

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

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Perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God

Gary Henry
603 Rosemary Drive
Gulfport, MS 39501



THOUGHTS ON MODESTY

Deciding whether or not particular clothes are modest is not always an easy business. At the least it can be irritating and, to the serious Christian, perplexing. Concerned as we are about what folks think of us, and knowing how large a part of our image is built around our dress, most of us would like to be able to wear about the same thing people who are important to us are wearing. And in a culture where the "in" thing will be "out" of fashion in six months, one has little time to ponder the complexities of modesty before a new stylish trend poses the question all over again.

Women, I suspect, have the more difficult problem. Modesty is by no means only a female concern, but it cannot be denied that, the biological facts of life being what they are, fashion designers have more often chosen to exploit the sexual charms of the female body than they have the male. The Christian woman who does not want to be totally out of step with the way her friends dress, but who is bound by the limits of modesty, will have frequent decisions to make about whether this or that kind of clothing is modest. Her choices, frankly, will at times be difficult.

As I have wrestled now and again with this vexing riddle, and have tried to sympathize with mothers and daughters attempting to draw the line between modest and immodest clothing, it has seemed to me that we ask the wrong question when we ask if certain clothing is modest. Modesty is first and

primarily a moral quality which persons may possess, and only secondarily an attribute of inanimate objects. Unless we mean "clothing which may appropriately be worn by a modest person," the expression "modest clothing" means very little. Even in 1 Tim. 2:9 where, according to the KJV, Paul encourages women to "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety," the word translated "modest" is not the usual word for modesty, but is a word which normally means honorable or dignified. (It is the same word Paul uses in 3:2 a few verses later when, describing the attributes of bishops, he says they must be "of good behavior" KJV.) Accordingly, the NASV renders 2:9: "I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly."

The words "with shamefacedness and sobriety" and "discreetly" get at the idea of modesty, but they are the words Paul uses to describe, not the clothes, but the person in the clothes, or at least the manner in which the clothes are worn. The woman is to be modest **herself**; she is to acquire the moral quality of modesty. Then, and probably only then, will she be able to judge "modest" clothes from immodest. It is no coincidence that nowhere in the NT is there given a description of modest clothes. It is assumed that the **person** who is modest will already know! They are clothes which appropriately serve the needs of a person with that kind of inward heart.

Paul's wording here suggests that a woman's choice of clothes flows naturally out of a much greater choice which she has already made. And that choice is how the inner person is to be dressed. Paul would rather the heart be dressed in modesty than for the body to be dressed in all the gold, pearls, and costly attire in the world. Peter echoes this thought when he says, "Let not yours be the outward adorning with braiding of hair, decorating of gold, and wearing of fine clothing, but let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit" (1 Pet. 3:3, 4). The choice for the Christian is not first of all whether she will wear modest or immodest clothes outwardly, but, more important, whether she will dress her heart in modesty or immodesty. If she chooses to be a modest person and to dress her heart in gentleness and

quietness, then the clothes she selects to wear will be "modest clothes" since they are the sort of attire that is considered fitting for that kind of person.

The sad truth is that modesty, in this inward sense, is not very much in vogue these days. A quick look at the dictionary informs us that a modest person is generally reserved, unobtrusive, unassuming, decorous, and unpretentious. He or she has a sense of shame and decency which prevents one from making a public spectacle either of his body or his abilities. In our day of militancy and liberation, these qualities are more often than not considered vices, rather than virtues. The fashionable qualities are swagger and shamelessness, boldness and brazenness, arrogance and audacity. Let a person try to be "modest" and he or she will have no lack of "friends" trying to persuade him to "get with it," or her to, "come out of her shell." Peter's "quiet and gentle spirit" and Paul's "modesty" are nowadays held up in mockery as the archaic leftovers of bygone history!

Be that as it may, if we are in earnest about this matter of modesty, we had best take to heart what the Duchess said in **Alice in Wonderland**: "Be what you would seem to be." Or, as Socrates put it. "The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear." We may agonize at length about whether certain clothes look modest, but at last the real question is whether we are modest. An immodest woman is not made modest simply by wearing modest clothes, and, on the other hand, the truly modest woman will instinctively know what looks appropriate on her. Mothers, do not teach your daughters only to stand before the mirror and ask, "Do I look modest enough?" Teach them to ask, "Am I modest enough?"

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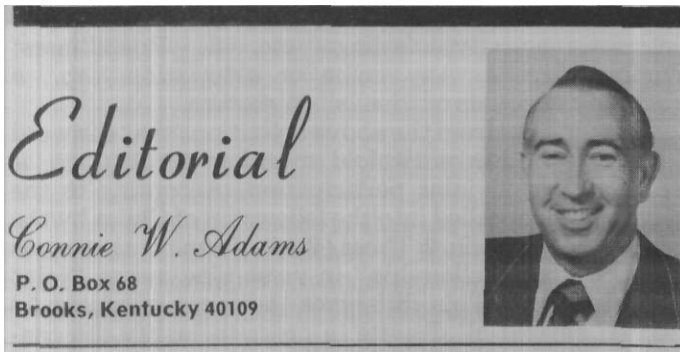
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A BASIC DISTINCTION

Of late some concern has been expressed that those churches which have resisted the inroads of the institutional movement may very well divide themselves into oblivion over a multitude of knotty questions. We too, see some dangers in this regard though we are not as pessimistic as some are. Certainly there are problems. There have always been problems. Each new generation is beset with its own set of them. We see some brethren wanting to flail others for their unwillingness to agree with them on some pet subject. Some have become hobbyists in the truest sense of that term. We are just as opposed to crankism as we are liberalism. They are two ends of the same basic problem.

But I guess I am not going to the same places some of the other writers go. I see much evidence of spiritual and numerical growth in various places. I see churches at work and at peace. More and more of them are lifting their eyes to other areas and supporting faithful men to go and preach the gospel. I see the development of elders and deacons, greater efforts to encourage and stabilize young preachers. Efforts are under way in many places in my personal knowledge to upgrade the teaching efforts of local churches. More is being done to preach the gospel through the printed page and on radio, and, in some cases, television. In the past five years it has been my lot to preach in about one hundred meetings scattered over most of the country. While the circumstances of every place are "unknown by face" to this writer, I think I am in as good a position to judge this matter as any of the rest. It appears to me that there is much more evidence of progress than of disruption.

Yet, I am not blind to pockets of trouble here and there. It is my conviction that many squabbles would be avoided if a basic distinction were kept in mind by all concerned.

Two Areas

First, there is a realm of collective activity. The work, worship and organization of the church must surely be placed here. Such matters as the use of instrumental music in worship, the activity in which a congregation engages and the use made of its treasury involve collective duty. Any difference in this realm will at once affect the peace and welfare of a local church.

There is another realm which involves personal scruples. Paul recognized this realm in Romans 14 and in 1 Cor. 8 as he dealt with the question of eating meats. In this realm, one is not to violate his own conscience, nor is he to place a stumbling block before his brother by influencing him to act contrary to his own conscience. This point is often abused to create a situation of virtual spiritual blackmail whereby one seeks to get his way by saying "that will offend me." Well, not in the sense of this passage (Rom. 14:1) unless the brother who claims to be offended is persuaded by the other to violate his conscience by engaging in the action in question. It is past time for brethren to stop practicing spiritual dictatorship by a misuse of this principle.

