

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XIX

MARCH, 1978

NUMBER 3

THINK ON THESE THINGS

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JAMES PARKER MILLER

James Parker Miller was born July 1, 1915 in the small town of Hazel, in western Kentucky. His boyhood days were spent in Hazel and his college years began at Murray State College, Murray, Ky. More information about his college years and his college debating experiences may be found in "Pap — The Broken Mold," a biography by his son, Rodney M. Miller.

He married Robbie Nell Meyers in 1942. "Bobbie," as she is affectionately called, stood by his side as a faithful wife and a true servant of God, even to his departure from this life. Upon many occasions, both public and private, Jim said that he could not have done his work without the help and encouragement of his good wife. Sister Bobbie Miller is an excellent teacher and writer. They have one son, Rodney M. Miller, who is a good preacher of the word and an excellent writer in his own right.

As I prepare this article about James P. Miller for *Searching The Scriptures*, a monthly religious journal which we jointly brought into being in January, 1960, many nostalgic scenes compel me to stop and tarry with the memories of varied interests and labors "Jim" and I spent together.

James P. Miller had a number of unique characteristics which will never be forgotten by those who knew him or heard him preach or debate. No one will ever successfully imitate his style. Who can forget that inimitable verbal ignition of a sermon, lecture or debate with: "Now in the very beginning. . ."? And who can forget that vivid picture of him shaking the

silver hair on his head as he jabbed an index finger in the direction of an audience while he pressed home a point with thunderous voice, and then turn with the pleading tones to make the application with: "Oh, let me tell you something. . ."?

I see clearly that man of God standing before an audience while a song of encouragement was being sung, after preaching a sermon from the Book and from his heart, with hands lifted and eyes searching for some indication of a response to the gospel. He had that rare ability to capture an audience with wit and humor both in the introduction and illustration of his lessons. He could carry an audience from laughter to pathos, all to the end of pressing upon their hearts the word of the living God.

James P. Miller was an evangelist, author, debater, editor, and a friend to many of all ages. He was well prepared for his work, both in attitude and ability. He loved old preachers of the gospel and tried to help them in many ways. He also had a special place in his heart for young preachers. I personally know of some who were helped almost beyond his ability to do so. He gave them books, advice, encouragement, and opened doors for them to begin preaching when they had no one else to help at the time.

While Jim loved old and young preachers, he had little time and patience for any man who showed little or no regard for the word of God, especially in relation to the nature and work of the church, whether he be preacher, elder, editor, college professor, or just any member of the church. He was long suffering toward one who indicated a desire to learn and showed the change in his life as he learned the truth.

In the spring of 1950 our paths crossed. I had heard of him but it was not until I attended a meeting in St. Petersburg, Florida, in which he was doing the preaching, that I first talked to him. I was preaching in Clear water, Florida at the time. In the fall of 1950 he had dinner at my home. This was the first opportunity we had to talk about Bible matters and things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven. I recall it well because it was the first time he gave me advice, and I took it. Although he was but one year my senior, I often consulted with him about matters

of real importance to me and I always received good advice. There were times when the reverse would be so. This became a mutual part of our relationship through the years.

On the occasion just mentioned about his advice to me in 1950, I had been writing for "The Gospel Broadcast," a weekly paper owned and edited by the late Eugene S. Smith of Dallas, Texas. Jim advised me to stop writing for that paper because of its reputation in Texas and other parts of the country, of which I had little knowledge at the time. We talked of the Lord's work upon many occasions from 1950 to 1955, the year he had his great debate with Morris Butler Book in Orlando, Florida. Fast bonds of common interest were formed between us during that debate. This relationship grew for more than two decades. The Book-Miller Debate was published by me (Phillips Publications) in 1955.

As I prepared the last editorial for **Searching The Scriptures** before delivering it to the present owner and very able editor, Connie W. Adams, I was giving a brief review of the beginning of the paper. I lift one paragraph from that editorial of May, 1973, page 4 to tell of the relationship we had:

"After two years of a very wonderful relationship between James P. Miller and myself, brother Miller felt the need to intensify his labors in other fields and arrangements were made whereby I would take the full responsibility editorially and financially to continue the publication of the paper. During our years together not one unkind or angry word passed between us. I believe there has been the full trust and confidence by each of us toward the other. He has continued his work in trying to increase the circulation of the paper and to write articles as he had opportunity through the years."

In the May, 1967 issue of **Searching The Scriptures** brother Miller wrote in the editorial:

"As I look back on this beginning and on the start of **Searching The Scriptures** in January of 1960 I marvel at the ease with which we worked. I do not remember a word said about any division of responsibility or duty, Elwood turned to the desk and I turned to the field. In other words, the new paper had the simplest organization of any paper in history. It had an inside man and an outside man and this was it. I have remarked that **Searching The Scriptures** had about the same organization as you would have if two men got in a car and one said, 'I will drive,' and the other, 'I will watch the route.'"

"It is wonderful to state that in the ten years we have been working together we have never had a misunderstanding of any kind or an unkind word ever spoken. As far as I know we come as near agreeing on every verse of scripture as it is possible for two men to do. We believe, speak and practice the same things. . ."

This was the relationship we had through the years.

We were not together much the last few years because we were separated by miles in our labors, and then his illness kept him confined except for those opportunities to preach in meetings, which he

Searching The Scriptures

Volume 19 March, 1978 Number 3

Published Monthly at
BROOKS, KENTUCKY

Second Class Postage Paid at Brooks, Kentucky
and at an Additional Mailing Office

CONNIE W. ADAMS, Editor

Office of Publication
52 Yearling Drive
Brooks, Kentucky 40109
Phone (502) 957-2257

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
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Club rate:
\$5 per year for 4 or more

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Address subscriptions and manuscripts to Connie W. Adams, P. O. Box 68, Brooks, Kentucky 40109.

Address supply orders to Religious Supply Center, Inc., P. O. Box 13164, Louisville, Kentucky 40213: Phone (502) 366-9014.

POSTMASTER: Send change of address forms to P. O. Box 68, Brooks, Kentucky 40109.

tried to do even though he was physically unable to do so. I saw him some from July, 1977 when he moved back to Tampa.

Although I knew his time was short because of hopeless medical reports from his doctors, a personal talk with Bobbie on Thursday evening, January 5, and a telephone report from Rodney that he was growing weaker, that telephone message that he had departed this life struck me with a force I did not realize. It was hard for me to accept the fact that my brother, friend, and co-worker for such a long time was no longer in his tabernacle of clay; he had departed to "be with the Lord." He passed away Saturday, January 7, 1978 at 1:40 p.m.

The full impact of all this hit me when I gazed upon his lifeless form at the Blount Funeral Home in Tampa, Florida. I do not know how long I stood there in sorrow and in joy, looking at his white hair, his face, his mouth which had so powerfully spoken the word of God, and his hands so appropriately

holding a copy of the New Testament. Sorrow at the loss of one of the best friends a man ever had; joy because of the promise of God of the crown of life to all who are faithful unto death. I rejoice in the Lord because a soldier of Christ is resting from his labours (Rev. 14:13), and that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of (one) of his saints" (Psa. 116:15).

I turned to embrace Bobbie (Mrs. James P. Miller) and try to comfort her because of our hope in Christ beyond this life (I Cor. 15:19). I could say only a few words. But through the mist that filled her eyes, and the tears that coursed her cheeks, her courageous smile came through the tears and she said: "We must go through this together, but God will take care of us." After talking a few moments I told her I would see her the next day and turned toward the rear of the chapel.

