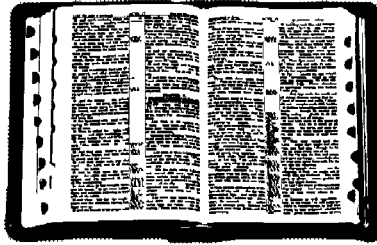


# SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXI

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## PROBLEMS OF THE FUTURE

*Iruen Lee*

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Worldliness is a very broad term which refers to many sins mentioned even in the book of Genesis and in our daily newspapers. Paul warned of drunkenness, fornication, murder, covetousness, lasciviousness, reveling, and such like in letters to churches in the days of his ministry. These sins are not new. They are common in our day as they have been in the past. These sins are often classed under the general heading of worldliness. They are so plainly condemned in the New Testament that people among churches in America do not commit them through ignorance, but they are examples of rebellion and of man's tendency to follow the crowd rather than the law of God.

"Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God", (Rom. 12:2). "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9). "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22). People who are bothered by "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" are not upset by these broad important principles nor by the specific commands which relate to "ungodliness and worldly lusts." Man's conscience can be seared as by a hot iron so he can suppose that all these passages apply to the sins of others and not to his own.

Even people who are very active in church work, sometimes serving as teachers and elders, can reach a point where they will not endure sound doctrine. When they turn away their ears from the truth they can "heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts" (2 Tim. 4:1-5). Men will preach for money which is a way to make merchandise of the souls of men (2 Peter 2:1-3;

Titus 1:11; Eph. 4:14). Worldly men may help the young and others to become enslaved to alcohol by offering them the social drink, and they may violate the marriage law which God has given. Reveling or lascivious dances may take place in their homes or in other places under their supervision. There may be absolutely no evidence of modesty, shamefastness, chastity, or discretion in the way they dress in public on the streets or at the beaches.

Worldliness of many different forms are distressing churches today. Some little church may start in some community and begin to grow as some of us watch and rejoice. After a while there is a place of meeting and a congregation that is still growing, and then the devil strikes. Immodesty, dancing, vulgarity, and blasphemy show up, and then fornication and divorces even among those who have been leaders. The future growth of the congregation is made next to impossible unless it turns in the direction of the "eat, drink, and be merry" type of religion that condones almost any kind of conduct. Such things are happening in the east, west, north, and south. The very sins that are so common today were common when the apostles lived. Many tears of concern have been shed by those who care (Acts 20:29-31; Phil. 3:17-19).

A large number of young men are making plans to give their lives to preaching. Some of these are invited to move to some small ungodly church to preach. As they begin to preach to meet the needs that are soon seen they are treated like brute beasts and asked to leave. The shock and disappointment may be such that the young men may turn to secular work and suppose that preaching is not for them. I wonder how many devout soldiers of Christ have been thus disarmed of their weapons for spiritual warfare in the last five years. Some such little churches can destroy about one young preacher per year. Without spiritual or numerical growth such churches can do much for Satan and practically nothing for Christ.

Some members of the church who are not so ungodly in behavior may join in blaming those who shun not to declare the whole counsel of God as being responsible for the trouble and constant disturbance. The fifth chapter of First Corinthians and other passages would put the blame on the wicked people and suggest that we mark, avoid, reject, and withdraw from such (Rom.

16:17,18; 2 Thess. 3:6-14; Tit. 3:9-11). Worthy brethren are to teach, encourage, reprove, and rebuke in order to try to keep the church purged from the leaven of wickedness lest it reach the point where it will not endure sound doctrine (2 Tim. 4:1-5).

The effective preaching against the ungodly deeds that destroy churches is done before the tares are growing among the wheat. A little leaven will leaven the whole lump. Churches may become so conscious of numbers that they may rejoice as worldly members begin attending. The better thing would be to meet them with the whole truth which can make men free (John 8:31, 32). The prophets of old have suffered much for fighting a good fight (Matt. 5:10-12; 2 Tim. 3:12; Acts 7:52). Let the faithful servants fight on even if the going gets hard. It is important to win a battle for truth in the open field where the devil makes his attack.

Our Lord spoke of several types of soil and then explained what each type of soil represented. The shallow soil appeared to be good, but it was a great disappointment in that it produced no harvest. The thorny ground type had so many of the wrong plants that it could produce no good fruit. Cares, riches, and pleasures of this world consumed their energy and interest. The good seed had no chance to do its work. We should give thanks for the honest and good hearts that glorify God by their good fruits, and we should be prepared to live through the failure and opposition of so many. Some hearts are so hardened by sin that preaching to them does no more good than casting pearls before swine. Their hearts are as hard as the road bed. Many people want a little religion as a cloak of respectability, but the wayside type of hearts make no pretense. The lukewarm hearts of the thorny ground type must be about as distasteful to the Lord as any (Rev. 3:13-20).

A poet pictured Columbus as he told his men: "Sail on, sail on, and on." We say to soldiers of Christ: "Fight on, fight on, and on," for your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Too many who should be fighting the influence of the ungodly are fighting godly people who have strong convictions because they do not accept all their scruples and safe points of conviction. It is amazing how many churches are being destroyed over problems we could handle by patience, gentleness, and skill in teaching. Let good men respect each other and work together while they study various questions that may arise. Some of the questions concern things that are not a matter of right or wrong. Carefully read Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus to observe how many times he used the words "shun" and "avoid" relative to foolish questions. Let us fight for right rather than just to test our skills at quibbling.

Did you notice the heading of this article? What will the problems of the future be? They will be very much like the problems of the present, of the recent past, and of the ancient past. The devil uses the same old temptations to destroy individual Christians and churches. Premillennialism, institutionalism, and the social gospel are all around us now, and we have no guarantee that they will not come back among churches that are now faithful. Look back over the years and see the

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problems that plagued churches in the recent and distant past, and expect to meet any epidemic of evil that has been experienced before.

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# Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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## PREACHING IN ITALY

By the time this issue of the paper is received the editor should have returned from Italy where he is scheduled to have worked among brethren in Aprilia, Pomezia, Rome (Via Sannio) and Poggiomarino (near Naples). Because of this trip, this issue of the paper was prepared earlier than usual. It was our pleasure to visit the good brethren in Italy in 1977 along with H. E. Phillips and the return trip, planned since that first visit, has been joyfully anticipated. Much progress has been made in the Italian work since we were there last and we will give our readers an account of the visit and general appearance of the work before long. Watch for it.

## CROSSROADS IN THE NEWS

There has been a severe battle raging among some of the liberal brethren over what is being called the "Crossroads Philosophy" of the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida. Even the Gospel Advocate has entered the fray. That church has continued the "Campus Evangelism" type approach of the 1960's which came under attack from several sources back then. Crossroads boasts a large and growing congregation which manifests an infectious zeal and utilizes what many people consider high pressure tactics to baptize people and then keep them in line. The public press has severely attacked them, some of which was overstated and biased. Some have referred to them as a "cult." Whether they are a "cult" or not, I am not prepared to say, but they have been part and parcel of the free-wheeling, bandwagon liberal approach for sometime. We have carried material in this paper in the past concerning their church supported recreational activities. We are somewhat dismayed to find the editor of **Vanguard** among the defenders of Crossroads. Certainly everything about them is not wrong and they should not be charged with believing or practicing anything which they disavow. Neither should their unscriptural practices be masked because they have baptized a large number of people and speak much of "total commitment." The same things could be said of Jerry Falwell and a number of others. The editor of *Vanguard* has written much over the years in opposition to many of the very things which have gone on at Crossroads and it is unsettling now to find him spending a week with them, speaking for them and then praising them so highly in his paper. Does Crossroads now oppose church support of human institutions? Does it oppose sponsoring churches? Has

it abandoned its social gospel practices? Has it disposed of the property it bought a few years back to be used for camps and "retreats"?