The question of whether or not a Christian may be a soldier, a policeman, may hold an elected office, serve on a jury, must wear an artificial covering when praying, buy groceries from a supermarket which sells wine or beer from the same display counter as Pepsi-Cola or Dr. Pepper, eat in a restaurant which has a separate cocktail lounge, work as a clerk in a store which sells cigarettes, and on and on, involves only the action of the individual. The action of one in such matters does not implicate another Christian who will have to decide such questions based on his own conviction of whatever scriptures are thought to regulate action touching these problems.

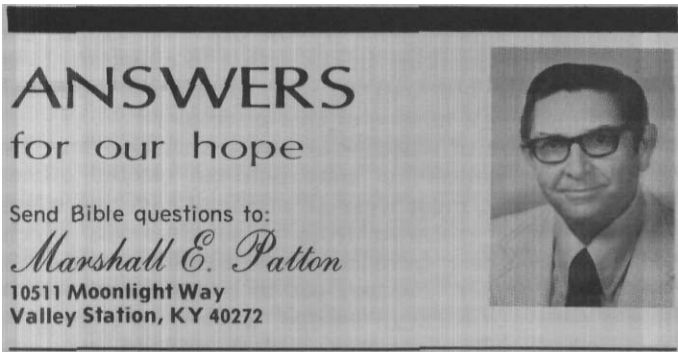
That is not to say that two different positions on the same question can both be right. The scripture does not teach contrary things. But it does allow for "weak" brethren and "strong" brethren (Rom. 15:1) and for "weak" (untaught) consciences and strong (taught) consciences. Each must respect his own conscience AND that of his brother in the Lord. Many of the wars and rumors of wars which break out among brethren fall into this latter category. The peace of a congregation should never be fractured over them. Brotherly love and forbearance should be the rule as we study the scriptures to find solutions for each question of this nature.

Certainly there are questions which appear more complex than these. But it is my settled persuasion that the greater part of the contentions which sometimes degenerate into needless janglings would be avoided if each would determine not to say either by word or action "Let MY conscience be YOUR guide."

OUR AUGUST SPECIAL

Our special issue this summer will be in August with a 32-page treatment on: THE CHURCH — ISSUES OLD AND NEW. Subjects have been assigned and the writers are now at work on it. This special will deal with the whole area of scriptural authority, the work of the church, its organization, relationship of the church to human organizations. There will be articles on the nature of the church, the sponsoring church, the silence of the scriptures and the abounding evidences of churches at play. The June issue will carry a list of subjects and writers and the price per 100 copies. A new generation is not as well informed as it ought to be about the divisions

produced in the past because of lack of teaching along these lines. People in both "liberal" and "conservative" churches do not know what this is all about. There are basic differences and vital principles at stake. We hope congregations will order enough for every family and that many of our readers will order extra copies to give to friends and relatives who need this teaching. These may be ordered from us at: P.O. Box 68, Brooks, KY 40109.



THE GRACE—FELLOWSHIP ISSUE— No. 1 FELLOWSHIP

There is a **NEW UNITY MOVEMENT (NUM)** among us that is disturbing the peace of Zion. This is not the ecumenism of the denominational world. It is a movement among us—churches of Christ. Its design is to broaden the base of fellowship so as to include sincere brethren in error, e.g., those who teach Premillennialism, use instrumental music in worship; support human institutions from the treasury of the church, have part in the "Sponsoring Church" arrangement, practice the Social Gospel, and perhaps others. In view of the loss already sustained, the chaos in evidence in some circles, together with the fact that the NUM perverts the gospel, transgresses the law of God, fellowships error and false teachers, and, therefore, involves all partakers thereof in sin, the issue must be viewed with deep concern, great alarm, and as being worthy of careful study on the part of all who love the truth and the souls of men.

Since the grace of God is made the basis for extending this fellowship, it is generally referred to as "THE GRACE—FELLOWSHIP ISSUE." While it has many ramifications, the cardinal points may be covered under the following topics proposed for this series: 1) Fellowship, 2) Gospel and Doctrine, 3) Unity In Diversity" —Rom. 14, 4) Law And Grace, 5) Faith And Works, 6) Imputed Righteousness, and 7) Sins of Ignorance. Our Current article deals with the subject of FELLOWSHIP.

The Word "Fellowship"

The word "fellowship" is from the Greek root "koinos," which appears in all of its New Testament variations 39 times, 18 of which involve the noun form "kononia." The latter is defined as follows: "Communion, fellowship, sharing in common" (Vines); "Fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, intercourse" (Thayer); "State or

relation of being a fellow or associate. 2. Community of interest, activity, feeling, etc. 3. Friendliness; comradeship. 4. Any union or association; esp., a company of equals or friends" (Webster).

It is obvious from the above definitions that the word "fellowship" has a twofold meaning: 1) A state or relationship, 2) joint participation. According to the former, we are called into the fellowship of Christ by the gospel (1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Thess. 2:14). I realize that some say the word "fellowship" in verse nine means "joint participation." This difference, however, need not be settled beyond all dispute in order to justify the conclusion that verse nine identifies and teaches a state of fellowship. Let us grant, for argument sake, that "fellowship" in this verse means "joint participation," we still have a contrast between those in the state where "joint participation" is enjoyed and those who are not, and their being *called or not called* makes the difference. One is a state of "joint participation" and the other is a state void of "joint participation." Therefore, either by direct statement or by necessary inference, we have a state of fellowship, unless one accepts the idea of universal fellowship. It follows, therefore, that one may be *in or out of fellowship*.

While a child always remains in Christ organically, he may be "removed" or "spued out" (Gal. 1:6 Rev. 3:16) of the state of fellowship. For example, a child may be disowned by his parents, but this does not destroy the fact of progenitorship. So it is with a child of God who falls from grace. While he is removed from fellowship, the fact of his spiritual progenitorship is not destroyed—he remains a child of God—in error. Otherwise, he would have to be baptized again when he is restored.

There is a subtle point at issue here made by the NUM. Perhaps this can best be seen from the following statements:

"We apparently share a common conception of what 'fellowship' means. It is not synonymous with 'brotherhood,' but means 'sharing together'— and in the Scriptures the term is almost always used with a specific object. That is, it is nearly always specified as to what is 'shared,' so that we do not think of 'fellowship' just in general, but of having sharing or fellowship in a given thing with someone" (Edward Fudge, *A JOURNEY TOWARD JESUS*, p. 8). "I may 'have fellowship' in whatever I believe is good with any brother who seems to me to be trying to do the Lord's will as best he understands it, living a pure life and seeking to grow in understanding the will of God" (Ibid, p. 10).

"There are those who simply want to serve the Lord in all things and happen to be convinced that what we call the 'conservative' position does this best. There are those who want to serve the Lord in all things and happen to be convinced that what we call the 'liberal'¹ position does that best.... With either of these groups of folks I can feel a common aim in

Christ—for I am seeking only to serve the Lord, and that is what these brothers are committed to as well. Of course, we cannot do some things together; we have different ideas about what pleases the Lord, and that must always come first by both of us" (Edward Fudge, AN—SWERS TO QUESTIONS, p. 4). What all of this means is that the NUM teaches that brethren in error, whether it involves instrumental music in worship or institutionalism, etc., who are sincerely trying to serve God should not be rejected as people with whom we can have *no* fellowship in any work of God. Rather, we should "share" or "fellowship" them in everything, except a particular matter that would involve a violation of conscience on our part. Such are regarded as being in a state of acceptance with God, and should be so regarded by us, even though they cannot be fellowshipped in a thing or two. Thus, because of this view and objective, the NUM seeks to justify only the 'joint participation' idea of "fellowship." Truth, however, demands that we also recognize the "state or relationship" idea as well, as we shall see further in this article.

