

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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THINK ON
THESE THINGS

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RELIGIOUS FANATICISM

"Fanaticism" is defined as: "excessive and unreasonable enthusiasm or zeal: as, religious *fanaticism*." (Webster's New World Dictionary)

Fanaticism in any area of life is dangerous and non-productive. Religious fanaticism is the fruit of ignorance of divine truth while in pursuit of acceptance by God or some supposed superior being. The blind obedience to the semi-gods who establish and direct the various cults, in which is found the most extreme religious fanaticism, is incredible.

Religious fanaticism and religious hypocrisy are not exactly the same, but they are closely related. Fanaticism is the product of hypocrisy and/or ignorance. The religious hypocrite plays his game well, and he creates devotees to himself and his cause who blindly follow his dictates, even unto death. Such is the case of the currently publicized self-destruction of about 900 members of "Rev.. Jim Jones" followers in Jonestown, near Georgetown, Guyana. They were members of the "People's Temple" based in California.

The advocates of atheism, and those who hold any anti-religious position, immediately seize upon any widely publicized account of the fruits of religious fanaticism of some cult to show the curse of religion upon mankind. You may be sure that the "pure and undefiled religion" from above will come under condemnation by atheistic communism of Russia and China, as well as all the countries of the world that are satellites to these world powers.

On the front page of the Tampa Tribune of

November 23, 1978, The Associated Press reported some statements from Tass, the official news agency of Russia, on the mass suicide of hundreds of followers of the "Rev. Jim Jones" in Guyana. The report says, "The Soviet press, in a sharper dig than most, said the bizarre poisoning death rite in remote Jonestown, Guyana, was a symptom of the American way of life in which 'millions are the victims of an inhumane society.'"

The official Tass news agency said American press coverage of the events in Guyana avoids the fundamental question of why the People's Temple and many similar religious sects exist in the United States.

"Only a few individual observers admit that what they are talking about is one of the products of the notorious 'American way of life.'"

The lying hypocrisy of Russian communism does not disturb me as much as fanatical religious cults that provide occasion for such comments by the enemies of both democracy and Christianity. But there are other enemies of truth and righteousness that are much more dangerous to us than the official Russian news agency. These enemies are among us and hide under the cloak of pretense to righteousness. "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)" (Phil. 3:17-19).

The heinous crimes and inhumane treatment committed in the name of religion stagger the imagination. But this hypocrisy in "righteousness" existed while Christ was upon earth. The account in Matthew 23 of the sharp and pointed condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees is the teaching of Christ. It shows the utter disgust for all forms of hypocrisy in the claim to righteousness.

The rebellion in the 1960's and the charismatic-Pentecostal off-shoots that were bred by hypocritical leaders of sects and cults is still very much alive. The "Flower Children," "Jesus People," "Temple of Satan," Charles Manson's "Family," and "Rev. Jim Jones" and his "People's Temple" are all the

products of the religious fanaticism that is invading some churches of Christ,

The Self-Righteous

A self-righteous person is either hypocritical or blindly ignorant of what righteousness is. Often it is a combination of both. Jesus spoke a parable unto "certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (Luke 18:9). Jesus warned his disciples against hypocrisy in righteousness. "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1). What does this mean? When is one playing the hypocrite in his claim for righteousness? Jesus gave some specifics.

"Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward" (Matt. 6:2). "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward" (Matt. 6:5).

Many will give nothing to the needy unless they can "sound a trumpet" and call attention of all to what they are doing. Their "alms" are more for the glory and praise from men than to help others and glorify the Father which is in heaven. Many prayers are made for the purpose of impressing men's ears rather than expressing our hearts to God. This is hypocrisy in the same form as it appeared in the Pharisees.

Hypocrisy in self-righteousness is further seen in the vain worship that comes by the doctrines of men. "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:7-9). This same hypocritical righteousness is at work in many parts of the country and drawing from many faithful churches of Christ those sincere, but untaught, babes in Christ, the emotionally unstable, and the misfits from society into the "cell-type Devotional-Emotionalism." The "Jesus People" started that way. Charles Manson started his cult in that manner. And from all information in the news media the "Rev. Jim Jones" began his fanatical religion in that way. From this small commune type "extra-righteous" group of devotees will grow the fanatical religious cult that will blind the minds of its members to the righteousness of God, and in the process will bind them to some radical leader who becomes some kind of god to them.

The hypocrisy of the Pharisees made itself known in the self-righteousness of this religious sect. The emphasis was on the external appearances rather than on the condition of the heart. Self-righteousness rejects Christ and centers all things upon self (Rom. 10:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:5). Through ignorance of what God

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says, one sets about to establish a form of right doing by his own standard. This is an act of rejection of the word of God.

Hypocrisy causes one to establish a dual standard in righteousness: one for himself and another for the rest of mankind. The beam and the mote of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 7 is proof of this. "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matt. 7:5).

It is time to expose and oppose all forms of "self-righteous" fanaticism and hypocrisy wherever it may be found. Self-conceit and pride must go. The doctrine of men must be opposed without favor and compromise.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	368
RESTORATIONS	85
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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WHAT DO YOU READ?

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Mt. 12:34). There is no doubt about it. None of us can ever be any better than that which fills our hearts. What we choose to think upon will have a marked effect upon our character and behaviour.

It should be the aim of every Christian to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor, 10:5). The mind of the Christian is sought by the Devil. Evil philosophies compete to control the thought processes of the people of the world. Once people have forfeited their right to think for themselves they are then conditioned for whatever form of tyranny may be thrust upon them by those who have fed their minds with error. The recent tragedy in Guyana is a case in point. Communism is a system of mind control. Catholicism has always thrived upon ignorance and has told the masses that they could not understand the Bible on their own. The priesthood must decide and tell them what to believe.

Christians must discipline themselves to "think Christ's thoughts after him." Paul wrote "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). While we are free to think, to choose and to act, we are not free before God to do as we please without regard for the will of God. It is for this reason that Christians must choose to think upon that which elevates and ennobles the spirit. The concept that man is nothing more than a graduated animal with no eternal destiny has done much to destroy self-respect and human dignity. Such philosophy is calculated to result in licentious practices of every kind.

The Value of Good Literature

In a world of R and X rated movies, soap operas, adult book stores, best seller novels, girlie magazines, and television vulgarities, we must emphasize again and again the need to think upon things that are higher and nobler. The power of the written word in shaping thought and action is seen in the fact that God, Himself, chose this medium in revealing his

mind to mankind. Nothing can take the place of reading the word of God. One is blessed who delights in the law of the Lord and upon it meditates, day and night (Psa. 1:2).

Down through the years the written words of faithful servants of God have done much to enlighten, to expose error and to inspire God's people to do right. The periodical, such as the one you hold in your hand right now, has been a very forceful and useful tool in thrashing out, sifting and sorting ideas and issues which Christians have to decide. Such a medium has not always been properly used. It is capable of great abuse. Some have had short lives (most of them fall into that category) while others (a relative few) have survived for decades. Some which once served a great and useful purpose have lived long enough to fall into the hands of those whose aims were far different from those who brought them into being initially. The fact that a good thing may be abused does not argue against the thing itself. Congregations can and do go astray but we continue to begin new ones. When a paper reaches the place that it serves an evil purpose, then faithful Christians ought not to support it.

But we fail to catch the logic of those who will spend \$60-\$70 a year for a daily newspaper, \$800 for a color television set, \$100 a year for assorted magazines, \$400-\$500 for a set of encyclopedias to help their children with their school work, but who do not own a concordance, Bible dictionary, Bible atlas, or read a single gospel paper.

Nineteen Going On Twenty

With this issue of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES, we begin our twentieth year of operation. H. E. Phillips and James P. Miller gave the paper birth and nourished it through the difficult years of its early history. In June, 1973 the present editor began to serve. Not many papers survive this long, I am realistic enough to know that much of the success of the paper is due to the work done by those who have gone before and I simply build upon their foundation. But we have continued to enjoy the support of readers throughout the nation and around the world and have been able to increase our circulation. We are now approaching the 8,000 mark in monthly circulation and are now launching a campaign to reach 10,000 monthly circulation by the end of this, our twentieth year of service.

Will You Help Us?