We have asked H. E. Phillips, the former editor of this paper, and now our front page writer, to prepare some material for us on this matter. Brother Phillips lived in Gainesville and worked with the University church of that city for a number of years and has been conversant with the developments among churches in that area. We hope his schedule will permit him to favor us with material from his able pen on this subject.

Before leaving the subject for now, though, I pass on the gist of a conversation I had two years ago with a legal assistant aboard a plane headed for Gainesville. She was a Baptist and apparently a dedicated member of a small southern Baptist church. She told me she had been pressured by friends until she finally attended some services at Crossroads. But then she added "But they were just too liberal for me." She related her impressions of the service which, to her, bordered on the charismatic. I did not expect to find a dedicated Baptist fully appreciating a service in a church of Christ, but even I was not fully prepared to hear one say "they were just too liberal for me."

## "RAMPANT INACTIVITY"

During a long lull at the recent Democratic Convention in New York, the wry newscaster, David Brinkley, commented "There is now rampant inactivity on the podium." When I got over laughing about that, I began to reflect on some church situations which would be suitably described as "rampant inactivity."

There is "rampant inactivity" on the podium when it comes to some of the preaching being done these days. Some preachers have become so dry and academic in their approach that their "rampant inactivity" has put the brethren to sleep or thoroughly befuddled them with their meandering theological discourses. There is a hunger for the bread and water of life dispensed in terms which are understandable and with applications to life which make it useful. We need men who will "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11) and who will open their mouths with boldness, as they "ought to speak" (Eph. 6:20). With Paul, let all "use great plainness of speech" (2 Cor. 3:12). In the effort to emphasize personal evangelism (and we would not minimize that at all) there has been a de-emphasizing of expounding the text of the word of God with clarity, force, simplicity, earnestness and boldness. Away with this "rampant inactivity at the podium."

There is "rampant inactivity" in many a business meeting, whether with or without elders. Unduly long sessions are held to hash and re-hash such monumental problems as painting a classroom, repairing the roof, or parking lot, or whether or not to put up a sign and who is to do it. When it comes to more needful discussions and plans for saving the lost, restoring the erring, purging out the wayward, planning for better teaching, sending and supporting faithful men to preach the gospel, there we find "rampant inactivity."

There is "rampant inactivity" in the lives of many

Christians. At least when it comes to spiritual interests and activities. They just don't awaken in time to get to a worship period. Sunday night may find them at home parked in front of the TV with their feet propped up. They have no time for Bible study or prayer, for training classes, for teaching their children the word of God. They are mightily concerned with Saturday afternoon football, or Sunday afternoon football, or Monday night football, or with who shot J.R., but don't expect much out of them in the way of spiritual concerns. They are afflicted with "rampant inactivity."

We would not encourage the other extreme. Many congregations have such an assortment of projects under way that they have mistakenly decided that all movement is progress. It depends on which way you are going. All congregational activity should be authorized by the word of God. Otherwise it is lawless and presumptuous. Some are so concerned with being "on the march" that they really don't care where they are going. That reminds me of a man I once knew in the community who was rather simple-minded. He would stand out beside the road and hail anyone who came along, to hitch a ride, regardless of which way they were going. It was just the going that was important to him. So it seems to be with many now. Paul admonished "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an en-sample. (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 glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things)" (Phil. 3:17-19).

Let us neither be guilty of "rampant inactivity" nor rabid activity. Let us be zealously affected toward that which is good, serving with diligence in that which God has approved.

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## Insight

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### RELIGIOUS CARNIVALISM

"Hear ye! hear ye! don't miss the show!" Here we are. The midway is jammed. The old calliope trills forth its familiar strains. The side show barker serves his wares in raspy terms calculated to incite curiosity and the desire for the different, the unusual, the queer. Everywhere you look there are "spectacular attractions," or "sensational acts," each vying for your attention, as the tantalizing aroma of popcorn and cotton candy, traditional fodder for the carnival goer, is wafted gently through the crowded midway. Above the dull roar of the anxious mob the loudspeakers blare monotonous invitations to ride the "thrill of thrills," or "test your skill." Through it all there is an air of excitement and expectancy, an almost pulsating frenzy which pulls you into a technicolor myriad of lights and sounds. Yes, it's carnival time! Our word "carnival" has a most interesting history.

It was used in ancient times to describe such activities as are parallel to the modern-day Mardi gras. "Carnival" comes from a word which literally means "the putting away or removal of flesh (as food)." In fact, our word "carnal," or "fleshly" has the same root. So does the word we use to describe flesh-eating animals, "carnivorous".

Lenten season, an annual period of fasting and penitence observed by the Catholic and Anglican churches, as well as some protestant denominations, begins on Ash Wednesday and runs for 40 weekdays until Easter. During the time the devotees must restrain from certain things, including the eating of meats, thus the definition of our word. In preparation of such events there has been for hundreds of years a time of feasting, or a "carnival." In medieval times there was a period similar to Lent which was observed from November 11th until Christmas. It was called "St. Martin's Lent." Immediately preceding that time there was a period devoted to revelry and riotous entertainment. One such "High Carnival" is the Mardi gras, which is celebrated with near complete moral abandonment just prior to Lenten season.

In ail cases the "carnival" has to do with fleshly pursuits, corporeal activities. Paul refers to some to whom he wrote as "carnal" (I Cor. 3:1-3). meaning that they were yet too concerned with the fleshly to be impressed with the type of spiritual food intended for the mature. The same word is used in I Pet. 2:11 when Peter warns that we should "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." The concept of being fleshly-minded

or "carnal, is best expressed by Paul in Rom. 8:5 when he says, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." He further states that "... the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Vs. 7), and "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Time and again the Scriptures warn against being controlled by fleshly appetites and carnal ambitions. And over again, the Bible recommends the advisability of having our sights set on spiritual matters (Cf. I Jno. 2:15; Col. 3:1-3; Matt. 6:33; Gal. 6:7-8; Rom. 8:1-ff. etc.)

### **The Denominational Carnival**

Protestant Denominationalism has long ago become the master purveyor of the religious carnival. Guided by Madison Avenue principles and adhering to the most accepted and successful advertising concepts and schemata, they have guided their particular brand of religion toward an admitted appeal to the fleshly man in order to "get at" the spirit-man. They will use almost anything to draw people to their facilities, which have become no less than a glorified and only slightly "spiritualized" carnival. Side shows, the unusual, the exciting, the appealing, the popular, are an accepted mode of seeking converts in today's denominational world. The devices used to attract crowds range from the clever to the ridiculous. And just as one decides that the most nonsensical of all has been pulled off by some promotional-minded group, another scheme, one even absurd, is innovated somewhere.

I know of one church which has a "Patriotic Sunday", complete with an Air Force band, color guard, a contingent of Boy Scouts, and with special awards for persons now retired from the Armed Forces. Another group, called "This City's Most Exciting Church," offered "Old-Fashioned Day Activities," including members dressed in old-time costumes, a real circuit-riding preacher, an antique car parade, and an old-fashioned singing. Participants were told to get there early to see the Pastor and family arrive in an old-fashioned horse drawn carriage." Still another group had a "Youth Fellowship Kick-off, complete with "Testimonies, Joy, Singing and (at last!) The Word of God." All manner of famous names, sports figures, political noteworthies, movie and television personalities, recording stars, business successuls, are used to gather crowds to denominational services.