According to the latter meaning of the word "fellowship," we "jointly participate" in all the relationship in Christ affords—multiple duties, privileges, and blessings. Examples of such use may be found in the following references: Phil. 1:5, 2 Cor. 8:4; Phil. 3:10. It is also used negatively in this sense—to warn and forbid (1 Cor. 10:20; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11). It is significant that it is never used in the Scriptures to denote a social dinner, recreation, entertainment, etc. While such use of the word "fellowship" exists among some today, it is not according to its New Testament usage. Such is a different gospel. Obviously a change has been wrought, and it is not good!

The Basis of Fellowship

The basis of fellowship with God and with the faithful is set forth in the following:

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us

from all sin" (1 John 1:1-7).

A careful exegesis of this passage shows that *Christ*, the *message* declared by the apostles, the *light*, and the *truth* are all synonymous. Fellowship with God and, consequently, with the saints is conditioned upon *walking in the light*. Since "light" and "truth" are synonymous, it is folly to make "light" mean anything less than "truth"—the whole truth.

The word "truth" always appears in the Scriptures in the singular. This is significant. It means that it is used in the same sense as "gospel," "doctrine," and "faith." One may as well talk of the gospels of God, the doctrines of Christ, the faiths of our Saviour, as to talk of the truths of our Lord. This means that any deviation from "truth" is a deviation from the "light" in which one *must* walk in order to have "fellowship." Let no man conclude, however, that this demands perfection in order to remain in fellowship with God. Within the body of truth authorized areas of tolerance are found, and provisions for human inability have been made. These "areas" and "provisions" are certain, definite, and limited. The NUM ignores these specific areas and divine limitations, as we shall see as we progress with this series.

Fellowship—Conditional, Durative, and All-inclusive

The above text shows that fellowship is conditional. This condition involves more than a single act—it is *durative*! One must continue to "walk in the light" in order to remain in the fellowship state. Not only is it durative, it is also *all-inclusive*. It involves doing the "truth"—the whole truth. Verses corroborating this are: Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10; 1 John 2:19; 2 John 9-11.

This fellowship is conditioned upon more than *love*. Some of the NUM teach that while one may transgress truth in some instance, yet, if he has love he remains in the "light," and, therefore, continues in fellowship with God:

"In God's circle of 'light' and 'darkness' there are, of course, two categories: He who loves his brother abides in the light (1 John 2:10); He who hates his brother is in the darkness (Verse 11). It will be admitted that one can oppose instrumental music and hate his brother. Such a person is in darkness, not because of his position on instrumental music but because of his attitude toward his brother. It will be admitted that one may endorse instrumental music and love his brother. Is he in the light? If not, have we set up a double standard?" (C. Ketcherside, MM, May 1961, pp. 7, 8).

While these verses do teach "love" as a condition to walking in the "light," they do not teach "love only"—not any more than verses which teach "faith" as a condition of salvation teach justification by "faith only." Both positions are in error and for the same reason. Furthermore, this error becomes more obvious in the light of 1 John 5:2: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his

commandments." Proof of our love for brethren is found in our keeping God's commandments. Therefore, walking in the "light" involves more than loving our brother.

It must be pointed out, further, that this condition involves more than "faith" as defined by the NUM. While they are quick to point out that such faith will try to "please the Lord" and will obey according to "present knowledge," nevertheless, in the final analysis, fellowship does not depend upon *obedience*, but upon the heart of faith. Note the following:

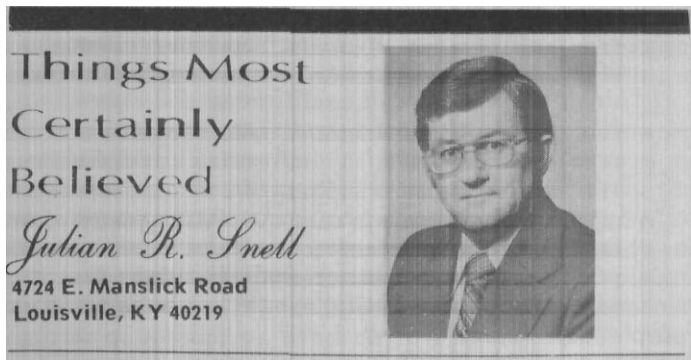
"To say all in a single term, this kind of person is one who the Bible would call a man of faith—a man who is trying to please the Lord, who walks in obedience according to his present knowledge of God's will and who walks in humility with his brethren" (Edward Fudge, A JOURNEY TOWARD JESUS, p. 9).

1 Jno. 1:6, however, teaches that those who *do not the truth* walk in darkness. This demands more than "faith"—even as defined by those of the NUM. One must *do the truth* in order to be in fellowship with God.

Congregational Fellowship

The local church is a fellowship state or relationship. Each congregation controls its own fellowship (Acts 9:26-28; Rom. 16:1, 2). This control should be in accord with the individual's fellowship with God, namely, his walking in the "light" or doing the "truth." What *should be* and what is sometimes differ. In 3 Jno. 9, 10 we learn of some who were in fellowship with God, but who were cast out of the church. This was not as it should have been. Nevertheless, it happened. We must recognize the same possibility today. In 1 Cor. 5:1-8 we learn of a brother who obviously was out of fellowship with God, but who was yet in the fellowship of the church at Corinth. This was not as it should have been. Yet, it happened. We must recognize this also as a possibility today.

Let us remember that the basis of fellowship with God, and, therefore, with each other is the TRUTH—that body of doctrine taught by our Lord.



"I AM"

The gospel of John is unique in several respects. There is a marked difference in the structure and style when compared with the synoptics. There are only seven miracles recorded, five of these not recorded elsewhere. John is concerned, it seems, chiefly with the person of Jesus and with establishing faith in him. The key to the entire book is, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20: 30-31). The word "believe" is found ninety-eight times within. It is truly the gospel of belief. While we emphasize this feature we hasten to add that such is not intended to minimize this design in the other gospels.

The gospel of John has many special features which strengthen the presentation of this main theme of belief in Jesus Christ. The personal relation of Jesus to man is stressed and this is our immediate consideration. Jesus made a series of claims which are introduced by "I am" in John's Gospel. There are seven of these and they shall serve as basis of this article. In each of the statements Jesus is saying "I am" all these things now! The import is not shall be sometime, but am now, irrespective of time.

"I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). Literally, bread is the staff of life, the very sustenance of life. Here Jesus claims to be giving himself to the world as the source and sustainer of life. This statement falls between an introductory and concluding reference to the "manna" in the wilderness which God gave to the fathers of the Jewish nation (v. 30, 31, 49). The point is, as "manna" was bread from heaven to them, so, I am sent from heaven to you and to all.

There is presented here the objective side of salvation. Jesus holds himself forth as the sustainer of the life he communicates. 1 John 2:1 says, "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." Eternal life is the objective and to that end Jesus Christ is not "a" bread but "the" bread. He is both giver and sustainer. "He that cometh to me shall never hunger." Faith is the condition of reception. It is here implied in "cometh" which is the active aspect

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of faith. "He that believeth on me shall never thirst" is reflective of the restful aspect of faith which results from complete trust and commitment. The statement of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:28) complements the idea. Faith that moves to acceptance of Jesus Christ as the giver and sustainer of life, characterized by complete trust and commitment, will produce rest and the peace that passeth all understanding.