There are several things our readers can do to help. Tell others about the paper. Show them your copy or ask them to read some article which you found especially helpful. When your children grow up and move away from home, subscribe for them and keep an old friend coming into their home. When you renew your own subscription, why not send in a club of subscriptions, or at least subscribe for one other person. If 1500 of our present subscribers would do this, in fact, if 1,000 of them would, with the normal increase from month to month we experience anyhow, we would be well over the 10,000 mark by the end of this year, or even before that time. We also ask the

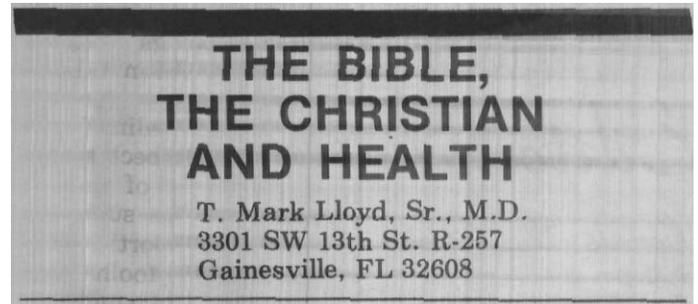
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Rate Increase

As much as we hate to do it, increasing costs of printing and postage make it necessary that we raise the single subscription rate to \$7 a year. This will apply only to new subs. The club rate for 4 or more is now \$6 a year. In groups of 12 or more, the rate is \$5 a year but this only applies to groups paid by a single individual. We do not have a non-profit permit. We operate on a second-class permit but pay the same rate as **READER'S DIGEST** or other magazines which sell advertising space. For the present we have no plans to change our type of permit. Our postal rates are much higher than those papers which mail under a non-profit second class permit. Even so, our subscription rate is in line with other papers of equal size.

What do you read? We believe this paper will make a worthy addition to your family reading material. Surely the offerings of such writers as H. E. Phillips, Marshall Patton, Eugene Britnell, Thomas G. O'Neal, Ward Hogland, J. T. Smith, Julian Snell, Wiley Adams, Gary Henry, Weldon Warnock, Ken Green, Earl Kimbrough, Dee Bowman, Rodney Miller and Mark Lloyd will build you up and help you to think upon the very things Paul admonished us to think upon in **Philippians 4:8**. There are others who contribute material all along, but these men have agreed to write so many columns each year, some of them submitting material monthly. What do you think? Pass this copy on to someone who is not now receiving the paper and see what that person thinks about it. We shall continue to keep a balance of material which is true to the word of God and presented in a dignified manner. When we deal in controversial matters we shall try to remember that we are Christians and act and write accordingly. We shall be firm but fair. If you are not now one of our readers, we would like to have you in that category. If you are already on the mailing list, thanks for your support in the past. Please stay with us and help us grow in circulation.



INTRODUCTION

This being my first article, I think it would only be proper to express my gratitude to Brother Connie Adams in asking me to write for *Searching the Scriptures*. I feel his ideas for these articles which are to include Bible thoughts with respect to sound medical principles are quite innovative and much needed. I hope that I can fulfill his expectations as well as provide reasonable, concise and readable articles which the brethren will enjoy and more importantly learn more about God's word.

It was with much trepidation on my part and friendly badgering, I might add, by the editor that I accepted this assignment. Writing has never been my forte, but as I continued to offer excuse after excuse to brother Adams as to why I should not, or could not write for *Searching the Scriptures* I began to remind myself of Moses and his multiple excuses as to why he could not approach Pharaoh and lead the children of Israel. His excuses were poor and God had an answer for them all and alas my excuses were even poorer and quite easily answered. Brother Adams has offered to help me in any way he can and thus I have finally accepted.

Brother Adams has left it up to me as to content and style of the articles. His only requests have been to make the articles interesting and readable as well as my being dependable and making a deadline. Both may be difficult, as to subject matter and applications, however, the sources are almost inexhaustible. There are a number of diseases listed in the Old and New Testament which are not well understood with which we can deal. For instance: palsy and leprosy. Actually leprosy was a very general term for a number of infectious diseases only one of which was the "leprosy" or Hansens disease as we know it today. Other articles will concentrate on medicines and potions of Bible times including myrrh and oil and wine. Paul tells us in **1 Timothy 4:8** that bodily exercise profits little, but we can discuss the meaning of this passage and how exercise can help us in our daily lives as Christians or we attempt to fulfill God's plan for a temperate and healthy life. How can we help protect our body which is the "temple of the Spirit", or should we even be concerned about our physical well being? We will discuss the problems of obesity, gluttony and intemperance and what harm these do to us physically. One interesting sidelight which will be discussed will be the modern day practice of our good sisters of

overfeeding the preacher during meetings to show our gratitude for his being there and of not being outdone by another sister.

There could be articles on "faith healing" and documentation of such practices with respect to real Bible miraculous healing and principles of modern medicine. What Bible principles apply to such sensitive modern issues as birth control and abortion may be dealt with depending upon how brave or foolhardy I am. What are the health consequences of smoking? How destructive is alcohol to the organs of our bodies will certainly be discussed. Can a Christian "smoke" marijuana and be pleasing to God? Anxiety and discontent with one's lot in life are subjects with which I definitely feel we need to contend.

The list is long and the subject matter is there. It is my hope only to be able to put it in its proper perspective. With God's help and your understanding and cooperation I hope we can make this series of articles a success, increasing your Bible knowledge and helping you to live the life God would have us all to live.

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A BAPTIST DISCUSSES THE POPE

Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" That question is ever before us, or it certainly should be. In considering any subject of importance, and certainly in the spiritual realm, that question should be asked and the proper answer discovered. Unfortunately, many do not seek the answer because they do not ask the question. They do not ask the question because they do not believe that there is such a thing as truth — or that it is important. Notwithstanding the fact that the apostle Paul rebuked some who "walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:14), many people feel that one should never say that something is true or right and everything else on the subject is wrong. Ours is an age of love everybody and condemn nobody. This is the attitude of denominationalism and all sectarian preachers. An example of this is what we are to discuss in this article.

Mr. Erwin McDonald is a prominent Baptist preacher in Arkansas. He once served as editor of the official Baptist paper of the state. He is now in semi-retirement, and writes some for the Arkansas Democrat, a daily newspaper.

In the issue of October 7, 1978, Mr. McDonald wrote an article entitled, "God's will and the death of Pope John Paul." It would be difficult to find more double-talk and compromise, yet his article is typical of the doctrinal dexterity of one who tries to be all things to all people and teach truth while denying truth.

The problem which he discussed was the selection of Cardinal Albino Luciani as Pope John Paul, what part God had in the selection, and why God would guide in his election knowing that he was to live only 34 days as pope. We present the following quotes and comments.

"If God promises his presence (and direction) 'where two or three are gathered together in my name,' how much more can he be expected to be with hundreds of millions of Christians who are uniting their hearts in a common petition, as was the case when they were praying for God's will to be done in the naming of the new pope?"

To gather or act "in the name of the Lord" is to act by his authority. Where in the scriptures did the Lord authorize the office of pope, give his qualifications, and instructions for his selection? We have found no such authority. We deny that millions

of Christians — or even one true Christian — prayed for God's will to be done in the selection of the pope, for no informed Christian believes that the office of pope is according to God's revealed will.

"Purely from the human viewpoint we have to ask, how could this man have been God's choice for the place when God knew, as surely he did, that he would die in his sleep in a matter of weeks?"

May we suggest, with kindness and reverence, that we leave God out of this! God had nothing to do with the selection of the pope. If you think He did, prove it. It seems that the gentleman is trying to get God in a dilemma, or accuse Him of acting inconsistently. But notice his next paragraph:

"Yet, if we conclude that Luciani could not have been God's choice, we cannot escape another puzzling question. If Christians in such numbers and such sincerity of purpose were mistaken — if in spite of all their petitions they had not found God's will — where did they go wrong? How else, besides prayer, are they ever to discover God's will?"

By reading God's word! God does not reveal His will for man today in answer to prayer, but in His revealed word, the Bible. Elsewhere in his article, Mr. McDonald refers to James 1:5, 6, but James is speaking of wisdom, not knowledge, and he says we should ask "in faith" rather than for faith because faith comes from hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17). "Where did they go wrong?" he asks. Answer, by not reading and heeding the scriptures. Again we deny that true Christians prayed for God's guidance in the selection of a pope, for Christians do not pray for that which is contrary to God's will.

"Some things about God's will are easily known by Christians. Indeed, in most of the decisions touching our lives, God leaves us to make our own choices. But what of those times — such as in the selection of a pastor or pope — when so much is at stake and we can discover no clear scriptural instruction but yet must make a choice?"