Halfway to the exit of the chapel I met Bob (Robert O. Miller, Jim's brother) and we clasped hands and spoke a few words. He said: "H. E., you and Jim have traveled many miles together and have spent many hours together in the Lord's work. He loved you more than you know. He talked about you many times and in many places. I know you will miss him." I said: "Bob, I appreciate what you have said. I loved him as much as he loved me. May God bless you in your loss." The handshake was very firm as Bob said: "Elwood, I love you; come to see me when you are in Kentucky." I nodded affirmatively and tried to swallow the lump in my throat.

Near the door of the chapel I met Rodney Miller, whom I first remembered as a 14 or 15 year old boy, and in his respectful and kind way he tried to say something to comfort me, while I knew he was carrying such a burden. Rod has always shown love and respect for me, especially since he reached college age.

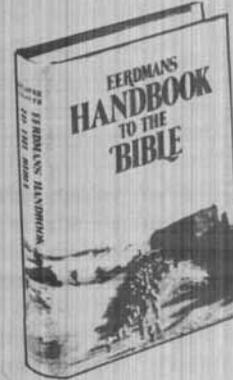
At 2 p.m. Tuesday, January 10, 1978, services were conducted in the Seminole building in Tampa, Florida. It was in the building he had labored so hard to make a reality, and in which he had spent so many years preaching, teaching and debating.

The building was filled. "Buck" Warren led congregational singing and brother James R. Cope spoke of James Parker Miller and his work in the kingdom. He then preached from Ephesians, one of Jim's favorite books in the New Testament. This is what brother Miller wanted. Everett Mann assisted James Cope with a few remarks, reading of Scriptures and prayer. He was buried in Garden of Memories in Tampa, Florida.

To my brother, friend, and fellowservant of Jesus Christ: you have been released from the fleshly bonds that encounter all the sufferings of mortality, and have entered into your rest to await the coming of Christ. After a few more days or years I shall follow. We shall then know the reality of those things we believed, preached and hoped for during our sojourn upon this earth. Rest, Jim; you have fought a good fight, you have finished your course, you have kept the faith: hence forth there is laid up for you the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous

judge, shall give to you at that day: and not to you only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (2 Tim. 7,8).

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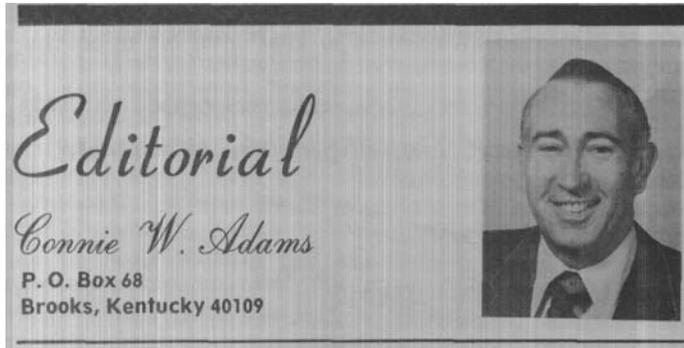
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(EDITOR'S NOTE: Five years ago my good wife wrote the following piece which was published anonymously in TRUTH MAGAZINE in the March 22, 1973 issue. Because of some references in it, some acquaintances recognized her as the author of it and called, or wrote, to express their appreciation for it. While we do not usually publish material which has already appeared elsewhere, I gladly relinquish my own space this month to my faithful companion. I think she said something which needed to be said, and while I am undoubtedly prejudiced, believe she said it very well.)

THE BLESSINGS OF A PREACHER'S WIFE

Tonight is the 23rd of December. In another week a new year will be upon us. It, naturally, is a time for reflection and a time to count our blessings. We are blessed because we live in America and are free to worship God in the way He commanded us; we are blessed because we have plenty to eat and warm houses in which to live while people in other parts of the world are starving. But there is one blessing that I share with a relative few in this world. It is a blessing that I prize very highly and one that I am thankful God gave me the freedom and opportunity to choose—I am blessed in that I chose to become a preacher's wife.

I can almost hear some now saying: "That's a strange thing to say. She must be off her rocker in some way. A preacher's wife can't be thankful or call that a blessing. Why she is often criticized and put on the spot. Her husband is often gone for days at a time and she is alone. Her children are in the spotlight and their actions minutely inspected. Preachers never make much money or have fine houses. They must move every so often. How can she call that a blessing?"

Yes, I can hear all these comments, even though unspoken. And I grant that most of them are true. But I still count it a blessing. Until recently, I never gave it much thought. I just went along from day to day doing what had to be done. However, some recent events have prompted me to reflect on this blessing. Perhaps my reflections can help a few others to appreciate their lot in life a little more and also cause others to choose this way, if the choice presents itself.

Recently, I have heard some voice the opinion that they did not want to be a preacher's wife or that they did not want their girl to become a preacher's wife. I

have heard of boys who want to give up preaching because their sweethearts did not want to be preacher's wives. You know, I never gave that a whole lot of thought. Maybe my mother wishes I had; but if so, she never spoke that thought. She did tell me that she wanted me to help make my husband a good one. Those of you who know him can judge how well I succeeded!

What is the life of a preacher's wife really like? There are others who have been "at it" far longer than I and who could tell far more about it, I am sure; but tonight let me give you some of my thoughts.

It will soon be twenty-eight years since I decided to take that 'giant step' and I never have been sorry for one minute. It has not always been smooth sailing or an easy course to follow. I have made a lot of mistakes — for these, I am truly sorry — but God forgives a preacher's wife on the same basis He forgives anyone else. The brethren where we have lived have "put up with," encouraged, laughed, and even cried with us on various occasions. For this, I am grateful. Without their help, I never could have "made it," I suppose.

I do not believe that I was consciously trained to become a preacher's wife. However, I never was discouraged. It just never really concerned me too much one way or the other. We had preachers in our family (though all are either dead or liberal now), and when we could all get together, it was a wonderful time. I am sure that when I left to go to Florida College in 1949 the thought must have occurred to my parents that I might marry a preacher, since that institution was (and is) well known for the marriages that are created there. I am an "only child" and when I left for college it was for good, except for short, infrequent visits. That is not the way I would like for it to be. However, because of our work it has had to be like that. So, being an only child is no excuse for not becoming a preacher's wife.

Next week is the twentieth birthday of our older son. Some of you will remember where he was born. Not in some comfortable American hospital in my hometown, to be sure. No, he was born in a University hospital in Bergen, Norway, thousands of miles from either of our homes and parents, with a doctor who was a Communist and nurses and attendants who did not speak or understand English. It was not an easy time. We had few friends there then, having been in Norway only four months. At the time, I came as close to not caring about anything as I ever have. But I thank God that I did not entirely give in. Even then, I did not regret being a preacher's wife. What I am saying is this: There may be times when you, as a preacher's wife, will have to leave this country. It is almost a certainty that you will have to leave your hometown and parents. But as Jesus said in Luke 14:26 "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

This is a time of protest and discontent. The younger generation are critics of the older generation.

They say we are materialistic. But I just wonder what it is when a boy decides not to preach because the girl he wants to marry just does not want to move around every so often, or does not want to leave her parents or her hometown. She wants the security of a job and a house in one locality all her life. Is this materialism? What else?

Preacher's wives are not a special breed. Why, God did not even give us special admonitions as he did the wives of elders and deacons. We have the same admonitions as all other women. However, there are a few commands which certainly pertain to a preacher's wife.

As with other Christians, we dare not to gossip or bear tales. No Christian should do this. And certainly not a preacher's wife. She is in a position to know things about other Christians which do not need to be made public. Things are said to her and her husband in confidence and she needs to be able to keep such knowledge to herself, lest it hurt the person, her husband, and even the congregation. In fact, some things her husband should not even tell her. If I had any one piece of advice to give any girl who is about to marry a preacher, it would be, "Keep your mouth shut!" Neither is it her business to advertise decisions that the elders make, or, for that matter, to try to tell the elders or her husband which decisions to make.