The "bread of life" brings full satisfaction of all want. Christ has made the soul of man know how the soul's wants can be fully and forever met. It is only in Christ that the soul's yearning can be satisfied.

"I am the light of the world" (John. 8:12; 9:5). He is light because he is the source of its life. Light not only to the Jew but to the Gentile as well, to all men. Like the sun, that light is diffused to all. We again stress that He is "the light" now: not was, not will be, but right now! He is the light of truth to the understanding. The Psalmist said, "In thy light shall they see light" (Psa. 36:9). The light of love to the heart and the light of righteousness to the conscience is all involved in Jesus' statement.

We would make this observation concerning light because of the appropriate application to Jesus Christ within this passage. Light is a blessing only to those who follow its direction. There is no blessing from light to those who move forward, ahead of it, nor is there any blessing to those going backward into darkness. There is possibly an allusion to the Israelites and the pillar of fire which led them by night as they came out of Egypt here. The remainder of Jesus' statement, "he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The believer follows the light and does not precede or go before it. Jesus goes before him. Christianity is the following of Jesus Christ, step by step, and is described as a "walking in the light" (1 John 1:7).

Following Him who is the light, the believer will not walk in the darkness of danger, discomfort, despair and fear. Delivered from unbelief he now walks by faith in Christ. Freed from the ignorance of what he was, where he was, where he was going, and from error, he now walks in truth. Seeing sin as bondage and himself in the throes of condemnation because of it he now sees Christ as the means of forgiveness. The believer shall then have the light of life, the light which springs from life. "In him was life and the life was the light of men."

"I am the door of the sheepfold" (John 10:7). Here is the allegorical presentation of a proposition concerning true and false teachers, just and unjust claims. The purpose is to emphasize the true and just as epitomized in Jesus Christ. The allegory and explanation begins with verse 1. In the above statement the highest point in the presentation of the truth is reached. Christ, the way of salvation, is here depicted as the door or means of access to the Father. "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. 2:18).

The figure "door" presumes a within and a without. Within is safety and blessing, while without

one is jeopardized by destructive forces. Without Christ one is doomed by sin, destroyed and damned. Christ is here represented as the entrance to all spiritual blessings. He has in fact affected entrance, He is the way.

"I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11, 14) is the second of two figures within the same context applied to Jesus Christ. Here is represented a higher level of personal relationship in Christ than formerly, stressing what Christ can be to every man. It is Christ alone that qualifies as "good" and in this we have supplied another element to the first allegory, "door of the sheepfold." This latter seems to blend with and bring to a fullness the presentation.

While John's statement is prospective, the fact is emphasized that there can be no life for the sheep but through the death of the shepherd. While the term "sheep" has specific application to the Jew the purpose of God for the Gentile is set out in verse 16. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Jewish unbelief would not thwart the Lord's purpose but for both, Jew and Gentile, all men, that purpose would be realized in the hearing of the voice of the Son of God, whereby there is entry into the fold of God.

Again, I emphasize these figures are reflective of what Christ is now to the believer. We are by them challenged to appreciate and understand the personal relationship of Jesus to the believer. He is all these things and more, to you and me, if we are his children, Christians.

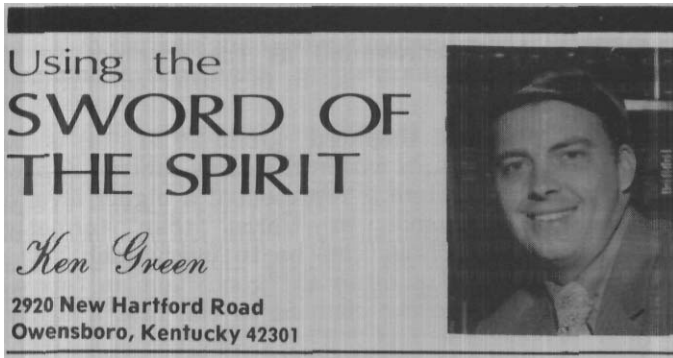
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PRESENT TRUTH: AN OVERVIEW

Present Truth magazine is free to subscribers, and is therefore received by practically all gospel preachers who know about it, including me. It possibly runs a close third in this department behind Col. Thieme's tapes and *Plain Truth* magazine. (I've often wondered what choice adjectives the Colonel would use if he realized how we've benefited from his tape ministry.) Unfortunately, however, *Present Truth* cannot be erased and reused.

The magazine is in its seventh year of publication. It has a very attractive appearance, and contains anywhere from twenty to fifty-six pages per issue. It is published about eight times per year and is filled with what I consider very appealing line drawings, many of which are medieval in appearance, representing various persons or events of the Reformation era.

Apparently the publication has been read, digested, and assimilated by a number of brethren. Such becomes painfully obvious when we compare some of the articles in current bulletins and journals published by churches and brethren with those of *Present Truth*.

Some Things Good

As is true with practically any religious magazine, *Present Truth* contains some good material. While I do not agree with what they're driving at, I feel somewhat refreshed after reading some of their statements regarding the objective and historical nature of the faith.¹ They stress that unity in religion cannot be won and maintained on the basis of sentiment, brotherly love, and subjective experience,² but must be based on the objective standard of revealed truth.³ They give great emphasis to the word of God, the Bible, and maintain that it is the one and only medium of the Holy Spirit.⁴

Neither is *Present Truth* afraid of a negative approach. It is very much against Roman Catholicism,⁵ the Holiness movement,⁶ the Charismatic movement,⁷ and dispensationalism,⁸ teaching that the kingdom of God is now in existence. They oppose all these for the very same reason, claiming that there are only two possible views of justification. One is "essentially subjective—man centered, experience centered" and says that justification "is by God's work of grace in man"; the other is "objective, Christ centered" and says justification is "by God's work of grace in

Christ."⁹ The former is represented in neo-Romanism, neo-Pentecostalism, and neo-evangelicalism (such as Campus Crusade). The latter is the Reformation doctrine and is the point of great emphasis in *Present Truth* magazine.

The Purpose of Present Truth

The avowed purpose as expressed on the front cover is: "A magazine dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity in this generation." Below this are the three latin phrases with their English translations: "*Sola Gratia, Solely by Grace; Sola Christo, Solely by Christ; Sola Fide, Solely by Faith.*"

The statement is somewhat enlarged on the inside front cover: "*Present Truth is a magazine dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity and committed to upholding the great Reformation principle of justification by faith.*" Obviously, *Present Truth* believes the restoration of New Testament Christianity, and the upholding of "the great Reformation principle" is one and the same.

The emphasis which is accorded this "great Reformation principle" is underscored throughout every issue of this journal. I picked at random twenty issues spanning the entire time of *Present Truth's* existence and counted the number of times various men were mentioned or quoted. The results were: John Bunyon, author of the classic *Pilgrim's Progress*, 13 times (plus many drawings which were based upon that allegory); John Wesley, 34 times, (not always in a good light, since he was the father of the Holiness movement); John Calvin, 154 times; Melancthon, a follower of Luther and author of the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, 22 times; Martin Luther, by far their favorite man, 334 times. This figures out to an average of 7.7 times per issue for Calvin and 16.7 times for Luther. Though a disclaimer is made in a couple of instances to the effect that these men are not looked to for religious authority, as often as not they're quoted in lieu of scriptural references.

