If interested, please write: Elders, Avenue B Church of Christ, P.O. Box 516, Seminole, TX 79360. Or call (915) 758-3701.

PERSONAL FROM THE EDITOR

THE AUGUST' SPECIAL — The first printing has already sold out and we have ordered a second which we hope to have long before any of you receive this October issue. The response to it has surpassed our fondest hopes. A good part of the second printing is already spoken for. We regret the fact that some who ordered extra papers received them so late. The printer was more than a week later than promised in completing the work, and we

have been having great problems with postal service in certain parts of the country. We have absolutely no control over that, though we are in the process of determining how and to whom to lodge a formal complaint.

THE JULY ISSUE — We must also apologize for the July issue being mailed out as late as it was. We have never been that late with an issue going out since we have been editing the paper. There was a press breakdown with our printer which backed up their work and brought on most of that delay. We thank all for your patience and assure each reader that we are making every effort to keep our part of the bargain to meet agreed upon deadlines. We cannot always control the other parties upon whom we depend to uphold their end of the bargain.

IN RESPONSE TO JAMES W. ADAMS — H E . Phillips is preparing a response to the two articles written by James W. Adams which appeared in the GOSPEL GUARDIAN in recent issues. It is my conviction that I have stated my own view of this matter clearly and in a proper spirit and feel that nothing more should be said by me, at this point, as it relates to the editor of the GOSPEL GUARDIAN. While the article being prepared by brother Phillips will bring to a close our direct differences with brother Adams himself, that does not mean that we shall not carry material on the subject of marriage, divorce and remarriage whenever we think it good to do so. When that time comes, we shall not seek the counsel of other editors nor give fifteen seconds thought as to whether or not what we have to say pleases them or any of their readers. We believe in autonomy for local churches, debaters and paper editors.

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