And which of us has not at some time engaged in a little self-pity? Some are more prone to this than others. But a Christian has no right or need to do this. We are called to serve God wherever and whenever we can. The preacher's wife cannot afford self-pity. There will often be times when her husband will be called away to the hospital to sit with a family during an operation; or to a funeral home after a sudden death; or to a person's home during a trying time when a marriage is on the brink of failure; or even to a local jail to help somebody in trouble. She must wait at home with a supper pushed to the back of the stove or in the oven. Or, he may be gone for several days at a time in a gospel meeting clear across the country, or to a lectureship, or to a debate. Maybe he will even be involved in his work half-way around the world.

I have never asked my husband not to go where he thought he was needed for God's work. Yet, I must confess that I came close in 1971 when he and J. T. Smith decided to go to the Philippine Islands. I knew there would be physical danger involved in such a trip; it would mean that the children and I would be alone for an entire month. What if one of the children got seriously ill? Or what if I became sick? However, I agreed that he should go. In fact, I knew he would go before he even finished telling me of the need. For some reason, I have always believed that it was up to me to let him go and that it was up to God to take care of him. So far, it has worked out that way. How glad I am now that he and brother Smith went. Because of their efforts and the efforts of others who have gone, the brethren there have been helped immensely. By mail, I have come to know many of those people. They have had many difficulties and

troubles which many of us would find unbearable. Would I be willing for him to go again? You bet I would!

Congregations often expect too much of the preacher's wife. They seem to think that for some reason they "own" her and should be able to tell her what to do and how to do it. This attitude can cause problems. Let me hurriedly and thankfully say that I have never really faced this problem. The congregations where we have worked have been very considerate along this line; but I do know that such things have happened. Just because the church owns the house in which the preacher lives or pays the rent for him, does not give the members the right to tell the wife how to run her house. This is their home for the time that they live there.

Neither does the congregation "hire" the preacher's wife. For the first twenty years we were married, I did a lot of secretarial work for my husband and the church. I knew how to do such work and was glad to do it. With one exception, I have never been paid for such work. However, a congregation has no right to expect more from a preacher's wife along this line than from any other woman in the congregation.

A preacher is not always as well paid as some in this life. He does not have many fringe benefits which workers in plants or offices have. Few churches pay social security, health insurance premiums, or pension plans. Yet, I do not know of many churches that will deny a preacher an extra day off at a holiday season or fail to continue his salary during a long, drawn-out illness. Though your daughter may not always have the "most" in this life, you can rest assured that there are fringe benefits which few others will ever have.

What am I talking about? For one thing: friends. Yes, our friends . . . from Maine to California; Washington to Florida; in Canada, Norway and the Philippines. We would not trade these acquaintances for any amount of money on earth. These are people with whom we have worked through the years and who now have scattered around the country and the world. They include preachers, and, yes, their wives. They include sons and daughters of preachers who have grown up and married in the past few years. Whole congregations are included. These are all brothers and sisters in Christ, and all of them are (or should be) striving toward the same goal—an eternal home in heaven. These friends are the finest people on earth.

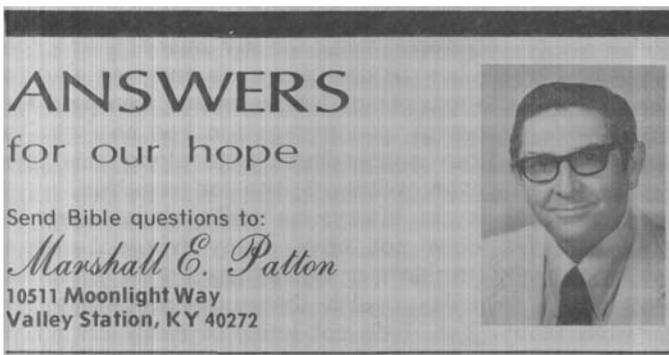
These "preacher-wife" years have meant a broader education for my children and me than would have been possible had we always lived in the same place. How else could we have seen the midnight sun of Norway; the snow of northeast Ohio; the blastoff of a rocket at Cape Kennedy; the rock-bound coast of Maine; the lakes of Ontario; the cathedral of Worms, Germany where Martin Luther took his stand? I do not mean for this to sound as if we have been to these places just for the fun of traveling. That is not it at all. The work came first and that is what took us to these places, but I would be foolish to let you think that it did not benefit our lives. It has even

helped our children in their school work.

One of the greatest fringe benefits is being the constant recipients of the prayers of the congregation. Who else has God's blessing invoked upon them in public prayers as much as the preacher and his family?

Most of all, a preacher's wife develops a better understanding of people and a desire to have a part in the saving of their souls. Who could describe the frame of mind a preacher is in after someone has obeyed the gospel, or a wayward church member has repented, or some evidence is seen of good resulting from your husband's efforts? Could it just be that I did have some part in making that possible? If so, then it has been worth it after all.

Barbara C. Adams



FOR WHAT MAY A CHRISTIAN PRAY?

QUESTION: (NOTE: The following are excerpts from a letter identifying the issue on which our querist seeks information—MEP) I wonder if you agree with me that there is confusion and uncertainty among the brethren regarding what we have a right to pray for. This may be, in some measure, the result of an over-reaction to the charismatic movement. Since miracles have ceased, and God's revelation is complete, many seem to believe that there is very little we can ask for that would not fall into one of those categories.

For example, we hear brethren say when praying for the sick, "Bless the means being used in their care," or "Guide the hands of the doctors as they minister." I am unable to see how it is less a miracle for God to guide the doctor's hands, or bless the means being used, than for Him to touch the life and body of the sick with his comforting, healing hand One preacher told me he didn't ask God's help in preaching—that he had the Spirit-inspired word, and "What else can He do for me"? When James wrote that men should pray for wisdom, and Paul wrote the Corinthians that they helped in the delivery of himself and his companions from the peril of death by their prayers, were these written only for the days of miracles?—J.R.

ANSWER: I agree that there is confusion and uncertainty among brethren on the subject of prayer. Much of this can be accounted for on the following grounds: 1) Rationalism. Some accept only what can be comprehended by human reasoning, plain statements of the Bible to the contrary, not-

withstanding. These need faith. 2) A lack of knowledge of what the Scriptures teach on prayer, and 3) A failure to distinguish between God's miraculous power and His providential power.

The word "miracle" in our English Bible is a translation from two Greek words: 1) "Dunamis," which is defined: "power, inherent ability, is used of works of a supernatural origin and character, such as could not be produced by natural agents and means" (W. E. Vine); 2) "Semeion" which is defined: "a sign, mark, token . . . is used of miracles and wonders as signs of Divine authority" (Ibid). In the light of these definitions, let it be understood that by "God's miraculous power" we mean supernatural power—power that is over, above, and beyond natural ability, agents, and means.

Our querist understands that "miracles have ceased." This means that God is not exercising such power among men today. This, however, is not to deny that He exercises power above human ability through natural laws, agents, and means. The latter identifies His providential power. It is by this power He is able to answer prayer today above human ability, yet without working a miracle. While this means His providential power is limited in its operation to natural laws, agents, and means, it nevertheless, is far superior to human ability. This ought not to appear strange, because we see demonstration of it every day.

The fowls of the air and the animals of the earth hear the cry of their young and respond, over and above the ability of their young, fulfilling their requests by utilizing natural means—and this without working a miracle. Parents, by reason of superior knowledge, wisdom, and ability, continually exercise power over, above, and beyond that of their young in fulfilling their requests by utilizing the laws of nature—and this without working a miracle. Furthermore, this is our Lord's illustration of this very point: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matt 7:7-11). The Bible teaches us to pray:

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16).