Can the man not see and understand that the very fact that we can "discover no clear instruction" in the Bible concerning a pope is a clear indication that God has not authorized such a position? God has given clear instructions for every office or work He wanted in His church; for example, elders and deacons (I Tim. 3; Titus 1). And God has given "clear scriptural instruction" that Christ is THE head of THE church, THE body (Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:23) and that leaves no room for another head. Another question is in order: Where do we learn that we "must make a choice" of one man as pope from a college of cardinals when the word of God says absolutely nothing about either?

"Although I have questions about the seemingly untimely death of the new pope — questions for which I do not have the answers — I definitely feel that God answered the prayers of millions in allowing Albino Luciani to become Pope John Paul. . . . It may be, for instance, that John Paul, in his humility and his great love and concern for just ordinary people, will be used by God to narrow the gap and bring the Catholic people closer to their top pastor."

Does he, as a Baptist, believe that God has authorized the papacy? Evidently he does, but his position is in direct conflict with traditional Baptist doctrine. To our knowledge, no Baptist creed teaches the office of pope, and the majority of them are outspoken against Catholicism. If God "answered the prayers of millions" and the pope was "used by God," then God surely approved the selection of a pope. If Mr. McDonald believes that, and can prove it by the scriptures (which would be more than he can do for the denomination he is in) then why isn't he a Catholic? If I believed that God is pleased with the pope, I would join the Catholic Church. And where does the Bible speak of a "top pastor" or even "a pastor" in any way? That term is used in the scriptures only in describing a plurality of men who serve in a congregation, also known as bishops, elders, presbyters and overseers. There is no scriptural authority for "a pastor" in a church, or the "top pastor" over the universal church.

"As a Southern Baptist I am grieved at the passing of John Paul, not so much for him as for his people. If he was what he professed to be, a believer and follower of Christ — which I have no reason to doubt — he is in the presence of the Lord now to an extent he could never be on earth."

As a Christian, I deny that! The gentleman is teaching salvation in the Catholic Church, yet he is a Baptist. There is little similarity between the Baptist Church and Catholicism. Their teaching and practice is different on almost any subject one can think about. Our friend believes that he can be saved as a Baptist, and the pope was saved as a Catholic. He feels that one can be "a follower of Christ" while practicing either Baptist doctrine or Catholicism. It would seem that there is no truth and error, no right and wrong. According to the denominational concept of religion, "truth" is whatever one wants to believe, every man becomes a law unto himself, and no one is wrong.

In view of what we have observed, and the typical sectarian attitude, we close our study by joining with Pilate to ask: "What is truth?"

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(EDITOR'S NOTE: It gives the editor great pleasure, and we hope pardonable parental pride, to introduce to our readers the writing of our older son, Wilson Adams. He has been preaching often since he was 15 years of age, filling appointments through his high school days. While attending Florida College in Tampa, Florida, he spoke a number of times at Fletcher Avenue and other places in the Tampa Bay area, preached during one school year every Sunday at West Palm Beach and then another year at Lady Lake, Florida. He spent one summer preaching at Vandalia, Illinois, another summer working with Wayne Chappel with the Lockland church in Cincinnati, Ohio and this past summer worked with Rodney Miller and the good Par St. church in Orlando, Florida. He is married to the former Teresa Jackson of El Toro, California. Since September, 1978 he has been preaching full time with the church in Roanoke, Virginia where a good work is under way. "I have no greater joy than to know that my children walk in truth."

PAUL'S THREE I AM'S

Three times in Romans 1:14-16, Paul uses the phrase, "I am," in describing his relationship to the gospel of Christ and to those in need of the gospel. He says:

I am under obligation both to the Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

Thus, for my part, *I am eager to preach the gospel* to you also who are in Rome. For *I am not ashamed of the gospel*, for it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (EMP. MINE — DWA)

Each verse carries with it an important message as it shows the love that Paul had for the gospel. This same attitude, as expressed by the apostle in these verses, should also be characteristic of all of us in our day and time (Heb. 13:8). We would do well to follow the example of Paul.

I Am Under Obligation

There is no doubt that Paul was under obligation (or a "debtor" — KJV) to preach Christ to all those who would listen. He realized this obligation and fulfilled it like a true soldier should. On more than one occasion this meant opposition, but opposition never de-toured Paul from his obligation. Why was he so obligated? Paul was obligated (or under debt)

because of the saving power of the gospel (Vs. 16). It was he who had been chosen to be instrumental in carrying the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). Furthermore, Paul was an apostle and to this group of men was given the charge to "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). Thus, Paul was under obligation to share this "good news" with all men.

As the gospel calls us today, are we not under obligation to teach it to others? This is the duty of all Christians. For example, if we see a drunkard lying on a railroad track and do nothing to save him from the on-coming locomotive, are we not partly to blame for his death? If I see a man drowning and refuse to throw him the life jacket in my hand, am I not guilty of his death? And, if I see thousands of lost souls and do not even attempt to teach them the truth — AM I NOT GUILTY, IF THEY DIE WITHOUT CHRIST? We all have neighbors, loved ones, and friends who are in need of the greatest gift of all — the gospel! We talk with them about everything else — WHY NOT THE GOSPEL? It all involves a love for lost souls. Paul had this love and he showed it time and time again as he preached Christ amid trial and tribulation. This same love is what drives some to sell their belongings and move to a foreign country to preach the gospel without all the conveniences of home. This same love is what causes some to stand up and preach the truth even when they may be in the minority. This same love is what causes some to put the Lord's church FIRST, realizing that all secular matters will fall into their proper place. If a preacher, or any Christian, feels no responsibility in spreading the gospel, then there is not a proper love for the soul that is lost. One of the great commandments is to, "love your neighbor as yourself." How is this possible if we have the truth and refuse to share it?

I Am Eager

Paul not only felt a certain obligation but he was EAGER to preach the gospel. Wouldn't it be wonderful if this was characteristic of all Christians? Sad to say, this is not the case. How many times have you heard: "You mean I have to go to all the services?" or "How much do I have to give?" Does this sound very eager to you in regard to the Lord's work? The problem is that while we do feel a certain amount of obligation towards the gospel, we are a long way from being eager to spread it sometimes!

In Acts 9:18-22 we see that IMMEDIATELY after Paul was converted he began to proclaim Christ. This reminds me of many individuals, who after becoming Christians, are really "on fire for the Lord." They are zealous and cannot do enough in His service. However, at the first hint of a problem, or should a temptation come their way, their zeal for the Lord is lost and they return again to the ways of the world (Matt. 13:20-21). This was just the opposite in the life of Paul. Immediately he began to preach the gospel and his zeal continued until his death. He told Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of

righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:7-8). We need to be eager in preaching the gospel, having a zeal based upon the word of God. Such was characteristic of the life of Paul.

I Am Not Ashamed

Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because, "it is the power of God to salvation" (Vs. 16). However, he had not always had this attitude as he used to march from city to city binding those who were in "the Way" (Acts 9:1-2). Paul was honest but honestly mistaken. As soon as he found that his conscience had been leading him astray his honesty showed forth and he ceased to be in error. What a lesson to be learned from this today as many continue in denominationalism, not willing to change and to obey the gospel of Christ. If only all were as Paul!

There are some Christians, I'm afraid, who act as if they are ashamed of the gospel. There are some preachers who preach as if they are ashamed of the gospel. Too many are timid and afraid to speak out **BOLDLY** as they ought to speak (Acts 9:27). We must remember that it is error, not truth, that divides and as long as we speak the truth of God's word we have nothing to fear. Surely, there will be disappointments along the way but we need not let disappointments turn into discouragement. Paul did not, and he underwent more cruelty in relation to his preaching than any of us ever will (2 Cor. 11:22-28). Paul was courageous, even as he stood before those who opposed him. May we be as Paul in realizing our **OBLIGATION** to preach the word, being **EAGER** to fulfill that obligation, and in speaking out boldly in the name of Christ, **NOT ASHAMED** of "the Way of the Lord" to which **WE** belong.

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**THE NEED FOR STUDY OF OLD
TESTAMENT PROPHECY**

In Louisville there is a large 10-story-plus insurance building on the Watterson Expressway that folks delight in describing as the building which was built from the top story down. Of course it is strange to conceive of a high office building, the top story of which was constructed first, and then followed by the other floors until the completion reached the ground.