The words "Reformation" or "Reformers" are used a whopping 485 times, or 24.25 times per issue. In view of such heavy reliance upon a movement conceived, inspired, and directed by mere men, it's difficult to understand how brethren could be influenced by it

The primary purpose of *Present Truth* is to initiate a new Reformation in which the "great Reformation principle" of justification by faith only, based upon an imputation of the perfect righteousness of Christ to the believer's account, will be the central doctrine. The doctrine of imputation is clearly the major thrust of the magazine. The phrase "faith only," or "faith alone" is found 125 times in the twenty issues, an average of 6.25 times per issue.

The "complete unanimity" of the Reformers on this point is highlighted. Their differences on other matters are minimized.¹⁰ That *Present Truth* views the Reformation as the restoration of New Testament Christianity is abundantly demonstrated by its teaching on the book of Revelation. The continuous-historical interpretation which was popular during the

Reformation period is often set forth in the magazine. The Reformation itself is viewed as the fulfillment of Revelation 14: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. . . And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle." (Rev. 14:6, 7, 14).¹¹

Later, in the same issue, it is claimed that Revelation 18:2 prophesies of the current religious scene in which the religious world has become "the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird."¹² Yet, they claim a remnant, armed with the word of God, shall escape this grand delusion that will unite the Catholic and "so-called Protestant" worlds. This remnant is allegedly described in Revelation 14:12: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." That's a lot of jumping about on the isle of Patmos!

Other examples of their treatment of "New Testament prophecy" are: The Charismatic movement was prophesied in Revelation 13:13, 14¹³; the leopard-like beast of Revelation 13 was a symbol of the papacy. The Reformation gave the "man of sin" a "deadly wound" but a restoration of the power of the ancient church is "clearly prophesied."¹⁴ Matthew 24 is given as a reference for "many signs of Jesus' coming and the end of the world."¹⁶ They say most of these signs have been fulfilled already, but "the greatest sign is the restoration of the pure message of the New Testament. This restoration will carry the glorious work so nobly begun by the Reformers, to its consummation." Surely, to call the attention of most of our readers to such exegetical nonsense is to refute it.

Who's Responsible?

The editor of *Present Truth* has stated, in regard to using material by such theologians as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Paul Tillich: "We take the position that truth is truth, even if it is spoken by the mouth of an ass (and we are not suggesting that Bonhoeffer was an ass). It is disappointing when people ask, 'Who said it?' and judge on that basis, rather than asking, 'What is said?'"¹⁶

That statement has much to commend it. Yet, I'm always made uneasy when I get the feeling that someone is trying to hide something from me. We are told that the publishers of *Present Truth* are "a group of Christian scholars and businessman without denominational sponsorship who have united to uphold the objective gospel amid the present deluge of religious subjectivism."

The keynote writer is Geoffrey J. Paxon who is identified as an Anglican clergyman and principal of the Queensland Bible Institute, Brisbane, Australia. The editor is Robert D. Brinsmead. His religious background or connections are never mentioned. It

wasn't until a few weeks ago that I learned he is a Seventh-Day Adventist. In the March, 1978, issue of *Eternity*, the Executive Editor, Stephen Board, wrote:

"Last month this space mentioned an interesting, if little publicized, controversy among Seventh-Day Adventists over the grounds of our acceptance with God. A minority among them, led by Robert Brinsmead, has even launched a publication called *Present Truth* to advocate one understanding of justification by faith."

Several loose ends certainly began to fall into place upon receiving that information. In subsequent articles we shall discuss some of them. We shall also be examining *Present Truth's* doctrine of an imputation of Christ's perfect obedience to the believer, as well as some other matters which we hope will be of interest.

Footnotes

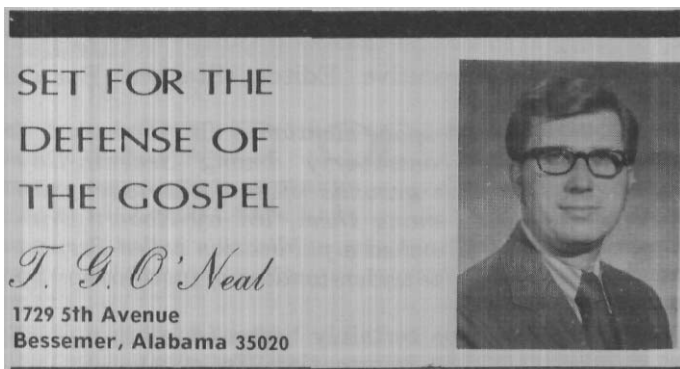
1. *Present Truth*, July-Aug., 72, p. 3; Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 4.
2. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, No. 5, p. 12.
3. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 4.
4. *Ibid*, June, 72, p. 14.
5. *Ibid*, Special Issue, Justification by Faith, pp. 6-8; Vol. 2, No. 5, p. 30.
6. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 7, 26; Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 13; Special Issue, Justification by Faith and the Charismatic Movement, p. 27; Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 17, 18.
7. *Ibid*.
8. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, No. 5, p. 30.
9. *Ibid*, Special Issue, Justification by Faith, p. 9.
10. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 4.
11. *Ibid*, April, 1972, p. 3.
12. *Ibid*, p. 21.
13. *Ibid*, Special Issue, Justification by Faith and The Charismatic Movement, p. 2.
14. *Ibid*, p. 29.
15. *Ibid*, April, 1972, p. 3.
16. *Ibid*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 7, 8.

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WITCHCRAFT

Of all the so-called witches, Sybil Leek is probably the most famous. It has been estimated there are 5,000 witches in New York, 10,000 in Los Angeles, 6,000 in Chicago and as many as 200,000 in the United States.

The Wicca Newsletter has a circulation of 5,000. Dr. Leo Louis Martella's Witches' Anti-Defamation League, Witches' International Craft Association and the Witches' Liberation Movement all promote witchcraft. The Religious Association for the Church and School of Wicca is headquartered at Salem, Mo. Now 18 states have legally incorporated churches of witchcraft. The power claimed by 'black' witches is used for evil, and the power claimed by 'white' witches is said to be used for good.

What IS Witchcraft?

Of the word 'witchcraft,' Webster says, "practices or art of witches; black magic; sorcery . . . power more than natural" (page 983). He further says of the noun 'witch,' "one who practices the black art or magic; one regarded as possessing supernatural or magical power by contact with an evil spirit" and of the verb, 'witch,' "to work a spell esp. an evil spell, upon by sorcery. To effect by sorcery, or witchcraft" (page 983). The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says "Since the 13th. century the word 'witch' has come more and more to denote a woman who has formed a compact with the devil or with evil spirits, by whose aid she is able to cause all sorts of injury to living beings and to things. The term 'witchcraft' means in modern English the arts and practices of such women" (page 3,097). The term is translated "sorcery" in Gal. 5:20 and "it means literally the act of administering drugs and then of giving magical potions" (Ibid., page 3,097). The word translated "sorcery" in Gal. 5:20 is "pharmakeia" which originally was used of drugs for healing purposes, but in time came to mean to misuse, to poison and not to cure, and finally, to mean sorcery and witchcraft (Difficult Times by Barney Keith, page 8-9; see also Vine, vol. 4, pages 51-52 and Thayer, pages 649-650). It is a general term including astrology, crystal ball reading, card laying, palmistry and casting spells.