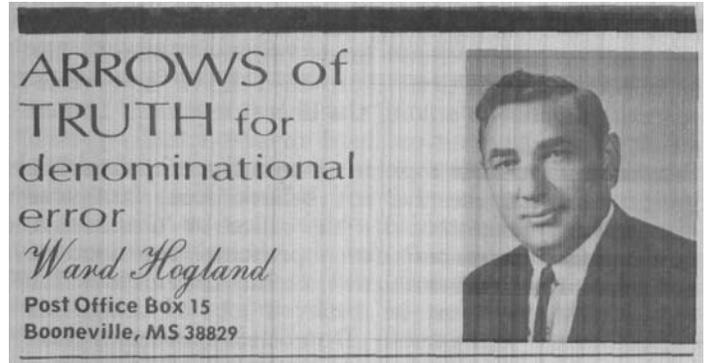
"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Pet. 3:12).

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas. 1: 5, 6).

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jno. 5:14, 15).

There is nothing to indicate that these passages were limited to or intended to apply only in the age of miracles. Notice, we have the assurance that, if our petition be "according to his will, he heareth us." God wills for us only that which is for our good. Just as a parent often refuses the request of his child, for his own good, so God in his infinite knowledge and wisdom sometimes refuses our request—and that for our own good. How thankful we should be for this! Parents sometimes err in their judgment; God never does. Furthermore, we must be resigned to the fact that it is *His will* to grant our request now according to natural laws. Such are immutable. However, this is not to say that, we can understand *how* He does it in every instance. A child may not understand, because of inferior knowledge and wisdom, how the parent fulfills his request. Nevertheless, he believes and continues to ask. So must we in making our prayers unto God. Remember, Paul said that He "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). To conclude, simply because we cannot see, that He cannot bless the means used in ministering to the sick or guide the physician effectively without working a miracle is to indulge rationalism. I may not understand *how* He does such through natural means, but such is no more a miracle than hearing us when we pray in the first place.



POLEMICAL QUESTIONS NO. 2

This is the second in a series on questions asked in public debate. Roy Deaver, head of the Brown Trail School of Preaching, in Ft. Worth, Texas and I met in debate during July of 1977. As stated in a previous article, we agreed on written questions and answers. The questions were asked and answered before the start of each session.

In a previous article, I promised to prove that brother Deaver and his colleagues have given up 1 Cor. 16:1,2, as an exclusive pattern on when money may be collected for the church treasury. When I was a boy, in the hills of Oklahoma, I heard older preachers slap the pulpit and shout, "This business of the sectarians, taking up a collection every night is unscriptural. 1 Cor. 16:1,2 teaches us that the first day of the week is the proper time for such collections." After this, they would give the old pulpit a second slap and say, "If you will come over to our meeting at the church of Christ we will not pass the hat every night but will cry out against it." Sad as it may seem that day is over. It has gone the way of the hoop skirt and spinning wheel. Later when I started to preach, I believed what I had heard and started to preach the same thing. After years of study and debate, I still believe it will stand the heat of controversy. I stand firm on the platform that the first day of the week is the ONLY time (spelled with a capital O) that Christians may raise money for the Lord's work. I assumed that most brethren believed this but I was in for the surprise of my Me.

I asked brother Deaver this question, "Would it be scriptural for an individual to give money into the church treasury on any day other than the first day of the week? His answer was, "YES" Gal. 6:10." After I got over the initial shock, I came back with a second question, "Since you said yes, to my number four question on Monday night VIZ, that a Christian can give money into the church treasury on a day other than the first day of the week, is the denominational practice of taking a collection on a day other than the first day of the week to put into the church treasury a scriptural one?" Brother Deaver came back with his answer; "The fact is that a Christian may contribute into the church treasury at times in addition to the regular first day of the week contribution (Gal. 6:10). What the denominations do is not a part of this discussion." Roy underlined the two words, "IN ADDITION" in his answer. So now,

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it becomes a matter of record. I copied his answer from his own handwriting and the tapes. I have no way of knowing how long brother Deaver has espoused this position. Nor, do I know how widespread its belief is among the liberal brethren. I must admit that I have never heard anyone actually preach this doctrine. I had a preacher to tell me back in the late fifties that he did not believe Acts 20:7 was binding. He admitted in his office at Clarksville, Arkansas that he had never preached the doctrine and his elders did not know of his convictions. He very frankly told me he believed lots of things his elders did not know about. Do not all apostasies start in the fertile imaginations of the mind of the mortal man before they are preached? When old brother Tant said, "Brethren we are drifting.", I doubt that he conceived of such a spiritual catastrophe.

You will notice in his answer he used Gal. 6:10. He did not quote the verse or even make an argument on it, he merely wrote it down with his answer. I have heard Gal. 6:10 used to justify everything from holy hootenannies to church haberdasheries but never as a text on raising money for the church treasury. Gal. 6:10 is to the liberal brethren about what Jno. 3:16 is to the sectarian. One Baptist preacher told me that the Lord could have mailed Jno. 3:16 to us on a post card and we would have everything we need to go to heaven. My liberal brethren obviously believe that Gal. 6:10 justifies about anything one desires to do out of the church treasury. The verse says "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Now brethren, honestly does this verse mention or imply a church contribution? Does it mention any day, especially a day other than the first day? Does it in any way even remotely mention the church collectively doing anything? A person must be hard pressed to give this as justification for a church treasury of any kind. Brother Deaver said in his answer that what the denominations do has nothing to do with the issue. I beg to differ with him and feel it has much to do with the issue. For example, if I believed what brother Deaver says he believes I owe the denominations an apology. I have accused them of being wrong on their nightly contributions for years. If and when I believe what he says he does, I need to make both private and public correction.

You will note in his answer he used the expression "In addition to the regular first day of the week contribution." This brings up an interesting question. Since he calls the first day contribution the "regular" contribution do we have authority for an "irregular" contribution on some other day? If so, where is the book, chapter and verse for the "irregular?" This also makes one wonder if the church could have two treasuries, one regular and the other irregular? It seems that brother Deaver believes in taking up the regular and irregular and putting them in ONE treasury. We both have 1 Cor. 16:1, 2 for the regular but where is the passage for the irregular?

Gentle friend, I was truly shocked when brother Deaver gave up 1 Cor. 16 as the exclusive "TIME" for the contribution. However, I received a greater

vibration when he told me the treasury could consist of beans and bacon. To prove I am not misrepresenting brother Deaver, I asked another question and here it is; "Since you said last night that the church treasury consists of more than money (items such as groceries, etc.) would it be scriptural for a Christian to give such items on the 1st day of the week instead of money? His answer was, "In some cases, yes." I then asked this question, "In light of Acts 2:44-45, 4:34-35 and 1 Cor. 16:1, 2, would it be scriptural for anyone ever to put into the church treasury anything besides money?" His answer was, "absolutely so." There you have it in black and white. He says groceries such as beans and bacon may be put into the church treasury instead of money. He did say, "In some cases" but never elaborated on what the cases might be. Years ago I met a Sabbatarian named Burt F. Marrs. He argued that the contribution of 1 Cor. 16 consisted of "Fruit" such as grapes and figs. He went to Rom. 15:28 where Paul says "Sealed to them this fruit." He said it meant literal fruit such as grapes. I remember asking him if fruit always meant grapes and figs, did the Jews have to cough up a stem of grapes when John the Baptist said, "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:8)? He did not reply.