Yet, in Bible study we are no less confused, because we try to start at the **TOP** and build down to the ground all the time. When we neglect the Prophets which paved the way for the coming of the Messiah and study only the New Testament fulfillment, we are neglecting the foundation of God's plan, — and building from the **TOP** down. The consequence of this failure is seen in almost every form of religious error that has ripped asunder the body of Christ. We have seen generation after generation mature without any concept of the *mission*, *function*, and *purpose* of the church. We have seen the church turned into a social club for recreation, into a Red Cross Center for World Benevolence, or into a motel lethargic, — sleeping disciples that want to soothe their consciences by "Sunday-morning-only Christianity." Why? Why has this type of error invaded brethren to such a degree that much of the brotherhood is divided over benevolence, institutionalism, and recreation, only to find those not guilty of that asleep in Zion with a ritualistic approach to Christianity? The answer must come from the pages of prophecy, some of the richest material in all the Word of God, which ought to fill our hearts, lives and worship as we observe what God promised in His prophecy and then compare to see if that's what we are today. If we were to be something other than what the Prophets saw down the stream of time, then we would know change was needed on our part.

We must cover the Basics of Prophecy to understand the glory of New Testament fulfillments. It is impossible for a student in mathematics to master differential equations in calculus until the basics of algebra and trigonometry are fully understood. The Lord understood this all too well as His plan to establish his kingdom began to unfold. He came first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Why? Because they had been studying the basics, they had been in God's home-study course for 1,500 years, and now they were given the first opportunity

to connect what the Prophecy had taught them concerning the fulfillment which the Lord had come to bring. Time after time the Lord went back to the Prophets and brought to the Jewish mind the prophetic truths, connecting them with His fulfillment, and concluded with the application to their lives. Notice in Luke 24 there are two examples of this in one chapter. First, verse 27: "Beginning with Moses and with all the Prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures." Secondly, verse 44: ". . . that all things which are written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." In these two illustrations, He connects past prophecy with present fulfillment, and then issues the application in verse 49: "you are to remain in Jerusalem until you are clothed with power and then you will proclaim first in Jerusalem, second in Judea and Samaria and thirdly, even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

If we try to mature brethren in Christ by any other method of teaching, we are missing the Divine example. If we preach only "application" (which is absolutely necessary) by itself, we will lack the force of Scripture. We must return to the Divine method, — first, teach the Prophecy, secondly, teach the fulfillment and thirdly, teach the application. Then and only then are we showing the Unity of God's truth from Genesis to Revelation, which is the golden thread of redemption of man. Then and only then are we demonstrating the Divine system of checks and balances which shows that Scriptures are not twisted or misapplied. On one side of the scale is the prophecy, on the other side is the fulfillment, and the question is do they balance? If our fulfillment is light or shy, then we know we are wrong. If it does balance, then we have built the faith to drive home the Divine application in our lives. When we fail to establish this overall procedure in our Bible study, we become like the student that cheats himself by reading "clift notes," the outline summary, rather than the entire book for his book report. Or, we are like the reader of a mystery who only reads the last chapter to see "if the butler did it," as opposed to reading the entire novel.

Our Bible study programs must by design seek to accomplish this overall view of the Bible in the minds of our students. When we follow the Master's method, we teach (1) first Old Testament Scripture and (2) New Scripture, and (3) application and the result will be a guard against apostasy, both individually and collectively. It is for this reason that Jehovah cries by the pen of Jeremiah (7:25) "Since the day your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day I have sent you *all my servants the Prophets*, daily rising early and sending them". Then again, in Jeremiah 25:4, "The Lord has sent to you *all His servants* the Prophets again and again, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear . . .

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THE GRACE — FELLOWSHIP ISSUE — NO. 7 SINS OF IGNORANCE

Calvinism teaches that the grace of God covers the sins of a saint so that he can never sin so as to be eternally lost.

The New Unity Movement (NUM) teaches a modified view of this grace. Upon the condition of "A HEART OF FAITH" THE NUM teaches that the grace of God covers sins of ignorance and weaknesses of the flesh so that the child of God will not be lost because of such sins. This "heart of faith" is arbitrarily defined (See article No. 5 in this series, *Faith And Works*, Vol. 19, No. 10, Oct. 1978) Upon this basis the NUM seeks to extend fellowship to sincere brethren in error.

The issue in this study is pin-pointed by the following questions, frequently posed by the NUM to the opposition: 1) Do you know everything? 2) Are you guilty of sins of which you are not aware? 3) How can one repent of and confess specifically that of which he is not aware? If one answers No. 1 negatively; No. 2 affirmatively, and No. 3 "He can't," and then seeks to justify himself upon the grounds of a general repentance and confession, the NUM accuses him of inconsistency. This inconsistency is seen in not extending the condition of general repentance and confession to the sincere brother who does not yet know the truth on instrumental music in worship, church organization, Premillennialism, etc. Thus, is identified the real issue and problem. Furthermore, I fear that this problem remains unsolved for some who are not of the NUM.

Vital Points of Distinction

One point of distinction to be kept in mind parallels the difference between the work of a lawyer and a judge. The former determines what law is; the latter pronounces sentence. If justice demands clemency, not provided for in revealed law, in view of extenuating circumstances, it is the prerogative of the judge — not the lawyer — to grant it. Our responsibility is that of the lawyer. I, therefore, am not too concerned about answering questions which pose hypothetical situations and which involve extenuating circumstances which demand clemency from the viewpoint of a human sense of justice. Granting such clemency is not my prerogative. My work is determining law in the light of revelation.

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Another point of distinction involves knowledge of when and under what conditions general repentance is acceptable. While the Bible teaches that there is a general repentance, it does not teach that such will suffice in every instance. The NUM is definitely lacking in such knowledge.

Also, knowledge of the nature of God's commands is imperative. Not all of His conditions are the same in nature. Like authority, one must understand its nature (generic or specific) in order to determine truth and make proper application. So it is with God's commands; they differ in nature — some are absolute and some are relative.

Absolute and Relative Commands

By absolute commands, I mean those so fixed as to be void of any relativity. Obedience to such is determined not upon the basis of their relation to something else, but rather upon the basis of being wholly independent of everything else. Obedience to such is not rendered by degrees. One does not progress or develop through time toward perfection in such obedience. One either obeys or he does not, without regard to other matters. For example, one is either "buried" and "raised" in baptism (Col. 2:12) or he is not — and that is it. In observing the Lord's supper, he does it on the "first day" (Acts 20:7) or he does not. Such conditions are absolute.

By relative commands, I mean those wherein obedience is determined by their relation to something else. Obedience to the command to add the "Christian graces" (2 Pet. 1:5-11) must be determined in relation to other matters. People may possess these graces in varying degrees. Obedience is determined upon the basis of one's "diligence" (v. 5). Diligence requires sincere effort commensurate with one's time, opportunity, and ability. In the parable of the talents, Jesus teaches that talents represent the measure of what one is accountable for, and that one's accountability is in proportion to his ability (Matt. 25:15). Therefore, obedience to relative commands is not determined on the basis of obedience to the degree of perfection, but rather on the basis of what is commensurate with other factors (time, opportunity, and ability). Such commands are related to these important factors, hence, are relative.

One may keep absolute conditions to the degree of perfection. In fact, if they are kept at all, they are kept perfectly. There is no relativity about it. One either obeys or he does not — and that is it. Grace is not needed in obeying such commands, so far as human effort is concerned. Grace is seen in the nature of the commands themselves — they are conditions of faith, not conditions of merit.

On the other hand, the relative conditions, void of their relativity, cannot be kept by humanity to the degree of perfection. Both the ages of Patriarchy and of Moses demonstrate man's inability. Otherwise, meritorious salvation would be possible. God's grace, however, provides for this human weakness — **CONDITIONALLY!** Concerning relative commands, His grace is seen in the extent of His requirement — that which is commensurate with one's

ability, time, and opportunity. The condition is "diligence" as pointed out above. This condition is also one of faith — not of merit. Indeed, man is saved "by grace through faith" (Eph. 2:8,9).