I do not find an authority in Scripture, either stated or implied, for such activities as I have just described. They are carnal to the core. They are but projects of man's devisings. It is obvious to any serious Bible student that these kinds of activities are foreign to the Scriptures. It is just as obvious that such goings-on are merely "religious carnivals," "man-made inventions which seek to coalesce the social gospel with the pure gospel of Christ (Cf. Gal. 1:6-9). And the denominational world is good at it! They have built a religion on it. They are yet today innovating constantly with new means and methods of this special ad-mixture to the simple New Testament methodology. But I am not surprised at that. In fact, I have come to expect such activities from the denominations. They

don't really affirm the need for authority to do what they want anyhow, so why not? If you don't need book, chapter and verse for all you do, then why not?

But it does bother me when those who call themselves "churches of Christ" do the same things. Listen:

### **Church of Christ Carnivalism**

A rather attractive advertisement appeared in the *The Pasadena Citizen* recently. It was for the Watters Road Church of Christ. The bottom line of the ad caught my eye. It said, "STRIVING TO BE A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH ONLY." Now, I like that. It is a noble cause, a high project. But, alas, that sublime statement did not comprise the entire ad. Just above that noble affirmation was a list of some of the services provided by this "warm, friendly, evangelistic, benevolent church." Included were such provisions as "Mother's Day Out," "Children's Joy Hour with Puppets," "Hospital and Benevolent Program," "Youth Ministry," "Singles Ministry" and "Evangelistic Outreach" (whatever that is!). Also included, but almost out of place in the midst of all the denominational "barkering" was a plain ole "Ladies Bible Class."

Now if a church wants to promote the social gospel concept, I guess that's their business. And if a church wants to be like the denominations round about them, I suppose they can. But when a church promotes such enterprises as we have just mentioned under the guise of restoring the New Testament church, that's MY business. And it is the business of every Bible-believing Christian who is dedicated to the proposition that a "thus saith the Lord," is necessary for all that we do. For a church to claim to be "striving to be a New Testament Church only" and advertise such non-scriptural activities as are most of the above is a contradiction of the highest order. The only way I know that a church can be a "New Testament church only" is to follow the New Testament only!

Where is the passage for a "Mother's Day Out" program as a part of the work of the church? Where is the scripture authorizing the church to promote a puppet show for children? I challenge any person to show from the Scriptures where the church may provide ANY sort of entertainment for its members. Where is it? And there is just no scriptural precedent which could possibly be cited for the church support of a "Singles Ministry." Paul was single and yet he never one time mentioned the need of such a program.

Now, I am not interested in just being an "aginner." I am not opposed to churches being active. Furthermore, I do not have a disposition toward controversy. In fact, I rather lean in the other direction. And I dislike vehemently disunity and turmoil. But there is a time to speak (Eccl. 3:7), as well as a time to remain silent. There is a time to "contend for the faith" (Jude 3).

### **Conclusion**

It seems to me that some of my brethren have the mistaken notion that if the church of Christ does a thing, it just could not be wrong. How sad! Brethren, it is time that honest men everywhere rise up against religious carnivalism" and begin again to demand a

return to the purity of New Testament religion. And we must do more than just run an advertisement that we are "striving to be a New Testament church only." We must prove it by doing only those things authorized in the New Testament. We must begin again to broadcast, unashamedly, our distinctive plea that, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11).

Let us get rid of the side shows and gimmicks. Let's put off our carnival devices, our bright lights and mesmerizing carnival atmosphere. Let's desist from advertising spiritual matters with carnival means. Let's begin again to "preach Christ crucified," to those that believe, "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:23-24).

EXPOSITION:  
TEXT and  
CONTEXT

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**"THE BUZZARDS ARE COMING"**

While flying back from Israel to Rome last year on a Bible lands tour, a gentleman from Kentucky, touring with another group, asked me if I had heard anything about an increase in the buzzard population in Israel. I told him I had not and he said that he did not have any affirmative evidence, either.

To relate a conversation about the buzzard population in Israel may seem to you like a strange topic to discuss in a religious journal, but you will subsequently see that the subject has some relevance.

Premillennialists tell us that the battle of Armageddon is imminent, the battle where the nations of the world will converge in Palestine and engage in World War III. Blood will flow up to the horses' bridles, they tell us, and human carcasses will be piled up from one end of Palestine to the other. Of course, there is no Biblical basis for a literal Armageddon, but many believe it, nevertheless. Revelation 16:12-16; 19:11-21 is figurative and symbolic language as the context plainly shows, but the premillennialists make the texts literal to try to prove their Armageddon theory.

In order to consume all of the dead bodies, God has intervened in the procreational process of the buzzards in Israel to enable them to multiply more rapidly than they have in the past. The idea is that it is going to require an excessive amount of buzzards to devour millions of decomposed bodies. Buzzards generally lay 3 or 4 eggs, but premillennialists are telling us they are laying twice that many to permit them to double at each settin' of eggs. A tract is being circulated asserting this bizarre story.

This whole wild notion about buzzards stems from a misunderstanding of a text in Matt. 24:28. The verse

reads: "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." The word, "eagles," is translated "vultures" in some other translations. Hence, Jesus is saying that "wheresoever the corpse is, there will the vultures be gathered together."

Premillennialists interpret (misinterpret) Matt. 24 to be describing the seven-year period of their so-called "Great Tribulation" on earth or the description of their imaginary battle of Armageddon. The Jewish people will be persecuted and driven into the mountains of Judea for refuge, they say. (Of course, the church is not on earth. It has been raptured, so the theory teaches.) Russians, Arabs, Chinese, Europeans and others are slaughtering one another in a conflict unparalleled in human history. Jesus finally terminates the war at His coming (Jesus is riding a horse followed by an army on horses, Rev. 19:11-14) by destroying these warring armies and inaugurates His earthly kingdom characterized by peace and tranquility, we are told.

However, before Jesus comes the vultures have their role to play in the battle of Armageddon. God multiplies them to eat the decaying corpses. I do not know why the Lord is not preparing bats to drink up the blood if He is making preparation for vultures to eat up the flesh.

But notice that those things in Matt. 24:1-34 the disciples of the first century would experience for the events would be contemporaneous with their lives. In verse 3 the disciples came to Jesus privately and asked some questions. Observe that Jesus uses second person pronouns as he describes many of the incidents that would take place. Those disciples would be alive while those things transpired. Verse 34 states: "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Jesus was speaking about the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by the Romans through verse 34 and not World War III that some call "Armageddon."

Now, back to the buzzards! Matt. 24:28 is a proverbial expression. Buzzards gather where the dead carcass is and devour it. The Roman army is represented in the text by the vultures and Jerusalem is the dead, putrid corpse. The Romans came and devoured it. Commentaries, such as Barnes and Clarke, take the same position. Other interpretations are espoused, but the premillennial view of the buzzards role during Armageddon is not worthy of any serious consideration.

This past May I traveled all over Israel. I saw birds galore, such as crows, sparrows, doves and partridges, but among those myriads of birds, I saw only one old buzzard. If the buzzards are doubling up on the eggs they lay, then one thing is evident—the eggs are not hatching. Enough said!

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### LET US RISE UP AND BUILD

Characteristic of Leadership As Seen In Nehemiah. I.  
A Virile Private Life, continued.

B. God's leaders are individuals who function in the privacy of the home. Nehemiah had already demonstrated the need for prayer in the private life of the leaders, and now Paul will focus on the home. The home is a second ingredient in the private life of the leader. Paul speaks to the point in I Tim. 3:4, "He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity. (But if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)"

Immediately someone responds, "Oh this is just a qualification for elders. It doesn't apply to anybody else." Really now, is that the case? Where do we find any father who is excused from rearing his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? What mother is released from her responsibilities in regard to the home? The only portion of this scripture that is unique to the eldership is that some men, by virtue of obtaining all the other mentioned qualifications as well, will be placed in a particular decision-making position. This unique position is that of bishop, elder or pastor, and it is not a release to any man from the responsibility of leadership in the home.