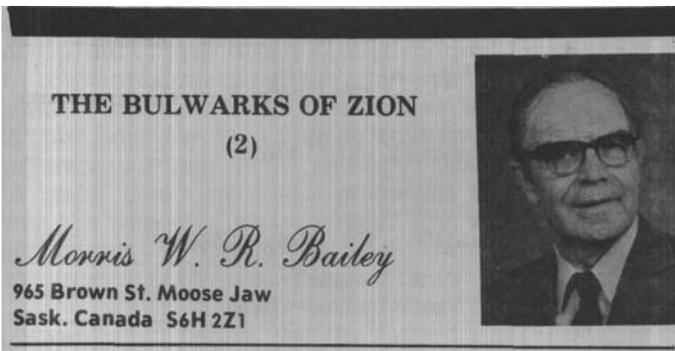
When brother Deaver told me the church treasury could consist of many things besides money, I was stunned. When I pointed out that in Acts 4:37, the disciples sold their land and laid the money at the apostles feet; he replied that Acts 4 had nothing to do with it. Again I beg to differ. Brethren it is later than we think. In our next article, we shall discuss the ramifications and consequences of this new doctrine. We shall discuss such questions as, if a brother gives a 250 acre farm to the church, what will the elders do with it? Shall they farm it, rent it, lease it, or put it in the soil bank? If a brother gives a drug store to the church will the elders operate it, sell it, or lease it out? Before you answer, think it over real good.

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In a previous article under the above heading, and based on the words of Psalm 48:11-13, it was pointed out that just as Zion of the Old Testament had certain bulwarks that served to protect Israel from apostasy, so also God's Zion of the New Testament — the church — has safeguards that are designed to keep her pure in organization, in doctrine, and in worship. The first of these bulwarks that I propose to discuss is the fact that the church has

A Divine Builder

The writer of Hebrews said: "For every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God" (Hebrews 3:4). That every house has been built by some one, is so self-evident as to be an axiom. We cannot conceive of a house that did not have a builder. But it is also true of institutions or organizations, whether they are human or divine. They have been built by some one. That being true, it is important that we know that the church, the house of God, has been designed by a competent architect, and erected by a reputable builder.

Some one has said that, "No stream can rise higher than its source." That is likewise self-evident. While a stream that begins in the mountain, may well fall to a lower level, the stream that begins in a swamp can never of its own power rise above its source. The same principle is true with regard to institutions and organizations. No institution can rise about its builder, or founder. It takes on the nature of the one who built it. If its builder is human, it can never be anything but a human institution. It would be as reasonable to expect to see a pine tree grow from an acorn as it would be to expect to see a divine institution produced by a human founder.

That is why denominationalism today presents such a bewildering picture, and is such an impotent force. It is made up of religious bodies that have been founded and built by fallible men. Each denominational body can be traced back to some man, or it may be, group of men. The Lutheran church, for example, cannot be traced back beyond Martin Luther, who was its founder. True, he was a great man, and performed a useful service to the world in that he provided the spark that ignited the flame of reformation, and thus dealt the Roman Catholic church a blow from which it has never to this day recovered; yet withal he was a man, and therefore the church that was founded by him is nothing more than a human institution.

In like manner, the church of England owes its existence to King Henry the eighth, who broke away from the church of Rome because the pope refused to grant him the right to divorce one of his many wives. It can thus never be anything but a human institution. The Presbyterian church had its origin with John Calvin who likewise broke away from the church of Rome. The Methodist church owes its beginning to John Wesley who, in his search for more spirituality, broke away from the church of England. The Mormon church began with Joseph Smith and his claim to special revelations. The Seventh Day Adventist church began with Ellen G. White and her so-called visions. The Christian Science church began with Mary Baker Eddy. These are all human institutions because they were founded by men and therefore reflect the characters of their builders. David said, "Except Jehovah build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psa. 127:1).

The church of the New Testament, however, is of divine origin. When the writer of Hebrews said, "He that built all things is God", it was in a context that speaks of God's house, — the church — and which leads us to conclude that

God Is The Divine Architect

In his epistle to the Ephesians, in the fourth chapter, Paul wrote about his mission to preach to the Gentiles, and the purpose of which was, "To make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:9-11). Thus the church was built according to God's purpose. He designed it, and it was built according to His plan. Just as an edifice bears witness to the wisdom of the architect who designed it, so the church, designed by God, bears witness to His wisdom.

A thought, not to be overlooked in this connection, is that the church was designed in the eternal purpose of God. The view held by the premillennial school of thought is that the church is just an afterthought on the part of God, and not in His original plan. R. H. Boll and others, spoke of it as a "spiritual contingent". The theory that they taught was that God had originally planned to set up His kingdom on earth, and that Christ came to earth to carry out that plan. But because the Jews rejected Him and crucified Him God had to postpone His plan for the establishment of the kingdom until such a time as the Jews are willing to accept Christ. He then set up the church. Thus according to the theory, the church is only a stand-in for a postponed kingdom. Not a very lofty conception of the church! And instead of making known the wisdom of God, it would seem that it only makes known His short-sightedness in that He did not anticipate the fact that the Jews would reject Christ.

Paul said, however, that the church was in the eternal purpose of God, as regards its beginning, and

in Ephesians 3:21 he said, "To him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen." Thus the church which began in God's eternal purpose will continue through the ages of eternity to come.

Christ The Divine Builder

Matthew records a conversation between Jesus and apostles that took place in the parts of Caesarea Philippi. In response to Peter's declaration that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus said, ". . . Upon this rock I will build my church. . . ." (Matt. 16:13-18). Thus Jesus identified Himself as the builder of the church. There are some that teach that the church was built by John the Baptist, and that all that Jesus did was to enlarge and improve upon what John had built. The language of Jesus, however makes it clear that He was building the church from the foundation up, and not just doing a renovating job.

Not only does the church have a divine architect and a divine builder, but it was built according to a divine plan with divine specifications. The book of Exodus tells us that when God called Moses up into mount Sinai, He gave him the pattern for the building of the tabernacle. It was a pattern that was very specific even in the smallest details. He was told of the material that was to be used, the dimensions of the tabernacle, its furniture, and the purpose of each item. Three chapters of the book of Exodus are used in recording God's instructions which were further emphasized by the command, "And see that thou make them after their pattern, which hath been showed thee in the mount (Exodus 25:40). The writer of Hebrews quoted this charge given to Moses (Hebrews 8:5), the point of its application being that the church — the true tabernacle — has also been built according to a divine plan.

These facts — a divine architect, a divine builder, and a divine plan—serve as a mighty bulwark or safeguard, that make the church a divine institution, and protects it from the weaknesses that are characteristic of human denominations.

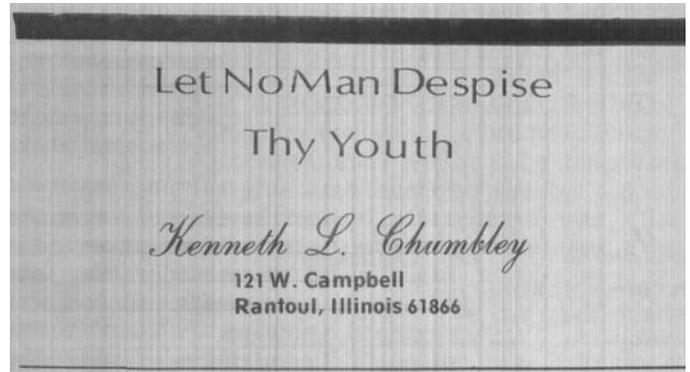
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(EDITOR'S NOTE: We are happy to introduce to our readers a fine young preacher with a promising future. Kenneth L. Chumbley (known more casually as "Tack" to his many friends) was born and reared in Champaign County, Illinois. His formal education has been at Florida College, Moody Bible Institute and the University of Illinois. He is married to the former Cathy Forrester of San Jose, California and they have two children, a boy (Gary) and a girl (Kelly). From 1974 to 1977 he labored with the Oak Grove church near Louisville, Kentucky where he did excellent work. Since March, 1977 he has worked with the church in Rantoul, Illinois during which time the church has grown from 50 to 80. We first became aware of his writing ability from the bulletin he edited at Oak Grove. He is a careful student of the Bible and we expect to hear many good things from his work over the years.)