Bible And Witchcraft

God has had somewhat to say about the ancients in of witchcraft.

(1) Ex. 22:18 — "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

(2) Lev. 19:31 — "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God."

"(3) Lev. 20:6 — "the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people."

(4) Lev. 20:27 — "A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them."

(5) Deut. 18:9-14 — "when thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you . . . a witch . . . or a wizard . . . For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord."

(6) Isa. 8:19-20 — "when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards, that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

(7) 2 Kings 23:24 — "Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiyah the priest found in the house of the Lord."

(8) Jer. 27:9-10 — "Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you . . . for they prophesy a lie unto you"

(9) Jer. 28:8-9 — "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the Lord."

(10) Micah 5:12-13 — "and I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers; thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thy hands."

(11) Nahum 3:4 — "Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favored harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts. Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord . . ."

(12) Rev. 21:8 — "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

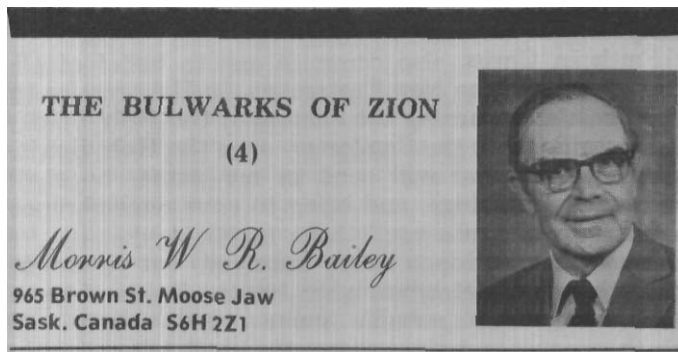
(13) Rev. 22:15 — "For without are dogs, and

sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

From the above passages one can see God's attitude toward witchcraft through the years. Such is a rejection of God. It claims powers which it does not have.

"Witch of Endor"

Some will ask about the "witch of Endor" and did she not have powers? One needs to observe that in I Samuel 28 she is not called the "witch of Endor." The text says "a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor" (verse 7). "Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land" (verse 3). When he saw the Philistine army "he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled" (verse 5). Saul "inquired of the Lord" (verse 6) but "the Lord answered him not." It was then that Saul turned to the woman with the familiar spirit. He did not want her to tell him anything; he wanted her to get God's prophet, Samuel. The action of the woman in verse 12 would indicate she was not expecting Samuel to appear for "she cried with a loud voice". Is this not an exceptional case of the working of the Lord?



As we continue our study of the bulwarks of Zion; having pointed out that the church has a divine builder, — Christ — and is built upon the tried and tested foundation of his divinity, I now propose to point out that another bulwark that safeguards the church is the fact that it has

A Divine Head

Just as every country must have some form of government, so also every institution, whether it be a fraternal organization, or a religious denomination, must have a head, or governing body. The head of the Roman Catholic church is the pope. Protestant churches, while repudiating the authority of the pope of Rome, are nevertheless governed by some ruling authority or head, vested either in one person or in a group of persons that constitute a governing body. While the reigning monarch of England is the titular head of the church of England, it is in act and fact governed by a college of bishops, presided over by the archbishop of Canterbury. The Presbyterian church is governed by a body called the General Assembly. The Methodist church is governed by its General Conference. The Lutheran church has its Synod.

It goes without saying that since men are fallible,

these institutions will be as fallible as the men that govern them. This is obvious from the fact that

The Head Controls The Body.

In a number of places in the New Testament, the church is spoken of under the figure of a body made up of many members. To the Romans Paul wrote, "For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another" (Rom. 12:4, 5).

In thus speaking of the church as the body of Christ, the apostle presented a forceful lesson, based on our knowledge of the human anatomy. We know that the human body is controlled by, and receives its instructions from the head. The brain, which is far more complicated than any computer that man has built, sends its messages out to the various parts of the body, and thus dictates their movements. So a serious congenital defect in, or an injury to the brain, such as often occurs in strokes, will result in abnormal bodily functions. That also accounts for the slurred speech and the staggering walk of the man (or woman) under the influence of alcohol. The head's ability to control the body has, for the time being, been impaired.

The same principle is true with regard to religious bodies. Their functions are determined and governed by the head, whether that head is a pope, or a number of men acting as a council, or synod. The fortunes of such churches will thus be determined by the calibre of the heads that govern them. Roman Catholicism reached the zenith of its power under its most powerful popes. On the same principle, many Protestant denominations that one time occupied a strongly conservative stance regarding the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and their adequacy as a rule of faith and practice, are today hotbeds of modernism. Their respective heads are modernists. The words of Jesus, spoken concerning the religious leaders — the Pharisees — of his day are thus applicable to many of the religious leaders of today: "They are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (Matt. 15:14).

Christ The Head of The New Testament Church.

In sharp contrast to the denominational world, with its churches governed by fallible men, Christ is the head of the church revealed in the New Testament. To the Colossians Paul wrote, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:18).

Because Jesus is the Son of God, he partakes of all the characteristics of divinity. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). He is thus infallible, and makes no mistakes. "Let God be found true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4). He is unchangeable. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). Unlike the heads of religious bodies who die, and must be replaced by other heads, "He, because he abideth

forever, hath his priesthood unchangeable" (Heb. 7:24).

The fact that such a one is the head of the church, is a mighty bulwark that fortifies the church against error in both doctrine and practice.

A Divine Creed.

Another bulwark that fortifies the church against error prevalent in the denominational world, is the fact that it has a divine creed. Sometimes it is said by well-meaning but not well-informed Christians that the church of Christ has no creed. Strictly speaking, that is not true. Every institution, whether it is a fraternal organization, or a political party has some distinguishing principles for which it stands; and every church has a creed.

The word, creed, comes from a Latin word, *credo*, which means, I believe. Therefore a creed is what one believes. A church's creed is therefore what one believes, or must believe to be a member of that church. To be a member of the church of England, one must believe the thirty-nine articles of faith that constitute the English Prayer Book. To be a member of the Presbyterian church, one must believe the Westminster Confession of Faith. To be a member of the Methodist church, one must believe the Methodist Discipline with its twenty-five articles of faith.

Human creeds are inadequate and therefore objectionable for a number of reasons.

(1) Being produced by fallible men they are susceptible to error, and in fact, often teach error. As an example, in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, the following statement is found: "Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so that all that proceed from them in that way, are conceived and born in sin." It is thus obvious that the above creed teaches the doctrine of inherited depravity, or that children are born sinners.

(2) Because human creeds teach error, they frequently have to be revised. As an example, prior to the year 1910, the Methodist Discipline taught that children were born sinners. But in 1910, after they had learned better, they re-wrote their creed, and today it no longer teaches that children are sinners at birth. So today, in order to be a Methodist, one must believe the opposite concerning hereditary depravity from what he believed prior to 1910.

It takes belief of the truth to save (2 Thess. 2:13). The fact that error has to be expunged from creeds implies that they did not teach the truth that saves.

Christ Our Creed.

Usually what people mean when they say that the church of Christ has no creed, is that it has no articles of faith, or set of rules drawn up by fallible men. The church, however, does have a creed. There is something that everyone must believe in order to be a Christian, or a member of the church. Whatever it is that one must believe, is the creed of the church.