Inability and General Repentance

There is still another area in which God's grace is urgently needed and in which it has been lovingly provided. This area involves that margin of difference between man's ability and perfection. While God in His grace does not require of man that which is above his ability, His law, nevertheless, remains perfect. After man has done all that he can do, he is yet a transgressor of God's perfect law, hence, a sinner (1 Jno. 3:4). God does not bend His perfect law down to the level of man's ability, but rather spans the distance between the two (man's ability and perfection) with His grace — **CONDITIONALLY!**

The Scriptures require a deep sense of unworthiness on our part, even after we have done all that we can do: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Lk. 17:10). No doubt, John had such transgressions in mind, primarily, when he said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 Jno. 1:8). Perhaps some were thinking that they had kept God's absolute commands, and consistent with their ability had kept His relative commands, therefore, were without sin. John corrects this erroneous view. Here is the area wherein general repentance must suffice. Such transgressions grow out of our inability to keep His perfect law — even sins of which we may not be cognizant (not through ignorance of law, but through human inability), of which we all are guilty (1 Jno. 1:8). How far short of perfection do we all come in the matter of patience, temperance, etc? The truth of the matter is we do not know — God does. Forgiveness, however, is made possible through God's grace, conditionally. The conditions involve a continual penitent confession and prayer (1 Jno. 1:9); 1 Thess. 5:17) and ever maintaining a deep sense of unworthiness (Lk. 17:10). This repentance must of necessity be general, since we cannot be fully aware of the measure of our guilt.

I find no reason, however, to justify a general repentance for a transgression of God's absolute commands. Such does not involve inability, but rather a lack of faith or ignorance of law. While God made provision for transgressions through ignorance of law among the Jews (Lev. 4) and suffered such among the Gentiles (Acts 14:16), that time is no more. NOW, He commands "all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Forgiveness is obtained upon the conditions of repentance, confession and prayer (Acts 8:22; 1 Jno. 1:9). Since God no longer "winks" at ignorance of law, this repentance involves cognizance of the guilt. The same thing would be true of a lack of "diligence" in keeping the relative commands. It is here that the NUM misses the mark of truth by teaching general repentance as a condition of forgiveness for transgressions of absolute and

relative commands.

It does not meet the issue to try to justify general repentance for transgressions of absolute commands upon the grounds of general repentance for the alien. The alien's repentance is of the fact that he is a sinner — a rebel against God. Hence, he is not called upon to confess his sins, but rather to confess his faith in the deity of Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37). The child of God, however, must make a penitent confession of his sins (1 Jno. 1:9).

God's Requirements

In the light of this study, what does God require of us? He requires perfect obedience to His absolute commands. He requires diligence in obeying His relative commands. He requires a continual sense of unworthiness because of our inability to keep His law to the degree of perfection. Any transgression in the realm of the first two must be forgiven through repentance (involving cognizance of the guilt), confession, and prayer. Transgressions in the latter realm are forgiven through a continual general penitent confession and prayer.

Moses E. Lard, one of the pioneer preachers in "the thick of the fight" against Calvinism in a day when the battle was fierce, the feelings intense, and confusion perhaps at its greatest, put it very simply in these words: "Partial obedience to the law is the only obedience possible to man; perfect obedience to conditions is the only obedience acceptable to God" (*Commentary On Paul's Letter To Romans*, Lexington, Ky.: Transylvania Printing and Publishing Co., 1875, p. 350). END OF SERIES.

ARROWS of
TRUTH for
denominational
error

Ward Hogland
Post Office Box 166
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NO ONE IS PERFECT (No. 2)

The old worn out cliché "No one is perfect" covers a multitude of sins. Back in 1964 Albert Garner, Baptist preacher, asked the following question in writing, "Mr. Hogland, when a child of God lies, steals, murders, curses or commits adultery do such acts constitute alien sins or alienating sins?" In 1968, Vernon L. Barr also a Baptist debater and preacher asked in writing the following question, "How many sins must a child of God commit in order for him to be lost?"

I introduce the two above questions to show the Calvinistic background of the two men. It is expected of Baptist preachers to fail to differentiate between the alien sinner and the erring child of God. However, I always thought my brethren knew better. Several years ago while writing a proposition for debate I used the word "Alien" sinner. A little smirk came over the face of my opponent and he said, "Hogland, I see no difference in what you call an alien sinner and one who sins after he is saved." I pointed out that I understood perfectly well the position he had espoused but I still wanted the word "Alien" in the proposition. I explained, that if I did not use the word in the proposition he might conclude the same law of conversion applied to both, and cause me some embarrassment during the debate. He acquiesced and we signed the propositions. Calvinists see no difference in the alien and the erring child of God and as one might expect they do not believe one can fall from grace. If once saved always saved is a Bible doctrine it would be foolish to talk about either the alien or the second law of pardon.

When Peter told Simon the magician to "Repent and pray" (Acts 8:22) he upset the apple cart of Calvinism. For example, in this one statement he refuted the once saved always saved idea along with showing the difference in the alien and the erring child of God. If there is no second law of pardon or if one cannot fall from grace then Peter should have told Simon to "Repent and be baptized" as he told the people on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38). Obviously, there is a difference or Peter the apostle made a mistake both in Acts eight and Acts two.

The fact that "No one is perfect" also gives much trouble to members of the Body of Christ. Since it is axiomatic that no one is perfect, even a Christian, this presents certain problems. Some feel that

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because the Christian sins he is in the same boat with the alien. Here we have a play on semantics! It is true sin is sin regardless by whom it may be committed. However, it must be understood that the two are not in the same boat with reference to laws of pardon.

We shall now study two cases which will serve to illustrate the point. In Romans five Paul tells the Romans it was their sin which had caused God to manifest his Grace in the sending of his Son to die for their redemption. The Romans like many today, and knowing that no one is perfect had their gun loaded and ready to fire. They argued, we will continue in sin and God will give us more grace. Paul, turned this argument into a tail-spin by saying, "God forbid." He went on to say in verse two, "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Now for an important question. Did Paul mean these Roman Christians were perfect? A thousand times no. On the other hand did he open the flood gate for sin? The answer is No! So the Christian stands somewhere between the stubborn fact that he does sin and yet cannot be a habitual (Continual) sinner. This is a difficult pill for the Calvinist to swallow. The Christian will inadvertently sin even if he tries not to, but this is a far cry from continuing in sin as Paul explains in Romans Six.

Our second example is in I John 1. This great apostle tells us that all Christian sin. He even included himself. He said, "If we say we have not sinned we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." Then John, like Paul trying to avoid extremism said in chapter two, verse one, "These things write I unto you, that he sin not." Now for another important question. Did John mean Christians are perfect? Again the answer is No. But when he said we all sin was he giving us license to sin? No indeed! Then why did he tell us we all sin and then turn right around and say we are to sin not? Because he was telling it like it is. He is explaining the difference in the alien sinner (sinning) and the child of God (sinning). One sins without restraint; the other will sin even with restraint. I insist this will help us understand the famous Baptist argument on I John 3:9. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." Baptist preachers say this means the soul of the Christian never does sin. When sin is evident it is always blamed on the body and that does not matter. However, let us get back to the text. Does John mean the child of God never does sin? Certainly not — He answered that question in I John 1:10. He means, as Paul told the Romans, Christians are not habitual sinners or that they cannot continue in sin.

Now for a final question. Since we as Christians admittedly commit sin, is there any hope? The Calvinist says no, and God says yes. The Calvinist believes he is as pure as God himself. I have had Baptist preachers to tell me their soul (not body) is as pure as God. Their soul does not sin. They believe in perfection! They will tell you that if your soul sins you cannot make it to heaven. As a matter of fact they believe in perfection and this is where the "once saved always saved" comes in. On the other hand

God tells us in I John 1:9 to confess our sins and the blood of Christ will cleanse (present tense-keep on cleansing) us from all sins. So there is hope for the Christian even if he sins. He must confess his sins. The child of God must say. Lord have mercy on me a sinner. The Calvinist cannot say this because he believes in perfection. He has no sins to confess. If he confesses his sins they are of the body and will not send his soul to hell anyway! If I felt as the Calvinist that the perfect life of Jesus had been imputed to me why would I want to confess anything? Gentle reader, on the day of judgment the Lord will look at you, not Jesus. In Matt. 25, the Lord will say, "I was hungry and you (not the Lord) fed me." I was thirsty and you (not the Lord) gave me drink." Notice the emphasis on YOU. Call it legalism or what you please. To argue that the personal righteousness of Jesus has been imputed to us and that our souls are as perfect as the Lord himself is a bunch of foolishness. We have fought this doctrine in Baptist preachers for years and I was hopeful that we would never have to fight our own brethren on these Calvinistic claims but alas the time has come!

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Ken Green

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GETTING BORED?

An AP release (Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, July 19, 1978) reported on the fourth annual Boredom Anonymous Convention in Manhattan that was staged as part of National Avoid Boredom Week. Several suggestions were offered as to how one might avoid boredom, including picking a fight in a karate school, chewing tinfoil, or getting the address of everyone who has ever eaten a Big Mac.