RENEWAL OF THE INNER MAN

The second Corinthian epistle yields a remarkable insight into the career of the apostle Paul which none of his other epistles give. From the opening sentences to the close of the letter our attention is arrested by recurrent re-countings of the afflictions Paul had endured as an apostle of the Lord. In the first chapter Paul writes, "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves." In chapter four, "we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." The apostle further reveals, "For when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears" (7:5). And towards the close of this courageous epistle is found a staggering collection of catastrophes through which the intrepid apostle had passed (11:23-33). In enumerating the hardships he has endured, Paul was responding to the charges which certain critics in the Corinthian church had leveled against him. In no other church were the apostle's adversaries more insolent, calumnious, or slanderous than they were at Corinth. Paul's reputation was attacked, his appearance ridiculed, his abilities as a speaker condemned, and his motive maligned. It was to vindicate his

authority as an apostle that Paul was compelled to reveal the ordeals which he had endured for the Lord. In contemplating the great and terrible trials through which Paul passed, the question we must pause over is this: how was Paul able to hold up under all of the pressures and hardships he faced? What enabled Paul to make that remarkable statement in 4:8-9? What was the source of his strength? The answer to these challenging questions is found in the paragraph encompassing chapter 4:16 — 5:10.

"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (4:16). That every man is a dichotomy is here indicated by the words inward and outward. To define these two terms, we might profitably substitute the words "fleshly" or "physical" for outward and "spiritual" for inward. The physical and spiritual dualism of man is clearly taught throughout Scripture (e.g. 1 Thes. 5:23). Further note that even as the outward, physical part of man is being destroyed (through aging and physical buffetings) the spiritual side of man can be daily renewed. Its because of this spiritual renewal that Paul endures without despair the hardships of his life. What is it, then, that can keep the inner man in all of us renewed?

In answering this question, it will help us to make an observation which is often overlooked in studies of this passage. 2 Cor. 4:16 — 5:10 contains some striking similarities to what is considered by many Bible students to be one of the most difficult texts in the book of Romans: chapter 8:18-25. Note the remarkable parallels between the two passages:

2 Corinthians 4:16 — 5:10 Romans 8:18-25

1. 4:16 Outward man decays	8:20-21	Creature subject to vanity; Bondage of corruption
2. 5:2 We groan, being burdened	8:22	Whole creation groans, travails
3. 4:18 Look at things not seen	8:25	Hope for things not seen
4. 5:2 Desire to be clothed with heavenly house	8:23	Wait for redemption of the body
5. 4:17 Momentary, light affliction works eternal weight of glory	8:18	Sufferings of present time not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed

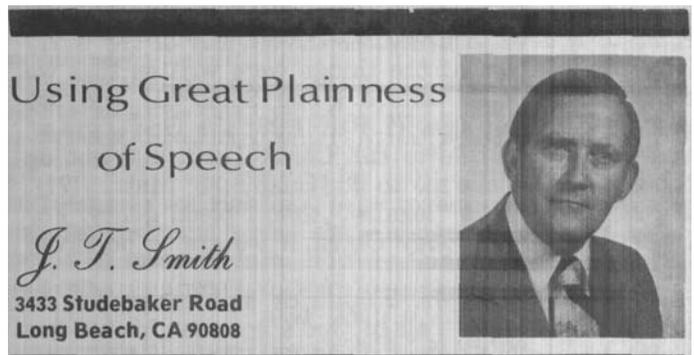
By paralleling these texts we clearly see Paul is discussing much the same topic in both passages. This being true, these texts complement each other, and we can use one to help illuminate and interpret the other.

Again considering the question, how is the inward man renewed, carefully note the third parallel above. The child of God is looking and hoping for things not seen. These words immediately call to mind certain statements in the Hebrews letter such as the one made of Moses, "For he endured, as seeing him who is invisible" (11:27). (Also cf. Hb. 11:10, 13; 12:2.) Moses endured by looking at something not seen. Paul writes "the inward man is renewed day by day." How is the inward man renewed, kept vibrant, fresh

and enthusiastic even as the outward man decays? "We look . . . at the things which are not seen"; "we hope for that we see not." What are the unseen things which the child of God is looking and hoping for? The answer is seen in our fifth parallel: we look for and hope for the eternal weight of glory, the glory to be revealed with which the sufferings of this life offer no comparison! It is this looking and hoping which gave strength to Paul and to us today; it is this looking and hoping which renews the inward man.

What motivates godly men and women to day after day struggle to make ends meet, working their fingers to the bone, performing thankless tasks, knowing that with each passing second their youth and vitality slips away, never to be regained? Is it not the hope of a better life after this life is over. The hope that "he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also" (4:14); that we will be clothed with an immortal body, a house from heaven (5:2) which will never decay or grow weary; and that we can be present with the Lord! We grow weary in this mortal body, but we are awaiting things now unseen, "the things which are not seen are eternal" (4:18). It is the invisible things, the eternal things, which cause us to imitate Moses and Paul in patiently enduring the afflictions and buffetings of this life. After meditating on these great truths, we more solemnly approach the words of Paul in that central chapter of the New Testament, 1 Cor. 15:19, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

Is it not inspiring to have the light which gleams into our minds from these texts! Do not these truths renew and give refreshment to that part of us created in the image of the Creator. Thus, we are saved by hope. And it is in hope of and looking to the eternal things of God that we too can triumphantly declare with Paul, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."



"THE ENSIGN FAIR" — FALSE DOCTRINE & PERVERSIONS

THE ENSIGN FAIR is a paper published in Huntsville, Alabama and edited by R. L. Kilpatrick. The December issue, sent to me by the editor, was the first issue that I had ever received; and I must say in all fairness that it has more false doctrine per square inch than anything I ever read. In addition to

the editorial, which "pokes fun at" an editorial by Connie Adams in the October, 1977 issue of *Searching The Scriptures*, the editor also attempted to review an article that I wrote in the same issue of STS on "Salvation By Grace Through Faith." (I will have more to say about the "review" later in this article.)

Included in THE ENSIGN FAIR was an article by Norman L. Parks on the eldership which was a carbon copy of the J. D. Hall, Charles Holt position published in their paper SENTINEL OF TRUTH in the 60s, of an elder being only an older man—no such thing as an elder having any authority—no such thing as the "office" of an elder, etc., etc. which has been answered again and again.

Then there was the "wonderful" article by F. L. Lemley on "Freedom In Christ" in which he argued that we must accept "the Christians in all denominations." Hogwash! And, on and on it goes with other "fine" articles by W. Carl Ketcherside and Buff Scott, Jr.

In reviewing my article, the editor either wittingly or unwittingly perverted every argument I made. In his review of my article "Salvation By Grace Through Faith" Mr. Kilpatrick says, "Bro. Smith will deny that his teachings are legalistic and that he teaches salvation by works, yet his explanation will lead to no other conclusion. Plainly from his teachings, Bro. Smith has God's 'grace' operating through a system of 'works', that the system itself constitutes God's grace."