Nehemiah clearly demonstrated that to be strong in public leadership, a private relationship with the living God was demanded. One cannot function in leadership publicly if he cannot privately walk with his Lord. Therefore, a person's private life with his family becomes an integral part of leadership. You cannot succeed with the multitude unless you can succeed with your wife and children! This happens to be true in the realm of common sense, but this truth becomes binding because of two definitive scriptures that teach it: (1) I Tim. 3:4-5: If you can't function in the privacy of your home as a leader, then you cannot function publicly as a leader. (2) I Peter 3:7: "Husbands live with your wives in an understanding way and grant her honor as a fellow heir . . . so that your prayers be not hindered." What this means is that the man who tries to lead the flock of God and who fails as a husband, will fail in prayer and therefore fail in leadership.

To those who would lead, we ask this question: Do you enjoy the highest respect or the highest resentment from your family? You see, in the home the mask comes off at mid-night every day. Publicly we may

look good and sound good, but the real test of our value is evident, or demonstrated, before those who know us better than any other human beings. What does your wife say? The greatest compliment to any man is for his mate of 30, 40, or even 50 years to say, "Truly, he was a man of God!" What do your children say? Do they actually see you enough to be influenced by your love, care, and attention? How do we evaluate Godly leaders? Well, brethren use many criteria. Some of them observe a man's business; others judge a teacher's class presentation; still others review a debater's argumentation. But God said, **LOOK IN THE PRIVACY OF THE HOME FOR THE LEADERS!**

During the rough, teenage years, the world pulls strongly for conformity to the peer pressure. In those immature years of frustration, when everything is a question mark instead of an exclamation point, there was one factor that could not be denied in my life. In that gray era of adolescence, I did much that should not have been done, being influenced by the pull of the world. But there was one factor which could not be erased in my life. It could not be explained away either. What was it? It was the reality of Jesus Christ in the life of my father and my mother! That, and that alone, kept saying to me,—**THERE IS SOMETHING** that can be seen in lives that are dedicated to a living Lord! This is true leadership! Leadership which was not before the multitude, although that was a part of my father's life. To me, therefore, true leadership was not an **ABSTRACT** quality. True leadership was demonstrated to me by seeing the effect Jesus Christ has on a person such as my father, day by day, in the quiet and intimate hours in the home. Brethren, if we fail at home, we fail completely!

What does it take to lead at home where it is most important? Many things, needless to say, but one that we all need to see particularly is **TIME**. No man can lead multitudes unless he can lead those in his own house. Therefore, it becomes simple to comprehend and to see that one cannot lead at home when he is continuously surrounded by the multitudes. We must take time away from everyone else in the world except our families in order to lead them anywhere. Too often our hearts beat with one accord to: "Go, Go," until all we become are real "Go-Go-Boys." The Lord told Elijah, "Go hide yourselves", and we need to hide ourselves with our families, and to shut out the rest of the world. But like Elijah, we want the "palace assignments" rather than the desert isolation with our wives and children.


A failure to do this has deep and abiding consequences. For example, in a discussion with a deeply troubled lady some years ago, the bitterness she felt poured out and crested over the highest mountain peak, as she recounted her childhood as a preacher's kid, and her life then as a preacher's wife. "I'm fed up with the preacher's 'pulpit line' on the home", she cried. "Those I've heard preach on the home were the worst examples I've seen," was her judgment. "First, a man's responsibility is supposed to be to the Lord, then to the family, and then the brethren. But that is not the way it is. It is the Lord, the brethren, the



brethren, the brethren, and then the family." Responding to her plea, the question was asked, "You mean to say your husband never spends any time with you?" She replied, "Some; but I wish he wouldn't." Continuing on, she said, "We go through the ritual of 'okay, you lucky woman you, we are going out to dinner.' We sit there like two mummies because we have nothing in common."

Oh, that is just an extreme or unusual case, you say? Well, we certainly do hope so. However, we must recognize that it may not be all that unique. God's leaders must lead first at home! Now, compare this example with that of Noah. After 120 years of preaching, Noah saved his family! Now, take a look at Lot, who was rejected by his children and only halfheartedly influenced his wife to leave Sodom.

The energy for public leadership, be it Bible Class teachers, personal workers, preachers, elders, or men in the business meeting, comes from quiet and tender moments when the world is far away, and the home is what it ought to be.



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**"MY CUP RUNNETH OVER"**

David said in Psalm 23:5 "My cup runneth over." This is the way we feel. One year or so ago we lay some twenty days looking at the ceiling in a hospital here in Louisville beginning the cure route for a cancer. Here it is a year later and we have just recently returned from a six weeks back-packing trip through Europe. We were in some eight countries, saw three more from afar, and met with the brethren in Greece, Italy, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

In the period between our hospital visit and overseas jaunt we were able to carry on a business that takes us into most of the continental states and Canada. During all this hustle and bustle we get to meet with the brethren when time and opportunity permit. We get a good cross section viewpoint of what goes on in the classes in the churches at large as well as our own congregation local. Some of these observations will pop up now and then in this series, not with the intent to gossip or carry tales but in the form of objective critical comment directed at us all, in the hopes that we can all learn from others.

Upon returning home for services the first Lord's day in July we began a series of classes with some 15 or 16 young men in a class our elders called the "Teacher Training Class". It is scheduled to last half a year so we have planned a 24 lesson series around the theme of II Tim. 2:2 after the key words at the heading of this article, "Able to teach". However I am expecting a bit more from my class. I have informed them that it could be well more than just a teacher training class . . . if carried to the logical conclusion it could be an elder training class. And I have told them that in 20 to 25 years I fully expect some of them to be filling that office, wherever they are. With the present growth rate of the individual class members I fully expect that shall happen.

These are but a few of the reasons "my cup runneth over". There are many more.

As a home work assignment along about the second lesson we asked for a full page description of "The best teacher I ever had". We wanted to cause them to think about the characteristics and methods their best teacher had. This could have been in school, college, work, military, church classes or whatever. The next week we assembled these individual points on the blackboard as they recited in the class. We will list them below in the order in which they were given.

Each answer brought forth a short discussion and some were mentioned several times either in the exact



same word or some term almost similar to the word already used. Now we have to think of these in terms of opinion... for they are of the "I think" variety. Now a future assignment will be to go through the letters of I and II Timothy and Titus and get the scriptural viewpoint of a teacher. We have already started the digging out process of the research needed if we are to find out "never the less, what saith the scriptures" (Gal. 4:30) in a balance between opinion and God's Word. And as in all cases God's Word shall prevail. Opinion will always come in second.