George Lewis, who founded the 200-member anti-boredom society, said he was dedicated to helping the country overcome boredom by "keeping the mind in a terrific fantasy."

Boredom is no joke. Idleness is still the devil's workshop, and I'm all for any real concern that is shown for the problem. I once saw a cartoon that pictured a man and woman at Niagara Falls. The man was shrugging his shoulders and asking, "So? What else does it do?"

Here's a piece that's been aging in my files for some years. Like many good things, it has grown more succulent with age. It was written by Charles Hodge. We believe it offers a better solution to boredom than picking a fight.

"America's unique sin is boredom. Well known people even commit suicide in the name of boredom .

. . . the boredom of interstate highways . . . the boredom of assembly lines . . . the boredom of old age homes . . . the boredom of living! Pornography, violence, crime feed on boredom. Marriages, jobs, friendships are destroyed by boredom!

"B. F. Skinner thought boredom came from coercion, but many like Paul in jail were not bored. Eric Berne thought it was structure hunger, but one can be bored by structure itself. Psychology, now, has decided boredom is 'An incomplete striving for meaning.' Boredom is meaningless! Boredom is not apathy — an accepted lack of meaning. So the key to boredom is meaninglessness, not monotony. Knitting and mowing yards are monotony but many enjoy it! In tests people preferred work to not work. So — it is not work that is boring, per se.

"It is tragic to find Christians bored! So many are. To them Christianity, the church, yea even life have lost meaning. Church is attended on Sunday with nothing given, nothing expected, and nothing gained. We return home bored. Members are driving themselves crazy boating, going off on weekends, etc., seeking something to eliminate boredom. Their recreation becomes equally as boring!

"We must die to live; we must die to reproduce! We must return to the real meaning of Jesus. Can you imagine the Apostle Paul bored? Even in prison? Can you imagine the early church bored? Persecuted — yes — but not bored!

"Boredom indicated meaninglessness — a Christian cannot have that!"

The sword of the Spirit says: "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death . . . The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath . . . Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established" (Prov. 14:27; 15:24; 16:3).

BABY BEER IS HERE

The Louisville Times, Oct. 21, 1978, reported that Anheuser-Busch, the country's largest brewer, recently began test-marketing in several areas of the country an alcoholic beverage that children can legally purchase.

Chelsea, a mixture of ginger, lemon and apple flavoring with a malt base, contains less than 0.5 percent alcohol. Because the alcohol content is so low, it can be sold to children and is outside the jurisdiction of many state alcohol control boards.

A spokesman for the Kentucky Nurses Association said that the drink could condition children to alcohol. The Association passed a resolution at its convention to oppose the distribution of Chelsea and pledged to boycott other Anheuser-Busch products.

I've quit being surprised at the glaring hypocrisy of the liquor industry. Representatives often acknowledge the problem of drinking among young people, and feign concern. Actions speak so loudly, however!

A recent report from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism estimated: that in grades 7-12, three out of every four young people

drink alcoholic beverages; one out of every five kids, aged 14-17 are problem drinkers; by the time they get to the 12th grade, 40 percent of the boys and 21 percent of the girls are problem drinkers; and in the last 10 years, arrests of persons under the age of 21 for driving under the influence of alcohol rose 875 percent!

As a result of such findings, states which lowered the legal drinking age below 21 are raising them again. Montana, Michigan, and New Jersey took such action in the November elections.

But the distillers and brewers are forever bidding for the soul of our land, and the souls of our youth.

The Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer (Nov. 21, 1978) editorialized: "The liquor industry has now provided us with examples of two of the most effective means for introducing non-drinkers into the drinking culture. We now have alcoholic drinks without any alcohol taste and (almost) non-alcoholic drinks designed to taste like the real thing.

"The former — such as Heublein's Malcolm Hereford's Cows — offer a milk shake taste with an alcoholic kick. The latter — Chelsea — offers that beer-like taste with a low alcohol content. One is attracting those who want alcohol and can't stand the taste (including many teenagers). The other gives people too young to have alcohol the thrill of joining in our alcoholic culture."

It is becoming more imperative all the time that we admonish our children to "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall" (Prov. 4:14-16).

If you would like to express your opinion about this, write to the Public Relations Department, Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company, 721 Pestalozzi, St. Louis, Mo. 63118.

AS A MAN THINKETH

If you were asked to list the ten most significant world events of the past 135 years, in terms of their impact on recorded history, what would you list?

Sylvia Porter, syndicated economy columnist, recently gave a summary of the list that was published by "The Economist," an "internationally respected British weekly news magazine." The list was created and published in connection with the magazine's 135th anniversary.

A good deal of bias and subjectivism would likely enter into the compiling of such a list. Yet, I must concur that all the events suggested by "The Economist" have affected world-wide consequences. The big shocker is that the top five in the list are not technological advances, but ideologies:

No. 1: The vast change in the position and status of women.

No. 2: Freud and the development of psychoanalysis.

No. 3: Darwin's theory on the origin of the species.

No. 4: The Communist Manifesto and the Russian

Revolution.

No. 5: Fascism and the rise of totalitarian dictatorships which led to W. W. II.

The rest of the list includes the invention of the automobile and airplane, electricity, the end of slavery in the U. S., the end of powerful monarchies in most of the world, and the "conquest of space."

In my view, everyone of the top five involves anti-God, anti-scriptural concepts. The theories of such mental giants as Freud, Darwin, and Marx were conceived and written in the quiet ripple of the study. But they are now reflected in the tidal waves of human behavior.

Let us never underestimate the power of philosophy. Truly, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

Using Great Plainness
of Speech

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GOD'S PATTERN FOR CONVERSION,
ORGANIZATION, WORSHIP & WORK # 1

There is much confusion in the world today, as well as in the church, regarding the Bible and its usage. What is the Bible? Who wrote it? What benefit is it for us today? I hope to answer these and other questions in this tract.

The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. Its claims to be such are evident. It claims to originate with God, to be complete, and warns man not to go beyond what is written therein. This is either true, or the Bible is a lie from beginning to end.

THE BIBLE	
1 Origin	Warnings
INSPIRED II Tim. 3:16	NOT BEYOND II John 9
HOLY SPIRIT John 16:13	NOT PERVERT Gal. 1:7
HOLY MEN II Pet. 1:21	NOT ANOTHER Gal. 1:8
40 MEN	NOT ADD UNTO Rev. 22:18
1600 YEARS	NOT TAKE FROM Rev. 22:19
COMPLETED 96 A.D.	PREACH WORD II Tim. 4:2
Complete	ORACLES OF GOD I Pet. 4:11
ALL TRUTH John 16:13	IN HIS NAME Col. 3:17
ALL THINGS II Pet. 1:3	JUDGE US John 12:48
WHOLE COUNSEL Acts 20:27	
ONCE FOR ALL Jude 3	

II Timothy 3:16 — "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, and reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

John 16:13 — "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."

II Peter 1:21 — "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

II Peter 1:3 — "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

Acts 20:27 — "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

Jude 3 — "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

II John 9 — "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

Galatians 1:8 — "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

Revelation 22:18 — "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

Revelation 22:19 — "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

II Timothy 4:2 — "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."

I Peter 4:11 — "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Colossians 3:17 — "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

John 12:48 — "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

In view of the fact that the Bible is the complete and final revelation from God, let us observe that it involves three different periods or dispensations of time (*Patriarchal* — from Adam to the giving of the law of Moses at Mt. Sinai; *Mosaic* — from Sinai until the death of Christ on the cross; *New Testament or Christ's Rule* — from the cross until the end of time).

During the Patriarchal period, God dealt directly with the head of the family. During the Mosaic period, man was governed by the Law of Moses. Today, we are governed by the New Testament.

Hebrews 1:1-2 — "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

When I refer to "God's Pattern" of things, I mean, "a model, plan, etc. used in making things" (Webster's New World Dictionary, Page 314). It simply involves reading everything God has said on any subject. When we compile all the teaching from the New Testament on any subject, we have God's pattern on that subject.

According To The Pattern

2 **Hebrews 8:1-5**

◆

*** Doing God's Will Matt. 7:21-23**

INIQUITY--"The Condition of One Without Law, Either Because Ignorant of It, or Because Violating It." (Thayer Page 48)

◆

*** Obeying Christ Hebrews 5:9**

◆

*** Scriptures Furnish Unto Every Good Work**

II Tim. 3:16-17

Hebrews 8:1-5 — "Now the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

Matthew 7:21-23 — "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Hebrews 5:9 — "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that

obey him."