It should be obvious to everyone that Mr. Kilpatrick sets out to try to prejudice the minds of his readers by placing me in the position of being one of those terrible "legalists." However, if I understand what Mr. Kilpatrick is saying in his explanation of why I am a "legalist," then rather than deny the charge, I plead guilty! For I do believe, in fact, that we are saved by faith (which is a work of righteousness given by God's grace, John 6:28-29), which **works** by love (Gal. 5:6). I also submit that Christ's dying on the cross was God's grace; that our right to believe in Christ as the saviour of the world is God's grace; that the things were written that we might be able to believe (John 20:30-31) and are preserved for all ages (1 Pet. 1:23) **are** God's **grace**; and that it is futile to call Christ Lord, and not do the things He tells me to do (Luke 6:46; Matt. 7:21). If that makes me a "legalist" then I plead guilty! For I believe we must obey Christ if we are to be saved (Heb. 5:8-9).

The thing that Mr. Kilpatrick and others fail to understand is that "all of God's commandments are righteousness" (Psalms 119:172). And, when Mr. Kilpatrick reviewed my article he perverted my position on "righteousness," because when he mentioned what I had to say about "righteousness" in Rom. 1:16-17, he failed to include the above passage by David or 1 John 3:7 which shows that the word "righteousness" is used in three different senses, and one of the usages is that which is to be done. "Little children, let no man deceive you: (Including R. L. Kilpatrick, JTS) he that doeth

righteousness is righteous even as he is righteous." Now if we want to be righteous even as God is righteous, we will do righteousness (obey God's commands).

In trying to do away with what was said about our "doing righteousness," Mr. Kilpatrick said, "We 'become' God's righteousness when we 'become' part of the righteous body of Christ." Just grant that the above statement is true. How do we "become part of the righteous body of Christ?" "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. . ." (1 Cor. 12:13). But baptism is a command of God (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 10:48). And Peter in Acts 10:34-35 said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and **worketh righteousness** is accepted with him." (Emphasis mine, JTS). Does Mr. Kilpatrick believe that one must be baptized in order to be a part of the body of Christ? Since all "God's commandments are righteousness," and since we must "fear God and work righteousness" in order to be "accepted" of Him, then I hesitate not to say that one **MUST** be baptized in order to be saved, thus becoming a part of the body of Christ.

Mr. Kilpatrick then perverts Phil. 3:9 to try to prove his point. He affirms that Paul is denying that "salvation comes about as a result of obedience to a plan or system." Paul is here stating, in context, that even though he was a model case when it came to keeping the Law of Moses, he realized that all that had to be given up in order to win Christ (read Phil. 3:1-9; thus salvation was not according to all that he had done under the Law of Moses).

Finally, in examining the arguments I made in the October issue of *SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES*, Mr. Kilpatrick lands on Rom. 4:4-5 to try to show how I misrepresented Paul's position regarding doing any works. He quoted verse five, but completely left out verse four which, in my opinion, is the "key" verse concerning this matter of works. Paul says in Rom. 4:4; "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." If one kept a law to perfection, then there would be no grace involved. God would owe that person salvation. However, no one but Christ has ever kept the law to perfection. But when a person sins, transgresses God's law (1 John 3:4), his salvation then becomes a matter of grace, not debt, regardless of how much work he may do in the vineyard of the Lord. Jesus said, "When you have done all those things which are commanded of you, say, we are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10).

A very sad sidelight to this whole issue is that all of the material that I have presented in this article was prepared by me in 1966 in Dayton, Ohio to meet the arguments of a Primitive Baptist Preacher. He didn't believe that there were any works that needed to be done in order to be saved either.

Conclusion

Since Mr. Kilpatrick chides me for believing that we must obey the system of teaching set forth by Christ in the New Testament, would he sign the following proposition for us to openly discuss the

matter two nights where he preaches and two nights where I preach? Resolved: Salvation is solely by God's grace on the merit of what Christ has done for us; and our obedience is not necessary to our salvation.

Affirm

:

Deny:

J. T. Smith -----

o -----

AUBREY C. BELUE

TO A GOOD ELDER.

As the years pass in the Lord's service, we experience the deaths of many brethren, loved ones, and close friends who have meant so much to us in life.

Such was the occasion at the passing of Aubrey C. Belue. Brother Belue was born in Tishomingo, Miss. in 1905; he died January 7, in Columbus, Miss. He was an elder of the East Columbus church since its beginning in 1956; prior to this he served in this office at the old 5th. St. church in that city for several years. His total tenure of office as an elder spanned over thirty years.

AUBREY C. BELUE—THE MAN.

Brother Belue (affectionately known to most of us who are younger as "Pa-Boo") was a great man. He lived in a small city; he worked 42 years for the postal service; he had very conservative political views (which he didn't mind sharing); he was a lover of music, and he was a strong believer in clean healthful living.

But above all this, he used his God-given talents and abilities in a special way. He made it his life's goal to know the Word. When Aubrey Belue gave his view on a passage of scripture, it was always wise to listen and take note. He was also well read in modern religious thinking; especially among the brethren.

He worked hard at keeping the church pure. He always looked to the future, not as an alarmist, but with insight into what can happen and to avoid the trends that can lead to apostasy.

He left a rich heritage to the younger. He related well to young people and always sought to mold their lives with principles to face the future. He has several "Timothy's" proclaiming the word today.

His family as Christians today attest to his role as a family man. I know of no other family that is more "wrapped up" in the Lord's work than Aubrey, Jr. (Buddy), Mrs. David (Betty) Haynes, and Mrs. Darrell (Mackey) Roberts; the children of Aubrey and Grace Belue.

I believe the greatest monument to Aubrey C. Belue is the faith he leaves behind. He being dead, will continue to speak through the influence he wielded on the lives of others.

I know my life is better, fuller, and more complete for having known and worked with Aubrey Curtis

Bob Walton, 507 S. College Rd.,
Lafayette, LA 70503

James P. Miller

(His Last Meeting)

"Now as a beginning place" for what I want to say about brother James P. Miller, I'm thinking of the recent meeting in which he preached at the Gay Meadows church here in Montgomery— Nov. 7-11, 1977.

Brother Miller did not really feel up to holding this meeting, but because of the support of this congregation of him in the two Miller-Woods Debates here and his many friend, he wanted to come. I met him at the airport Monday afternoon (Nov. 7) and brought him to our home where he stayed while here. His condition required that he bring along (in dry ice cartons) specially prepared food by Bobbie to eat.

Jim said, "Herschel, I'm not well, but I hope it won't effect my preaching." And, it didn't. James P. has preached in meetings where I lived and worked before, and I can truthfully say his preaching was as fine, if not better, than ever. I was actually amazed, for after all his sickness, I thought he might be lacking in some of that typical Miller effectiveness. There may not have been as much "bluster" (I use this word in a good and limited sense), but his speech was very effective, his mind alert, and his sermons all well arranged and true to the Book. I actually felt that I was hearing brother Miller do some of the best preaching I had ever heard him do.

At home, Reba and I talked much with brother Miller about our generation of preachers, the battles we have had to fight, treatment at the hands of brethren (both good and bad, but mostly good), our families, dying, and the hope beyond. Brother Jim felt sure that his "race was nearly run". He said, "Herschel, this is the last meeting I will ever hold out of Florida. Maybe—just maybe I'll get to preach a little more around home." He was bothered at the thought of dying at our house-away from Bobbie and family . . . away from his doctors. I really believe this is what caused him, upon feeling some physical discomfort, to close the meeting on Friday night and fly home instead of continuing through Sunday night, as planned.

Jim and I talked freely of dying. His faith and hope was strong. In fact, he often was actually enthralled at the prospects of going on to that heavenly reward. Yet, he had many reasons for wanting to stay on. He dreaded leaving Bobbie ("Who works so hard at just keeping me alive") and the companionship that had meant so much to him. Rodney, his wife, and grandchildren . . . these too, were dear to him and a reason for his desiring to stay here a little longer. Too, continuing to be able to preach the gospel, the great ambition of his life, held great attraction. "I've studied and nearly know the Bible by heart and love to proclaim it."