What must one believe in order to be a Christian? It is summed up in the confession made by Peter and

later by the Ethiopian eunuch that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (Matt. 16:16. Acts 8:37). That such belief is essential to salvation, and therefore to membership in the church was made plain by Christ and the apostles. Jesus said, "Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). The apostle John said, concerning the signs done by Jesus during His personal ministry, "These are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life through his name" (John 20:31).

But some one asks, Is that all that one is required to believe? Are not Christians required to believe the Bible account of creation? And are they not expected to submit to any rules that govern their manner of life? Yes. But what our denominational friends have failed to see is, that is all included when one believes in Christ. For as a creed it is all-comprehensive. Time and space does not permit our noticing the many times that Jesus quoted from Old Testament scriptures (Matt. 19:4; Mark 7:10; Luke 5:14; Luke 6:3; Matt. 24:15; John 15:25 are but a few examples). These quotations constitute Jesus' endorsement of the Old Testament scriptures as being true. Therefore to believe in Jesus is to accept the Old Testament scriptures as inspired.

Faith in Christ also commits one to belief of aft that is said in the New Testament. In His promise to the apostles regarding the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 15:26). And again, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth He shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you" (John 16:12-14).

To believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is thus to accept the teaching of the apostles, when they went out preaching under the great commission, as the message of Christ, called to their remembrance by the Holy Spirit, who also guided them into all truth in the things yet to be revealed. Concerning the gospel which he preached, Paul said, "It came to me by revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12).

In view of the above observations, to say that Christ is our creed, is, in effect, to say that we believe the Bible from the "In the beginning" of Genesis 1:1, to the "Amen" of Revelation 22:20. Thus, in the broader sense, the Bible is our creed.

As some one has well said, If a creed contains more than the Bible, it contains too much. If it contains less than the Bible, it contains too little. If it is just like the Bible, then throw the creed away and take the Bible itself.

The Bible contains none of the imperfections of human creeds. Where human creeds often teach error, the Bible is true. David said, "Thy word is true from the beginning" (Psalm 119:160 K.J.V.).

The Bible, as a creed, is all-sufficient. Paul said, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction

in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

The Bible as a divine creed thus stands as a mighty bulwark that safeguards the church from the errors that are so often found in the creeds written by men.

JAMES P. MILLER

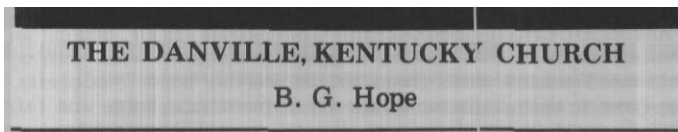
When Rodney called and told me of the passing of his father I felt a deep personal loss. James P. Miller was a friend indeed. I have known and loved him for almost two decades. In the early sixties I watched him wage a relentless battle against innovations within the church.

Computed by what I believe to be the standard of God I considered him a great preacher. He never allowed the cringing cowardice of compromise to raise its ugly head within his heart. A man who had the unique ability to project his personality deep into his preaching. One could be brought to tears and in the next breath share with him the joys of laughter. James P. Miller loved the Lord and the cause he espoused. This was demonstrated in his many debates. Filled with enthusiasm and a love for God, the truth was made to shine brighter as it came forth from the heat of controversy. In *the* field of religious journalism, Jim told me more than once he did not like the "Mechanics" of publishing a paper. However, with the loyal help of brethren H. E. Phillips and Connie Adams he contributed fine articles for *Searching the Scriptures* until his passing.

Like Paul he "Fought a good fight" and will be missed not only by his beloved Bobbie and Rodney but all who had the privilege of sharing his devoted life.

Ward Hogland

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I preached in a meeting at the church in Danville, Ky., located on Lexington Ave. August 22-28. It was an enjoyable meeting and I hope it was profitable. I first became acquainted with the church there about twenty-five years ago. It was indeed encouraging to see the progress that had been made over that period of time. I'd like to give a brief history of it and also a description of the work being done there currently.

That congregation came into existence as a result of a five week's tent meeting conducted by C. W. Scott, in the summer of 1940. By the meeting's end, sixty-nine persons had united to form the new church. Brother Scott then moved to Danville to work with the brethren. Erecting a small building on Carr Street, they met there until 1953, when property was purchased on Main Street. In 1958, the present

building was erected. Other preachers in Danville include R. E. Peden, W. C. Sawyer, J. E. Bacigalupo, Grover Moss, Herman Mason, Kelly Ellis, Rea Pennock, W. C. Sawyer (a second time), and Royce Chandler.

Besides the normal works of regular Bible classes and assemblies, these brethren publish both a weekly and a monthly bulletin, publish a bi-weekly article in the local newspaper, enjoy an active work group program, carry on correspondence courses, and have four gospel meetings per year in each of three of the past five years. In addition, they have just arranged to use their sixth successive summer for inviting a young preacher to come and work with them. In the fall of 1976, the elders arranged an intensive Bible class program for helping to train men to preach the Gospel; at the end they have eight students. Only last July, through some extraordinary circumstances, this church had an opportunity to plant the Gospel in Colombia, South America. Jumping at the open door, the Danville church sent Royce Chandler and Wayne Partain to study with the one Christian they knew to live there. Early efforts have been successful and follow-up plans are well in progress. As a group, the church is zealous, unified, and warmly affectionate.

The work is carried on efficiently under the supervision of the elders, brethren Kelly Ellis and William Royalty. They are, in my judgment, well qualified to tend the flock among them. They are men of vision who have a mind to work. They are held in high esteem by every member, it appeared to me.

Royce Chandler is the evangelist. He is comparatively a young man but is becoming a very knowledgeable person with excellent judgment. He is fervent in spirit relative to preaching the gospel and is effective in creating interest among the young people. He interests them in the same gospel in which older people are interested. He doesn't do it with the modern "gimmicks." Brother Chandler has done quite a lot for the singing part of worship. The elders and the evangelist are not merely interested in the local community but are zealous about taking the gospel to faraway places.

The special classes are taught by brethren Ellis and Chandler. They both are qualified academically and Biblically. The two make an excellent team: brother Ellis, an older man with experience as a teacher and counselor—brother Chandler, young, with less experience, but with a super abundance of energy. The wife of each furnishes the necessary inspiration and general assistance.

Churches have lectures—special courses—for a week or so and invite neighboring congregations and sometimes some accept the invitation that appears in some bulletin or religious journal and come from far away places. These special courses are carried on for 31 weeks each year.

I was deeply impressed by the work being carried on. I know of no church doing more and few as much. These brethren should be commended and imitated.

109 Circle Spring Dr.
Glasgow, Ky. 42141

Next Month—24 pages

In our continuing effort to give our readers a better paper we are enlarging to 24 pages with the June issue. This will allow more space for the good material our writers continue to provide. Show your paper to a friend and urge him to subscribe.

J. P. Lusby Departs

We learned recently of the death of yet another veteran gospel preacher. J. P. Lusby of Amarillo, Texas has gone to be with the Lord. His experience in the kingdom was extensive. He was a man of ability and great influence for good. Our deepest sympathies are extended to his family.