II Timothy 3:16-17 — "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Paul says the Scriptures furnish us unto *every good work*. Hence if it is a good work that God wants done, He reveals it to us through His Word. Therefore, following God's pattern means doing God's will or obeying Christ. Thus, God through His Word has revealed to mankind His plan (pattern) for us to follow.

From The Bible We Learn God's

3 Pattern For:

* **Becoming A Christian**

◆

* **Organization For Congregation**

◆

* **Congregational Worship**

◆

* **Work of Congregation**

(Next month, we will begin our discussion of God's pattern in becoming a Christian).

Insight

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SELECTIVITY

Selectivity is a part of life. No matter the area of life under consideration, the necessity of being selective is a vital concern. It is important what school we attend; it is vital that a potential breadwinner choose a vocation in keeping with his abilities; it is of concern to a young lady that her male companions measure up to the standard she has set for a possible mate. Because of the fact that much of our thought time is taken up by the action of choice, we should extend to that part of our thinking great care and dedication. We must not only learn to distinguish, we must learn to discriminate, be selective.

We Must Practice Selectivity Regarding Meditation

Every person has time when he is free to meditate, muse, plan, even dream. Such thoughts are entirely under his control and supervision. Apart from such times man could not function as he ought, for this type of deliberation is necessary to his well-being since out of this type of thinking comes his various decisions and eventually, his route of pursuit in life.

I suggest that the neglect of proper meditation in private and personal worship is one of the most serious derelictions in the life of many Christians. David said, "Oh, how I love thy law; it is my meditation day and night" (Psalm 119:97). But today we are so busy with the affairs of life that if we give even five or ten minutes in sincere worship to God it is most likely because we have been arrested by the death of someone, by our own sudden realization of pain, or by some similar experience. We need to be more selective about what we allow to run through our minds. We need to give as much time as possible to deliberating and thinking about God and to honestly planning in our minds a stronger dedication to His service.

We Need to Be Selective About Our Servitude

Man has the inherent right to choose to whom he will render his service and for whom he will live his life (Rom. 6:17). With the cognizance that every man is voluntarily subjugating himself in service either to God or the forces of evil (Matt. 6:24), it ought to be abundantly clear that he should exercise care in the choices he makes in order to stay in service to God and out of the grasp of the forces of evil. Peter says, "Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage," (II Pet 2:19), indicating that man can overcome just as he can be overcome. Such victory is possible to him who trusts in the strength which God supplies (Phil. 4:13; Matt. 4:1-ff). Dual devotion is odious to God. Since such is so, we should be careful that our every action reflects a submission to God, coupled with a feeling of deep enmity toward all evil.

We Must Learn to Be Selective Regarding Companions

I have seen literally dozens of people seek to hold hands with God and with the world at the same time. The world always won. "Be not deceived; evil companions corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33), The NASV has it, "bad company corrupts good morals," and the NIV, "bad company corrupts good character." Any way it is said, the result is the same: when a person carries on with evil associates, some of the evil is bound to pervade and corrupt this good character. The Christian just has no business fraternizing with the world. He has no more fellowship, sharing, partnership with the world than light has with darkness, or righteousness with unrighteousness, or Christ with Belial (Cf. II Cor. 6:14-ff). The truth is, they have nothing in common

and if a Christian finds that he has considerable agreement with the world, it is past time that he re-examine his life and purposes and come out from among them and be separate. To sever such a relationship is admittedly difficult; but sever it he must! And he should also remember that it is a far more desirable thing to stay away from such an evil relationship than after having become beholden of it, to seek to rid himself of its grip. And while it is certainly true that monasticism and complete separation from the world is not possible, "for then must ye needs come out of the world" (I Cor. 5:10), it is as the modern-day proverb says, "I may not be able to stop the birds from flying over my head, but I certainly can keep them from making a nest in my hair."

We Need to Be Selective About Where We Go

Man is influenced to a large extent by his environs, or the things which surround him. If he frequents evil places, he is likely to take upon himself those things peculiar to those evil places. On the other hand, if he is a regular visitor to some wholesome spiritual environment, he likely will assume the qualities radiated by that atmosphere. The person who is not careful and discriminatory about his haunts will drift away from righteous influences simply because of the immediate pleasure to be derived from the bright lights and sweet music offered by this world's houses of entertainment. In his haste to conform and be accepted, he forgets that those baubles and beads are merely the bait and that such allurements hide a monstrous hook from which escape is rendered most difficult. Young persons usually do more going than older folks. Young people, watch where you're going! There are places you do not need to frequent, even to "see what's going on there." The person who never goes to the bar is far less likely to become addicted to the alcohol; the person who never visits a dope party will likely never be involved in the drug scene. The wise man asks, "Can a man take fire into his bosom and his clothes not be burned?", and again, "Can a man walk on hot coals and his feet be not burned?" (Prov. 6:27-28). Our assignment to come together (Heb. 10:25) is for the purpose of our mutual edification and encouragement and the selection to be associated with those of like, precious faith is a far superior choice than spending time with the enticements of the worldly and the wisdom of the wicked.

We Need to Be Selective About What We Hear

Our ears are bombarded in this day and age with all manner of evil speakings. There is cursing without regard at work; there is gossip at home; there is filthy talk at school; there is backbiting at church. At every turn there is demeanment, slanted information, sordid and off-color stories, misrepresentations, and even open slander available for the taking. And the sad part is that most of us, at some time or the

other, take some of it! It is so accessible that one must exercise great care not to be involved in some sort of it. Such an avoidance takes great selectivity. It is considered fashionable today to see how coarse one can become, even in mixed company. Women today are as bad as men with their filthy talk and ungodly jesting. The television set, which was some years ago seemingly filled to capacity with suggestive material, no longer merely suggests it — IT SAYS IT! IT DESCRIBES IT! AND IT EVEN DOES IT! And just about the time I think I have heard every gross and filthy expression which the Federal Communications Commission could possibly allow, some half-illiterate, self-inflated, pot-promoting prima donna disc-jockey fills the air with a line of filth that should cause even the less discriminating to blush in shame! And, mind you, he does it all without any dread of punity. People, many radio stations (certainly not all!) are purveyors of slop. And they are planting ungodliness and immorality into the hearts and minds of our young people right under our very noses and virtually without resistance. And they are doing it on a daily basis, too. In Luke 8:18, Jesus says, following the discussion of the parable of the soils, "take heed therefore how he hear." If you are giving all your leisure time to hearing the tripe and filth being fomented by most of the entertainment world today, you are not being selective. You need to hear more about God and less about what the world deems to be of pleasure and benefit.

We Need to Be Selective About What We See

Never in the history of man has there been as much to see. Instant satellite communication has bridged the breach between wherever we are and any event taking place on this planet, as well as in outer space. But never has there been, at least in the history of this country, as much filth available for our viewing. Smut and pornography are being peddled to our young people in complete disregard for moral implications. And older persons are openly arguing for the right of these young persons to see it. It is disgusting!

Even the church of our Lord has been affected by such loose thinking regarding the display of the human body. We have seen so much sex in advertising, so much near-nudity in entertainment programs and movies, so much disregard for modesty in the styles of the day that we have become immune to the shame which such should cause. And in some instances, even though we would not dare speak up for such filth, we openly view it and sometimes we are prone to look forward with some lustful anticipation to the next shocking scene just after having condemned the first. We condemn it while enjoying it! And it seems that if society says it is in vogue, we will stand and fight for it, even if it means we must change our views somewhat about some of the prohibiting scriptures. How sad. But how so. Some few years ago preachers, teachers, and godly persons everywhere sought in vain to tell some women that lower hemlines were necessary to

modesty. What they could not do in years of intense pleadings was done by fashion in a matter of only a few days! Does the fact of it not argue where the real servitude is among many people?

Parents, what are your children watching? I do not argue that we should impose blinders on our youngsters so that they have no concept about what is taking place in the world about them. Nor would I advise that we adopt some puritanical attitude of never discussing sex and its various influences and implications. But I do argue that a steady diet of pornographic lewdity and its polluting effect on the mind is not to be tolerated by the discriminating parent. Please be advised that even with selective viewing imposed on our youngsters, they will still see enough things in life to be educated about the ways of the world. And without really looking! We will be held as accountable for what we see as for what we hear and we should consequently exercise fastidious care both in our own selections and in the selections we allow for our youngsters. To do less is to be foolish.