As we talked on and on, I realized I was talking to a man who was truly as the Apostle Paul—"In a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh" was appealing because of fleshly ties and help he could still be to brethren.

Now that the end has come, I am confident that

James P. Miller is happy beyond words. The Lord whom he served and who blessed him through life will continue to bless those dear fleshly ties who remain here on earth, doing the same glorious work James P. Miller did in life. "Though dead," brother Miller, "yet speaketh" through his books and remaining family.

Herschel E. Patton,
3753 Hunting Creek Rd.
Montgomery, Ala. 36116

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

DOUGLAS K. SEATON, Route 1, Box 147, Concord, NC 28025 — Since our last report in this paper in October, 1977 we have had 10 more responses to the gospel. Our contribution for 1977 was 50% higher than any year in the history of the church here. Presently we are running articles in two newspapers. Most of the baptisms we have had and several of the restorations are a direct result of home Bible studies. Several of the members here are now setting up and conducting their own studies.

LEONARD SALYERS, P.O. Box 66, Pound, VA 24279 — Since beginning work with the church at Pound two have been baptized, four restored and one has placed membership. When traveling through this western tip of Virginia, stop and visit with us.

WALLACE H. LITTLE, 2909 Old Greenwood Rd., Ft. Smith, Arkansas 72903 — We have concluded our work with the church in Peru, Indiana and are now working with Greenwood Road in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. Will all correspondents please take note of our new address.

(Editor's Note: The interesting column, OVERSEAS PREACHING REPORT, which was "prepared by Wallace H. Little for THE SOWER, will now be carried every other month as a regular feature of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. We must not forget those dedicated men and their families who labor around the world, whether Americans or native workers in their own countries. We need to know of their triumphs, failures, problems and needs. This column is a great help in that direction. Wallace Little has shown unusual interest and gone to much time and personal expense in keeping abreast of gospel work around the world. The first of his columns under this heading will appear in the April issue of this paper.)

Basil Cass Needs Help

GENE TOPE, 1603 Lauderdale Dr., Richmond, Virginia 23233 — Readers of this periodical may remember the name, Basil Cass, because of the number of very fine articles that have been written in commendation of this South African gospel preacher and saint. This past September, Basil held a gospel meeting in the Indian area of Durban, South Africa, designated as Unit 9, Chatsworth. This meeting was an enthusiastic success, with five precious souls being added to the kingdom of God. The brethren living in Unit 9 further urged brother Cass to move his efforts there from Port Elizabeth. Such a move had much to commend itself and Basil consented to do so at the end of 1977.

Basil has now made that move and is busily engaged in this

very prospective area. This work will keep him busy by night and day teaching publicly and from house to house both Hindu and denominational seekers after truth. BUT, he is in financial trouble as a result of the move. Living costs are somewhat higher in this coastal resort area than his former place. The moving costs have set him back considerably. Basil is in immediate need of \$300 and needs a further \$200 per month to help meet higher housing, petrol, and food costs. Will you help this worthy man? Can the church where you are help with his monthly expenses? If not, how about a "one-shot" contribution to help alleviate the immediate crisis? Any kindly inquiries addressed to brother Cass will be fully and honestly answered by him. He is a most worthy servant of Jesus Christ, and you can rest assured that your help is going where it will do much Scriptural good. Any measure of help will be truly appreciated by the Casses. Write airmail to: Basil Cass, P.O. Box 875, Pinetown, 3600, Republic of South Africa.

A GOOD CHURCH AT WORK

The Imhoff Avenue church in Port Arthur, Texas is a worthy example to others in supporting gospel work in many places. With less than 200 members, this congregation averaged over \$1600 a week in contributions during 1977. In addition to the support of Bill Cavender in the local work, they regularly supported 17 men in preaching in several states and in South Africa, Italy, Canada, Mexico and the Philippines. Additionally, they had a part in supporting 17 others during the year in work in several places at home and abroad. For 1978 their plans call for helping with cost of living increases with men they are presently supporting, rather than taking on new ones. The following is quoted from the Imhoff Avenue MESSENGER OF TRUTH for January, 1978: "We are concerned here more and more with adequate wages for preachers. Comparatively few faithful men are being supported as they should be. With rising costs of all goods and services, with inflation, with preachers' costs in books, automobiles (a preacher will wear out one in 3-4 years), rising costs of gasoline, insurance, oil and auto repairs, and other extra expenses which preachers have which most brethren do not take into consideration, we hope to give men regular yearly wage increases." We commend these brethren for their continued efforts to sow the seed of the kingdom and for their concern for the well-being of those men with whom they have chosen to have fellowship in the gospel.

The Work In Iran

James P. Needham reported in the January issue of TORCH on his recent preaching trip to Iran. He spent about 30 days in late 1977 working among American Christians in Iran, a territory "which approximates the ancient kingdoms of Babylon, Assyria, and the Medes and Persians. This trip was made at the invitation

of the brethren in Shiraz (a city toward the southern part of the country), and I spent most of the time there, but was able to arrange short meetings also in Tehran (the Capital) and Isfahan (a city about midway between Tehran and Shiraz). The trip was jointly financed by the Palm Springs Drive church where I work regularly, and brethren in Iran."

He reported that there are now some 40,000 Americans in Iran and that it is estimated that by 1985 there will be between 80,000 and 100,000 there. Four families make up the church at Shiraz while there are 35—40 in attendance at Isfahan. The group in Tehran is small. During these meetings, two were baptized.

Except for the Americans present, the population is almost 100% Muslim. An American preacher might be able to go and work with the American churches and have some success, though it appears there would be serious problems to face otherwise. While one might legally enter for preaching work among the Muslim, he would likely be afforded no legal protection and would be in constant danger. The church at Shiraz thinks it best for American preachers to come periodically to teach and encourage with the work carried on by local members usually. The Isfahan church is interested in an American preacher coming and working among local people. There is a language barrier which must be conquered. Tehran also is interested in securing an American preacher. American members have been able to influence Iranian people in their acquaintance to attend meetings in their homes and at least one Muslim has been converted. There are American jobs available ranging from teachers to technicians. Faithful Christians who qualify might be able to render valuable aid to the cause in this country. Brother Needham says he will be glad to put any interested parties in touch with brethren there and provide the latest information as to where the brethren meet. If you have

friends or relatives being sent to Iran in their work, these contacts should be noted: In Shiraz, Marion Grant (Phone 22913 or 14 Ex. 31), Frank Herrlein (phone 35212), or George Snyder (Phone 30372); in Isfahan, Jack Morgan (phone 40700), Wesley Scarbrough (phone 45834), or Joe Mulkey (phone 49034); in Tehran, Lane Cubstead (phone 245932) or Bob Downing (phone 244950).

PREACHERS NEEDED

GONZALES, LOUISIANA — The Southside congregation in Gonzales is seeking a full-time preacher. We are a small, faithful congregation with an average attendance of 35, located between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. If interested, please call (504) 644-4260 or 622-2368.

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA — The congregation which meets at 4801 S. Dixie Highway is looking for a man to work full-time as an evangelist. An experienced man in working with a small congregation is desired and can be fully supported financially. Interested individuals may contact: David Mulej, 4894 S. Kay St., Lake Park, FL 33410 or Kirby Mole, 8864 Dania Dr., Lake Park, FL 33410.

TRENTON, FLORIDA — The Cherry Sink church, just outside Trenton, Florida, is in need of a preacher as of April or after. An excellent area for anyone with a young family as well. For further details contact the Elders: Lee Roberts 904-463-2490 or Jim Downing at 904-463-2955.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	348
RESTORATIONS	77

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)