These are the characteristics of my best teacher: He does not (1) lecture, lecture, lecture. He keeps (2) a high level of interest in both material and presentation, he (3) uses various methods of presenting the lesson, and (4) various methods in all aspects of his teaching. He (5) issues a challenge to his class, by (6) making me think. To do this he uses (7) questions, and gives class (8) assignments of homework. He (9) has a good appearance, will (10) evaluate his students, and shows forth (11) patience. He gives the class (12) undivided attention as well (13) as the individual student. His classes are (14) non-repeaters or as we sometimes say . . . 'another re-hash.' He will (15) control the class, but still (16) understands his students. His service is (17) sober, even though he has a degree (18) of humor when appropriate. He (19) inspires confidence in his students, keeping his (20) lesson simple. He always shows forth the element of 'care' (which the class defined as the real meaning of the word 'ministry'). He knows his task and message is (21) important, as he knows (22) his students. He both (23) gives and takes (24) objective constructive criticism. He is (25) organized, gives (26) clear instructions, even though he will (27) experiment. He is not (28) boring, is (29) honest, and (30) enthusiastic and never (31) partial. He is (32) dedicated, and puts (33) his students at ease, keeps his lessons on course (34) by having (35) direction. He will (36) illustrate key points well, and prepare (37) outlines or handouts. He will show (38) love to his students and (39) the whole teaching/learning process. He is always (40) well prepared and therefore will (41) stimulate and (42) motivate the class, calling (43) students by name. Last of all he will (44) test for their learning by quizzes and tests. That's my best teacher!

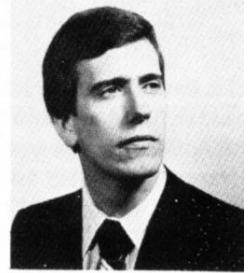
The class was given a week to think the list over. Additions and corrections were made. This is the result. We share it with you in hopes that it will make some who are now teaching do some self examination on the subject. This is what my classes want, need and have a right to expect of me as a teacher.

Now put these together with the scripture 'apt to teach' as a basic qualification for elder and a life time of work within that office, link them to 'vigilance' about what is taught and you sum up the course of the church for the ages to come. It's some responsibility! How serious are we when we take a teaching assignment?

Now our task is to examine scripture in the same manner, just how does God view the teacher? More on that later.

## THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL—John 3:16

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John 3:16 is truly "the golden text of the Bible." It serves as a foundation for many a sermon, is read frequently, and no doubt occupies a permanent position of recall in your mind. However, because of its repetition and frequent mention, we often find ourselves minimizing its real meaning, and that should not be. John 3:16 is a wonderful gospel in miniature. It describes at once the grace and love of God as seen in Jesus Christ who left it all in order that we might obtain life eternal. Luther called it "the little gospel." May I suggest to you that while little in size, it is great in magnitude!

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Perhaps it has escaped your attention that in this verse there are contained ten prominent words. In my estimation these ten words have a mutual relationship and can be divided into five pairs.

### **I. First Pair: TWO OF THE PERSONS OF THE GODHEAD**

**A. God-Father.** Many have the shallow notion that God is all wrath and Jesus is all mercy. Please consider that in John 3:16 all the love, glory, and sacrifice is attributed to God the Father. Paul writes in 1 Tim. 1:1; 4:10, that God is our Savior, i.e. He planned, He gave, and He sent in order to secure salvation for man. Paul writes in Rom. 5:8:

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

The love of God was seen in the incarnation of His Son, in His miracles and teachings, in His persecutions and trials, in the garden and on the cross. Do you realize that the greatest pain felt by our Lord at Calvary was not the hatred of the Jews, the insults of the Romans, nor the indifference of His own apostles; but rather the greatest pain was seeing the Father, for the very first time, turn His back upon the Son. Our question is "Why?" John records the answer: "For God so loved the world..."

**B. God-Son.** In Heb. 1:1-3 we read that Jesus was the expression of God, i.e. the exact representation, express image, the image of God's substance. Jesus came and expressed like no other could:

1. the LOVE of God, Jno. 3:16
2. the LIGHT of God, Jno. 1:18, and

3. the LIFE of God, Col. 1:16.

It was the Son that brought the final chapter to the scheme of human salvation and as Paul noted, it is by His blood that we are redeemed (Eph. 1:7).

**II. Second Pair: EXPRESS FATHER'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WORLD**

A. Loved. Do you realize that our love to God is different than His to us? I love God because He is the creator, the most wise, the most tender and compassionate. Now why did He love me? Because I was truthful, lovely, honest, and honorable? No, God demonstrated His love toward us "in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Please observe that there are two kinds of love: Complacent Love and Benevolent Love. Complacent love by definition means "a feeling of pleasure." You love a beautiful person because you see something in him or her that draws out your love. Conversely, benevolent love means "a disposition to do good unto all." Such love is bestowed on people in whom we may not recognize any outward beauty, but we love them simply for the good that we may do them, or for the sake of character we hope to develop. Notice the contrast between the two:

Complacent Love	Benevolent Love
Intensive	Extensive
Partial	Impartial
Exclusive and Select	Inclusive and Universal
Selfish	Generous
Involuntary	Voluntary
Involves a Few	Whole World

My friend, God exhibited benevolent love!

B. Gave. Benevolent love always sacrifices, it always gives. God could not have loved if He had not given, for the words LOVED and GAVE go together. There could not have been such wonderful giving without such wonderful loving. There could not have been such wonderful loving without such wonderful giving. As a result God "loved" and "gave."

**III. Third Pair: REFER TO OBJECTS OF DIVINE LOVE**

A. World. This word is the most universal term in the human language. It is defined as "the whole of man that occupies the sphere." Such is the word used to indicate the object of His love. Yet, there is always that danger of being lost in the crowd. But when God looks to us He never forgets an individual. So He says:

B. Whoever. This word is also a universal term but with a difference. "World" is a collective universal term, i.e. it takes all men in the mass. "Whoever" is a distributive universal term, i.e. it takes all men out of the mass and stands them separate before God. Just think of the implications if "whoever" was left out of John 3:16. We would be prone to say, "Oh, He never thought of me." But when He said "whoever," that means you and me personally. "Whoever" is even better than your own name for perhaps there is another whose name corresponds with yours. So our Lord dispelled any doubt and said, "whoever."

**IV. Fourth Pair: SHOWS PROPER ATTITUDE OF MAN TOWARD GOD'S LOVE AND GIFT.**

A. Believe. God has done His part ("loved" and "gave"), and now man must do his ("believe" and "have"). John has properly been termed the Gospel of Belief. In 1:12 it is said,

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.

In 3:36 we see that this belief implies obedience:

He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

Yes, there is more to salvation than a simple mental acquiescence that Jesus Christ is the Son of God or that He is anybody's personal Savior. Christ is the personal Savior to him who obeys Him! (Heb. 5:9). And if we truly believe, we won't have any trouble repenting, being baptized, loving our neighbor and living as we should. Why? Because we believe, and believing, we obey.

B. Have. You have what you take! God gave His Son and John says His Son is the life. Therefore, if we obey the Son, we have the promise of eternal life. John observes,

And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life (1 Jno. 5:11-13).

John's purpose is seen in four stages:

1. Should hear,
2. Hearing should believe,
3. Believing should live,
4. Living CAN KNOW!

**V. Fifth Pair: POINTS TO THE EXTREMES OF HUMAN DESTINY — RESULT OF REJECTION AND RESULT OF ACCEPTANCE.**

A. Perish. If writing to please men this point would be overlooked. I wish I could believe there is no hell. I wish hell would be unnecessary. However, what we wish really doesn't make any difference. Note passages such as Matt. 13: 41-42; 25:30; Rev. 21:8. Yes, those who refuse God's gift will depart into everlasting hell. A place of darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth, and where the smoke of their torment will ascend forever and ever.

B. Life. On the other hand there is life offered to the righteous. Jesus said on one occasion, "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jno. 11:25). His purpose in coming was to bring LIFE. His purpose in dying was to give LIFE, and His purpose in the resurrection was to prepare LIFE. He said, "I go to prepare a place for you" (Jno. 14:2). What a great and wonderful place that will be. A place where there will be no night. A place where there will be no tears, no parting, and no sorrow. A place where we can be with God forever and ever and bask in the sunshine of His great love, a love that lies today at the very heart of the gospel!