We Need to Be Selective About What We Say

Nothing is more beautiful than a few, well chosen words; nothing is worse than to say what is obviously out of order and untimely. I doubt that there is any one thing more common among all people than poor use of the tongue. Most all people-related problems are products of a poor and indiscriminate use of the tongue. Solomon says, "there is a time to remain silent; a time to speak" (Eccl. 3:7). And I add that it takes almost solomonic wisdom to distinguish between the two! It takes care and constant attention to make a proper use of the tongue (Jas. 3:6-10), but when it is done (and it can be done!), it can be a vital and moving force for good.

Today's Christian has more opportunity to speak out for good than ever before. He is out and around; he is presented with occasions for speaking up for good. And yet we often see Christianity maligned, the system of good trampled, the Christ of the Bible demeaned, and the idea of godly living mutilated and twitted at and we walk by unconcerned. How can it be? Are we afraid? We live in a country where we are assured the right of expression. Are we ashamed? We have the truth of God. Are we just unimpressed with the entire business of Christianity? How is it possible? We need to learn to speak up for truth and right. We need to learn to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3). Jesus said that the person who is ashamed or timid about his kinship to Christ in this life will find no confession of his name before the throne of his Father at the last day (Matt. 10:32-33). It also needs to be noted that a denial of his sovereignty need not be an audible negative declaration; just the failure to stand up and be counted at the right time will do!

We also need to recognize the force and influence which can be wielded by a wrong utterance. In Eccle. 10:1, the wise preacher shows how one tiny fly can completely destroy an apothecarist's months of

meticulous attention to a very precious preparation of ointment. And in the same way, one ill-chosen word has the power within it to literally destroy a reputation which was a lifetime in the building. And that untimely remark can come either from him who has spent the years in its building or from someone who seeks to destroy the reputation of that one. Any information about some other person should be guarded, carefully contemplated, and then spoken only after great hesitation. Even if it is so! In short, we should be very selective about our remarks, no matter the occasion, no matter the subject.

We Need to Be Selective About Our Future

The real future for man will not be found on time's side of eternity, for we all tend toward a spiritual destiny. Man is destined to die (Heb. 9:27) and he is likewise scheduled to participate in a judgmental interview with God, there to give an accounting of

the deeds done during his probationary period on earth (Rom. 2:6-9). The fact of it should serve to cause every person to ponder seriously over his choices and make only those decisions as will eventuate in his being acceptable to God at that great day. Man has but one period of time during which to prepare for eternity. Failure to discriminate between the joys of heaven and the miseries of hell, whether out of willful ignorance, prejudice, or by simple neglect is the most foolish failure of all. Its consequences are eternal, unchangeable. How can we afford to take such a chance? The risk is too great.

Conclusion

There are many other areas where selectivity is advisable, even demanded. But I hope these will suffice to demonstrate to a proof the dire need for such discrimination in every area of life. To fail to do so is to fail in everything we do, for if we miss heaven, we have just missed all there is!

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

NEW CONGREGATION BEGINS

DOUG SEATON, Concord, NC — A new congregation of faithful brethren has begun in Salisbury, NC. A group left the liberal church in Salisbury after the "fellowship hall" was completed and after coffee and cake were served after the morning worship service. These brethren have been meeting in homes for over a year, but have recently been able to rent a comfortable meeting place. They have worked hard and spent a great deal of time in making the place suitable for worship. They have taken a stand for the truth and have been persecuted because of it. They were ignored until a recent meeting in which the writer preached. When the liberal church saw the advertisement and teaching articles in the paper they became very upset and decided to try to stop the meeting. Their efforts to stop the meeting failed so they decided to withdraw from one of the members involved in helping start the new work. The persecution has caused a great many in Salisbury to open their eyes. During the meeting one was baptized and a number from the liberal churches attended. Attendance averaged 37 during the meeting and a number that were not Christians attended. Attendance on Sundays now averages 15-20. Brethren from Winston-Salem, Concord and Charlotte are preaching for them on Sundays but the church is interested in getting a sound preacher to work with them on a full time basis. The prospects are great for growth in this area. Any interested in the work should contact James H. Hand, Rt. 5 Box 347, Salisbury, NC 28144. Phone 633-1398.

ROBERTO V. SPENCER, Odessa, Texas — The Spanish congregation which meets at Mable and Myers Sts. in Odessa conducted a gospel meeting November 5-10 with preaching by Francisco Pena from Guadalajara, Jal., Mexico. His style is original and he used pictorial illustrations very effectively. He is a former superintendent of schools in Mexico. A record was set the first night with 118 with above 100 present every night. Every night we saw new faces. Also, Mexican brethren from Midland, Monahans, Pecos and San Angelo, Texas cooperated with us very well. On Sunday morning after the meeting one 65 year old man was baptized. He had attended the meeting all week.

I was with the Spanish congregation in Del Rio, Texas December 4-8 in a gospel meeting. They are new in the faith and need much teaching. I ask your prayers.

The Courage of Conviction — Italian Radio Program

(Editor's note: The following excerpt is from a recent letter from

RODOLFO BERDINI who lives in Rome and preaches for the church in Aprilia. Note the subject matter of his recent radio sermons in the very center of Catholic influence and power. I ask you, if you were an Italian Christian living in Italy, would you deal with such subject matter on a radio program? What a refreshing contrast this is to the watered down preaching on such programs as Herald of Truth. — CWA)

"The radio programme is going ahead notwithstanding opposition from the owner of the station who is afraid that the station will be closed down because of contempt of the Catholic religion, which in Italy is the official religion of the State.

You have to realize that there is a substantial difference between Italian and American listeners. Here there is a public which is completely foreign to biblical reality, brutalized by centuries of spiritual ignorance, which is desired and was wittingly guided by the inquisition with physical and moral abuse of every kind used on a public that thinks we are delinquents to avoid. You see, dear Connie, I am talking to infants who believe themselves to be giants and with whom I often have to use the guttural sounds characteristic of that infantile age in order to gain even their attention. So that from 4th August I started to broadcast lessons — information on the papacy, analyzing doctrinal problems, only superficially but sufficiently at least to initiate a dialogue, enlarging especially on the consequences that history points up about the problem of the Catholic institution of the papacy. On 18th August I discussed the much-talked-about poverty of Montini and of his simple fir-wood coffin which contained his mortal remains, and discussed the immense riches of the Vatican. In the broadcast of 25th August I discussed Montini's testament which affirms that the bones of the Apostle Peter are there in the grottoes of the Vatican. On 1st September I analyzed some of the realities of the Conclave, enlarging on this subject also during the broadcasts of 8th and 15th September. I put into evidence the iniquities of a great many of the popes, doctrinal and moral iniquities, in order to inform my listeners that the Holy Spirit, who according to Roman doctrine inspires the Cardinals in their choice of the Roman Pontiff, not only does not, certainly, enter into the choice but that they are certainly directed by Satan. On the 22nd and 29th September and on 6th October I analyzed the ecclesiastic law of celibacy of priests, and in particular I pointed up the consequences which history shows us abundantly. On 13th, 20th and 27th October I talked about auricular confession and the consequences that it has produced and continues to produce among the clergy and the faithful. Among the historical authors whom I had recourse to most frequently and who is the most documented and the most serious is the American Henry Charles

Lea. I believe that he is so seriously analytical that he will find a place in the bibliography of such subjects as auricular confession and celibacy of priests in the Catholic Encyclopedia published by the Vatican."

WE WANT TO KNOW

Many brethren have told us they always look for and are encouraged by the little box we publish each month "In The News This Month" in which we report the number of baptisms and restorations which we have learned of through bulletins, newsletters of workers in this country and around the world, or hear of in various meetings as we travel to meetings in various parts of the country. But we are hearing of a small percentage of what is being done. We wish to urge all readers, wherever you are, to let us know of such information from the places where you worship. This is of great encouragement to brethren around the world. Why not share your good news with us.

PREACHERS WANTED

CORDELE, GEORGIA — The church meeting at 610 E. 16th Avenue, P.O. Box 342, Cordele, Georgia 31015 is in need of a full

time preacher. Gospel preachers interested may contact the brethren at the above address or call Irby Hartin (912) 273-4530 (Home) or 273-3727 (Office).

WARREN, ARKANSAS — This congregation of 35 members is in need of a gospel preacher. We can supply \$125 a week support with the rest having to be secured elsewhere. Those interested may contact Morgan O'Neill, Rt. 2 Box 423, Warren, Arkansas 71671, or call (501) 226-3964 at night, or 226-7225 in the daytime.

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