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

GILBERT HOLT PASSES

With regret we note the death of yet another faithful soldier of Christ. Gilbert Holt of Lewisburg, Tennessee passed away in Nashville recently following open heart surgery. Brother Holt was an experienced and well-respected preacher. His love for the truth was evident to all who knew him and his manner of life was consistent with his preaching. His death leaves another void in the ranks of God's people. How swiftly life is passing from us! Younger hearts and hands must be prepared to take up the slack. Funeral services were conducted in Lewisburg and in Athens, Alabama where he was buried. Our hearts reach out to his wife and children. Perhaps a more extended notice of his work can be carried Later.

INDIANA DEBATE

On July 24-27, 1978 there will be a four night debate between Carrol R. Sutton and Ray Hawk on the subject of church benevolence. The first two nights will be in the building of the Hobart, Indiana congregation, 200 North Liberty St. The last two nights will be in the Lake Station congregation's meeting house at 4901 East 28th Ave., Lake Station, Indiana. Should attendance be larger than these houses can seat, it may be possible to move to a nearby school building. Carrol Sutton will oppose church contributions to such organizations as Paragould Children's Home, Shults-Lewis Children's Home, and Homes for the Aged, Ray Hawk will defend the practice of making such contributions. Hiram Hutto will moderate for Carrol Sutton and James Bullington will moderate for Ray Hawk. Any questions about the debate may be sent to Wendell M. Powell, P.O. Box 275, Hobart, Indiana 46342.

NEW CONGREGATION IN METRO-PHOENIX

GARRETH L. CLAIR, 711 Santa Anna, Mesa, Arizona — A new congregation began meeting in the southeastern section of Metro-Phoenix on January 8 of this year. Five families (about 30) made up the first service. Contributions have been averaging about \$150 weekly. We are now in a position to purchase property and are looking for a suitable location in this area. At present we are meeting from house to house with some good results and close ties. I am preaching for the congregation and receiving support from other sources for the immediate future. When traveling through the Phoenix area contact us at 602-835-1192 for directions or transportation to worship.

OVERSEAS EMERGENCY

WALLACE H. LITTLE, Fort Smith, Arkansas — The plunging dollar is causing serious difficulties for all Americans overseas, and especially gospel preachers. Of these, Bob Nichols (address: P.O. Box 44, Hirakata, Osaka, 573, Japan) is in by far the worst situation. Daily he sees his support further eroded by the dollar's decline. I strongly urge those supporting Bob and other Americans overseas to increase their support to cover this. If you are not now helping to support a man, please consider a "one-time shot in the arm" to help them over the present difficulty. God will bless you for this.

IN NEW BUILDING

JESSE W. BROOKSHIRE, Texarkana, Texas — The Congregation formerly meeting in Texarkana, Texas at 3107 Summerhill Road, in a store building, has just completed a new building at 701 Belt Road in Texarkana, Texas. We opened the new building the first Sunday in April, with a gospel meeting with Robert Turner of Burnet, Texas doing the preaching. This new building is in one of the fastest growing areas of Texarkana, well located as well as attractive. We thank God for this accomplishment and are looking forward to its use to his honor and glory. When traveling on I-30, stop and visit us. Exit at Richmond Road, go south two blocks and turn right on Belt Road, one block to the building.

RONALD L. DRUM, 1415 13th Ave., North, Naples, Florida 33940 — We are making some progress in the work in Naples. We carry advertisements in the Wednesday, Friday and Sunday NAPLES DAILY NEWS and now have a column called "Bible Answers" in the NAPLES STAR. We also advertise in SEE NAPLES and NAPLES GUIDE magazines. Several are now taking a Bible correspondence course. Wallace Bowen of 77th St. Church in Birmingham, Alabama visited with us recently and encouraged us much in the Lord's work here. I still lack about \$300 a month having adequate support for full-time work. We meet in the Coast Federal Savings Community Room on Sundays at 9 AM and 6 PM for worship with our Bible study at 6 PM. Thursday Bible study is at 6:30 PM. Write us if you know of people we should contact in this area.

PREACHER NEEDED

PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI — The Scovel Road church in Pascagoula is in dire need of a gospel preacher to work with us full-time. We are a small group but our meeting house is adequate, we have a three-bedroom house for a preacher's home and can furnish some financial support. We are one of four conservative churches along the Gulf Coast between New Orleans, La. and Mobile, Alabama, no the challenge is great. Anyone wishing to help us meet this challenge please contact either: Philip Cunningham, 5119 Canter Dr., Moss Point, MS 39563 (phone 601-475-8551) or G. H. Roberts, 1611 22nd St., Pascagoula, MS 39567 (phone 601-762-3657).

EDITORIAL MUSINGS

The month of March found us in encouraging meetings at Mooresville, Indiana, Manslick Road in Louisville, Kentucky and at Oglethorpe, Georgia. The work is making good progress at all of these places. Mooresville has enlarged and greatly improved their meeting house and is engaged in an active program of work. They have 160-170 in attendance. Harry Lewis continues to do fine work. There are a number of active and growing churches in the Indianapolis area who are blessed with the services of some very able men. . . . What a thrill it was to work again with the Manslick Road church in Louisville. We lived and worked with that good congregation for several years. That is one place where a number of the young people met, sat together and now are

married to each other. They have young families of their own and are energetic in the work. We have worked with young people in many places, but must say in all frankness that the 25-30 who were our students in a high school class there were exceptional. Of that number, four are today devoting their lives to gospel preaching, one of the girls is married to one of the boys now preaching, some of the others are Bible class teachers, song leaders, and another girl is married to a gospel preacher she met in college. That group always sat together during those years DOWN AT THE FRONT. They enjoyed being together. Julian Snell is doing excellent work with this congregation. The church continues its program of helping young preachers to get started right and presently has Rick Toney working with them. Three good elders serve this church. They support a number of faithful preachers in various parts of the world Oglethorpe, Georgia is in "Carter Country" not too far from Plains, the home of our President. The church there is small but is making progress. Some brethren would not think it much to be excited about to have 76 present one night and 70 the next, but when you normally have 35-40, that is a great crowd. In addition to visitors from the community we had support from brethren through that part of the state. One family drove 200 miles one night. Jim Allen is the preacher there and is well respected by the church and community. He is doing some good with a daily radio program out of Montezuma, Georgia These lines are being written on April 3 from Paden City, West Virginia. The church here is fairly large, meets in a commodious building and is engaged in good work. They support 10 sound men in this country and abroad, have a radio program and are blessed with talented men who preach in surrounding places. Paul Rockwell is preaching here now, though engaged in secular work. A number of churches in this area are standing for the truth.

EDITOR'S MEETING SCHEDULE

May 29 — June 2 — Debate with Clifton Inman —
 Middlebourne, W V June 5-11
 — Gulfport, Mississippi June 12-18 — Bessemer, Alabama June 25-July 2 — Milbridge, Maine
 July 24-30 — Peru, Indiana
 August 6-11 — Ray's Branch, Bowling Green, KY
 August 14-20 — East Florence, Alabama

REPORT ON H. E. PHILLIPS

Many have asked us about brother Phillips His material has not appeared in the paper the past two months. We are sure all have missed it. He has suffered a set-back in his health. In addition to other problems which he was able to control fairly well in recent months, it has now been learned that he is diabetic and is now undergoing treatment to bring this condition under control. His work has been curtailed for awhile. We understand that he is better and prospects are good for his being able to resume his work before long. Keep him in your prayers. I am sure a card of encouragement from our readers would mean much to him and to sister Phillips. Address him at: P.O. Box 17244, Tampa, Florida 3 3612.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	448
RESTORATIONS	192

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)