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**TEXT AND TRANSLATION—(1)**

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For about the past 100 years the field of textual, or lower criticism has been dominated by men hostile to the Textus Receptus — the Greek text from which the King James Version was translated. This dominance has been reflected in every English version since the 1885 revision, as well as in the mass of material written on the subject of textual criticism. A popular example of this critical enmity is the frequent assertion, "the text of the KJV is faulty." To such a charge as this I answer—HOGWASH!

At issue here is not something purely intellectual or academic. Rather, the subject is eminently practical. For example, what is the Bible student to think when he discovers Mark 16:9-20 has been removed from the 1946 RSV text; or that the NIV prefaces the paragraph with the statement, "The most reliable early manuscripts omit Mark 16:9-20"; or that the ASV and NASV carry a similar warning; or that the ASV, RSV, NASV, and NIV all raise suspicion about the genuineness of our Lord's utterance, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Similar examples could be multiplied. The newer versions almost seem to delight in giving the impression that the Greek text of the KJV is vastly inferior to their critical and eclectic texts. The doubts raised in the prefaces and marginal asides of the new versions are serious and must be addressed. To quote Miller, has the use of the Received Text (evidenced in the King James) constituted a reliance on "a Form of Text, which in a vast number of particulars, many of which are of great importance, has been fabricated by the device or error of men?"

Textual criticism seeks to "ascertain and restore . . . the very text of the apostolic writers . . . It aims to show, not what the apostles and evangelists might have written or ought to have written, but simply what they actually did write." (Philip Schaff, *Companion to the Greek Testament and English Version*, p. 343.) The rival schools of thought in this field are styled the Critical School and the Traditional School. Apologetics for the Textus Receptus comprise the Traditional view, while those antagonistic to the Received Text constitute the Critical School. What follows is a brief summation of the major fallacies of the Critical position, as well as a listing of the strengths of the Textus Receptus.

### **The Critical School**

The Critical theory owes its fame and wide acceptance largely to the work of two English professors, B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort; though much of their work was merely an assimilation and expansion of critical tenets previously promoted by opponents of the Traditional Text. Against Westcott and Hort's work (and the Critical Theory in general) I would like to advance four considerations.

1. Contrary to the popular view, it does not appear the W-H theory was arrived at through an unprejudiced examination of the facts, but resulted from a pre-conceived animosity against the TR (Textus Receptus). When only 23, before he ever studied the evidence, Hort (it is generally understood that Hort was the main impetus behind their work) declared the TR to be "villainous" and "vile". It is hard to believe that Hort brought an open mind to his work.

2. The work of Westcott and Hort depended heavily on the conclusions of men such as Lachman, Griesbach, and "the father of German rationalism" J. S. Semler. As Hodges notes, the roots of the critical theory "are to be found in rationalistic soil where hostility to the authority of the Bible also flourished."

3. In examining the W-H theory the student is jarred to discover that the entirety of their work constitutes little more than an exercise in *petitio principii*, i.e. begging the question. Again and again they assume the very thing to be proved. After his extensive study of the Cambridge professor's work, Edward Miller wrote "on studying and testing the Theory, the first thing that strikes a man of logical mind is, that he sees an ambitious and lofty outline, which turns out to be merely cloud reared upon cloud. There is no firm footing for the feet of an inquirer . . . There is abundance of considerations, surmises, probabilities, generalizations . . . but an array of facts strong enough to establish satisfactorily each stage in advance is wholly wanting . . . Proofs are required: and no real proofs are offered. Seldom indeed has a theory been advanced with so few facts for its basis."

4. It is a matter of record that while the Critical school still accepts Westcott and Hort's conclusion (viz. the relative worthlessness of the TR), they for the most part have rejected their premises (Genealogy, Conflation, etc.). Indeed, as Pickering concludes, the theory "is evidently erroneous at every point.

While the first two points are not of themselves a conclusive argument against the Critical theory, they certainly serve to raise our suspicions about it. It is the third point which carries the most weight and the student can only be impressed by the strength of this objection after he has considered the W-H theory for himself.

Of more immediate concern to most Bible students are the questions raised by modern versions on the last twelve verses of Mark, the bloody sweat of Christ in Luke 22:43-44, the account in John 7:53-8:1 of the woman taken in adultery, and so on. Are these passages spurious? And if the "most reliable early manuscripts" omit them, would it not be "unreliable" to appeal to them as Scripture?

The "reliable early manuscripts" referred to are the Codex Sinaiticus (Aleph), a 4th century Uncial discovered by Tischendorf in 1844, and the Codex Vaticanus (B). It was primarily Westcott and Hort who championed the exaltation of these manuscripts. They considered Aleph and B to be the true readings of the Greek text. Whenever Aleph and B differed from the reading of the Traditional Text, the traditional reading was set aside. The Critical school has followed this practice. That is why modern versions either

eliminate (cf. the New English Bible's handling of Jn. 7:53-8:1) or cast strong doubt on certain well-known passages—the passage is not to be found in Aleph and/or B. Despite the servile submission of the Critical school to these two MSS, there exists strong reasons for rejecting their supposed superiority.

1. Although Aleph and B both date from the 4th century, Schaff correctly states, "mere antiquity is no certain test of superiority, since the corruption of the text began at a very early date." As Pickering comments "The a priori presumption in favor of age is nullified by the known existence of a variety of maliciously altered texts in the second century."

2. The earliest extant MSS all come from Egypt, whereas the earliest MSS de facto were made on the north side of the Mediterranean (cf. Col. 4:16). The burden of critical scholarship is to objectively demonstrate that the MSS found in Egypt exhibit the true text, while the manuscripts which trace back to the area the apostolic letters were originally sent display a corrupted text. Conclusive evidence supporting this assertion has not been forthcoming.

3. In comparing the readings of Aleph and B in the Gospels, Hoskier discovered they disagree between themselves over 3000 times! Aleph and B disagree, on the average, in almost every verse of the Gospels. Such a consideration as this alone seriously undermines their credibility.

4. The number of manuscripts approximating the "pure" and "true" text of Aleph and B is embarrassingly small. Out of the hundreds of MSS which he had access to, Dr. Hort could cite only twelve so-called "Neutral" MSS in all of the Gospels. (Westcott and Hort, "Introduction", p. 171.)

The reliability of Aleph and B is nothing more than an unsupported pronouncement of the Critical school. Pickering's conclusion is right, "If these are our best MSS we may as well agree with those who insist the recovery of the original wording is impossible, and turn our minds to other pursuits. But the evidence indicates that the earliest MSS are the worst."

### The Traditional School

It is a common notion that an apologetic for the Traditional Text is likely to also be a supporter of the FLAT EARTH SOCIETY. Such are the risks incurred when one seeks to defend what is thought to be indefensible. The arguments for the Traditional Text are sound. They demand a fair hearing.

1. It is a documented fact that the TR, more than any other printed edition of the New Testament "has been found to exhibit a form of text like that which exists in a large majority of all extant Greek manuscripts." (For this reason the Traditional text is also called the "Majority" text.) This is not a slender majority that is appealed to either. The extant Greek manuscripts (uncials and cursives) present us with a form of text which enjoys an 80-90% majority. As Hodges notes, "This is a fantastically high figure and it absolutely demands explanation." It is this majority reading that is seen in the TR and reflected in the KJV.

2. The 10-20% of MSS which vary from the majority reading do not represent a single unified text form. The

minority MSS (including Aleph and B) "disagree as much (or more) among themselves as they do with the majority." What the Critical school is asking us to believe is that the minority reading (which is actually quite chaotic) is the pure and thus preferable text. What they have never been able to explain, or introduce any evidence for, is how the corrupted reading (which they suppose the Traditional text to be) could have prevailed to the extent that it now appears in over 80% of all available Greek MSS. As Hills states it, "If the Traditional Text is late and inferior, how could it have so completely displaced earlier and better texts in the usage of the Church." For a corrupted reading to prevail to the extent that the Traditional Text has, there would have to have been an abnormal transmission of the text through the early centuries. Yet, there is not one shred of historical evidence to suggest such a distribution ever occurred. 3. The Traditional Text is unquestionably attested to by early authorities. Pickering cites Patristic evidence extending from the first half of the second century through the 4th century. In addition, Traditional readings are to be found in early codices (notably A and W) and the papyri. (Hodges reports, "in John there are no less than thirteen places where the new American Bible Society text has changed readings of the Nestle text back to the reading of the TR, mainly because these readings are now attested in P75.") Hills points out that early versions, chiefly the Peshitta Syriac, Sinaitic Syriac, and Gothic, also reflect the majority reading. The charge that the Traditional text is not to be found in early witnesses is blatantly false.

This paper has necessarily passed over much relevant material, as well as simplifying some matters which defy simplification. It is hoped that enough information has been presented to show that the doubts and aspersions heaped upon the Traditional Text are undeserved. In this case the liberal critics are most illiberal, in that their objections largely rest on an unscholarly rejection of pertinent facts which cannot be ignored. It is claimed that studies of the Traditional Text have disintegrated it; in fact, the studies have greatly strengthened it. The critical school is in a state of confusion. Doubt and skepticism haunt them. Some of their leading spokesmen have publicly expressed doubt that the genuine text of the New Testament is recoverable. For such a conclusion we can offer no sympathy. The case for the Traditional Text, reflected in the King James Version, is strong, sound, and worthy of our defense. Mark 16:9-20, John 7:53-8:1, 1 Tim. 3:16, etc. are not spurious. They are the Word of God. (To be continued)

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**WAS ZACHARIAS PERFECT?**

The text says, "There was in the day of Herod of the King of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Lk. 1:5-6). We have been told since no one is perfect or sinless, one cannot be righteous, that is of himself. This text established four irrefutable facts against false teachers. (1) The text says Zacharias and Elisabeth were both righteous, yet they were not sinless. (2) It also affirms they were righteous before God, and yet they were not sinless. (3) They walked in all the commandments of God, yet, who would argue they had never sinned? (4) They were blameless before God, yet they were not perfect in every way.

I insist that man does not have to be perfect to be righteous or blameless. It might be argued that the righteousness of Jesus had been imputed to them and therefore they were righteous for that reason. A casual reading of the Bible will show that Jesus had not been born. Any student of the Bible knows the entire remedial system was predicated on the shedding of the blood of Christ (See Heb. 9:15), however, this was God's part in the scheme of redemption and had not been completed at this time. Our text shows in the eyes of God people under the Mosaic law could be righteous. Our text sets Zacharias and Elisabeth apart from others. They were set apart because of something they had done; they had lived a righteous life! It was their conduct, which conformed to the will of God which made them righteous. The word righteous (Dikaios) is sometimes rendered "just". W. E. Vine, on page 299 of *Word Studies* says, "Righteousness is not said to be imputed to the believer save in the sense that faith is imputed (reckoned, is the better word) for righteousness. It is clear that in Rom. 4:6,11, righteousness reckoned must be understood in the light of the context, 'faith reckoned for righteousness' (vv. 3, 5, 9, 22). For in these places is eis, which does not mean 'instead of, but 'with a view to'. The faith thus exercised brings the soul into vital union with God in Christ, and inevitably produces righteousness of life, that is, conform it to the will of God."

It is obvious that Zacharias and Elisabeth were righteous, not because of what God had done, exclusively, but what they had done in conforming to his will. It is well that we observe the meaning of blameless. This word (amemptos) confirms the idea

that man, not God is the one who must act if he (man) is considered blameless. Trench says, "If amomos is the unblemished, amemptos is the unblamed. Christ was amomos in that there was in Him no spot or blemish, and he could say, 'which of you convinceth (convicteth) me of sin?' but in strictness of speech he was not amemptos (unblamed), nor is this epithet ever given to Him in the N. T., seeing that He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, who slandered His footsteps and laid to his charge 'things that he knew not' (i.e., of which He was guiltless)." P. 103. Vine added this comment, "Blameless implies not merely acquittal, but the absence of even a charge of accusation against a person."

In the above scenario, please observe it was man, not God, who did the righteous living. Note, the pronoun "they" (They were both righteous) not God. Certainly, the only standard by which any person may be righteous is the standard of God. However, God does not give the plan and then do the living. Calvinist want God to GIVE the plan and then do the LIVING. I insist that man must do the living after God gives the PLAN.

Fellow Christians, I believe we have righteous people in the church today. I do not believe any of these people in the church today are sinless or perfect. I do not believe they know it all, but I do hold the position that God's word is plain enough that any responsible person may know right from wrong. Brethren, if the Bible is so complicated that one cannot know this much we would do the native in Africa a favor by permitting him to stay in ignorance! Yea, we would do ourselves a favor by not studying, because God would probably overlook our ignorance.

Friend, the text says one may be blameless, walk in the commandments of God and be righteous all at the same time. This does not demand perfection but it does demand dedication and determination.

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## "WHO AM I THAT I SHOULD GO . . .?"

**Jeffery Kingry**  
P.O. Box 26  
Milton, Vermont 05468

These words came from the lips of Moses in Exodus 3:11. Moses spoke over 3,750 years ago, but his words sound familiar in the twentieth century. His words **and** the attitude they express belong to this age as well as to his. Have we not heard or felt in our hearts many times, "Who am I that this obligation should be laid upon my shoulders. There is a kinship in human nature which stretches across the ages. Moses was hesitant and initially did not believe he should be the one to go to Egypt for his Lord.

Life and all its prospects could have been smooth for Moses. He might have settled down to the soft life of privilege and ease in the house of Pharaoh. But, he was emphatic to the needs of his brethren who were oppressed and under bondage and it got him into trouble. Moses had been "burned" before by becoming involved in the needs of God's people.

### "I'm Not Going To Ever Do That Again..."

That is what I said after spending over two and a half years in Annapolis, Maryland. It was not the work or the church there that made me decide to avoid another work like that — it was the **manner of support**. Anyone who has ever "raised support" and been dependent upon the U.S. Mail and the good will of several churches and concerned brethren know the insecurity and hardship of working under such conditions. The first year I was in Annapolis I lost over \$500 a month support. I found a job and tried to supplement our income that way. My family life suffered as a result. Doing the work of evangelism is a full-time job. With two full time jobs something has to be left out. It generally was my family and my own free time. The loss of income took me over two years to recover from. Those who have ever tried to do the work of evangelism without adequate support know what this is like. It is like trying to run and catch up with a bus while with each step someone drops a lead weight onto the burden you carry on your back. It is difficult enough keeping pace with inflation, a growing family, and taxes when one is adequately supported in a consistent manner and can stay in one place long enough to accumulate some kind of savings. With inadequate support, constantly fluctuating in amount it is well nigh impossible.

I determined that I had "done my apprenticeship" and henceforth would labor only in those areas that security could be assured. But. . . while the crises of men's decisions are always different in their particular circumstances, some principles are always true. One is the fact that Moses was brought to understand, as well as this preacher: A man must establish an affirmative concept of who he is and what God can do with him. We do not need to be the shadow of someone else's opinion, good or bad. We all have a foundation given us by our Lord of ability, character, and experience. We

can build on that foundation something of value, or with baser materials a life of less worth. The choice is ours alone to **make** (1 Cor.3:10ff; 1 Tim. 6:19). If we choose to take the easy **and** "secure" way **out** which "saves **our** life" we will lose it **in** the process. God's call is to need — wherever that need exists.

### Milton, Vermont

Several years ago I held a meeting in Milton, Vermont. I was surprised and touched to find a church "made from scratch." In the isolation of the Northeast a congregation of God's people had begun from the work and teaching of a handful of brethren. They **had** no "full-time" preacher. No one was old enough in the faith to be an elder. They were poor. None of the brethren made much at all. But they are zealous and full of love for God and each other. I went home and wrote an article calling on a concerned brother somewhere to raise his support and move to help and participate with them in their work. That was 1976. Nobody went. Brother Keith Clayton, one of the first converts in Milton quit his job, raised support and began working very diligently in the community. The church grew from about 25 to close to 70 in the two years Keith worked. Keith is now moving to southern Vermont, near Bristol to begin a new church with a family he has converted. His work has already begun and is meeting with the same success he had in Milton.

Milton needed someone to "go." The number of contacts and work that had "backed-up" precluded even the best efforts of the brethren after work and on weekends. I thought a long time about it. All those who ever did anything great for God in the Bible had a willingness to listen to a greater call than the security of "staying at home." I want to do something good and great for the Lord. "Great works" are to be found in this day in the lives and souls of men. What shall be given or traded in exchange for a soul.

Therefore I am doing something again that I said I would never do. I am raising support. It is not even as promising this time as it was last. My family and I will be moving to Vermont the first of September. At the moment I have less than half of my support promised, and about two thirds of what I need to make the move. I will go whether I have the support or not. If necessary, I will labor with my hands as I have in the past till our needs are met. I have confidence in God's providence and the dedication and commitment of my brethren that those needs will be met. Can you help? I would be more than happy to send the names and addresses of brethren from every place I have ever worked. I can supply the names of men who know my work and teaching. The acceptance and recommendation of the brethren in Milton can also be passed along. I need your help. Can I hear from you?

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## INDIA REPORT

William V. Beasley  
P.O. Box 331  
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John Humphries  
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We left for India on April 21, 1980 for six weeks of teaching the word of God. We wanted to have classes with English-speaking Christians. By having the classes in English, we were able to cover much more material than having stop-and-go preaching using interpreters. Also, we knew exactly what was being taught—and how—in its entirety. Furthermore, we planned to concentrate on a few English-speaking churches in order to build some strong churches that could in turn sound out the Word.

We believe that we were able to accomplish our goal. We taught a series of lessons entitled "That Ye May Believe," from the gospel of John and a series from I John, "That Ye May Know" (Beasley); and a survey of the Old Testament, "Establishment and Characteristics of the Church," and "The Dangers of Apostasy" (Humphries). We believe that much good was done.

The first church where we taught was Malakpet in the Hyderabad/Secunderabad area. The second series of classes was at Kazipet. The church is Kazipet, in our judgment, has great potential. The congregation is made up mostly of school teachers and railroad shift supervisors. These brethren are well educated and capable of becoming very good students of the Word. They all, including the children, speak fine English.

We had small classes in our hotel room when possible, and taught many evenings at little congregations in and around Hyderabad. Some of the village congregations (at least six) have been meeting regularly for five years (since being established on John Humphries first trip to India). These brethren pleaded with us to stay and teach them more. The great need and limited time are both heart-breaking and frustrating.

We took turns getting sick, but we managed by the grace of God to keep our classes going. We are most grateful for the prayers of the congregations which supported our efforts and the prayers of our home congregations.

The Lord willing, and if family conditions permit, we would like to return to India in the fall of 1981.

We noted some things which caused discouragement among the Indian brethren. First, some who preach regularly seemed a little discouraged when we did not jump at the chance to support their pet-project (most of the Indian brethren converted by our liberal brethren had a pet-project needing support). We taught, explained, insisted, re-taught, re-explained and re-insisted that it was not our purpose, nor the purpose for which our support had been given, to financially underwrite evangelistic, benevolent or building construction projects. This, of course, needed to be discouraged among the Indian brethren. Faithful

brethren in India are holding the line against such and, in fact, refer to their liberal brethren as the "Denominational Church of Christ."

Second, for one to come from America to "preach/teach Christ," but, seemingly, be more concerned in proving that other brethren (American and Indian) are dishonest, untrustworthy, etc. was a source of some discouragement to faithful brethren. Also, a stay of only ten days or two weeks, **unless seriously ill**, seems hardly worth the expense, **of the Lord's money**, to fly to and from India. We are not discussing those who become so ill as to endanger themselves and thus **had** to return to the U. S. A. Such has happened to good men. If one continually (two or three trips in succession) gets too ill or too discouraged (and there are many things in India to cause westerners to weaken) to do the work it would seem a good idea to leave that particular work to the ones with "cast-iron" stomachs. It would not be amiss for congregations to ask "How long do you intend to stay?," and, especially, "How long did you stay on your last trip?," when support is requested.

In spite of physical discomfort (the summer, we learned, is not the time to be in India), the discouragement caused by the death of the Indian preacher (who was making arrangements for our classes) and other relatively minor problems, we feel that much good was accomplished through teaching and through the encouragement of being with brethren in Christ. We were especially happy to see, as we have mentioned before, that congregations established five years before were still meeting to worship and praise our God. We were also encouraged to learn that preachers who had lost their financial support from America were still preaching. It was good to know that their faith did not carry a "For Sale" sign.

Brethren, we earnestly solicit your prayers on behalf of the saints in India.

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### PEOPLE PROBLEMS

All of us have some basic weaknesses when we seek for and try to arrive at truth. Francis Bacon once said that there are a number of things that hinder men from arriving at the truth on various subjects. "First," he said, "there is wishful thinking; second, personal prejudices; third, a failure to define terms; and fourth, the blind acceptance of tradition as authority." Dale Carnegie once said, "Men are not creatures of logic, they are creatures of emotion." I believe that what Mr. Carnegie said simply sums up what Mr. Bacon said. In this article we want to examine all four steps of the problem mentioned above and see what is taught in the Bible on these subjects.

#### Wishful Thinking

All of us, at one time or another, have been guilty of this, I am sure, to some degree. How many have wished that that friend or loved one who is so wed to denominationalism could be saved in that denomination? Knowing that they are fine upstanding people, it seems reasonable to us that God could make an exception in their case and save them. But, as we said, that is just wishful thinking. For we know that God has said in His Word, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). It might seem to us that all good moral people should be saved on the basis of their morality. But, Cornelius was a good moral man and yet he was told, "Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon; whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:13-14). So, even though a person may be a good person morally, and though we may desire that he be saved, he must hear and obey as Cornelius did that he might be saved. All of our wishful thinking cannot get him to heaven on his good morals alone.

#### Personal Prejudice

You may say that this is not true in your case—that you are not prejudiced—and may be you are not. But if you are not then you are a very exceptional person.

What is prejudice? Mr. Henry Thayer defines it as, "an opinion formed before the facts are known, a judgment" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, Page 540). Thus one who is prejudiced renders his decision without all of the facts. He favors or disfavors a person or thing without real evidence or facts. In the King James Version of the New Testament, the closest thing we have to the word "prejudice" is found in I Timothy 5:21. "I charge thee before God and the Lord

Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one another, doing nothing by partiality." The word "preferring" is literally translated "prejudgment" in Nestle's Interlinear.

The worst thing about prejudice is what it produces. Even during the personal ministry of Christ, because of prejudice, men stopped their ears and closed their eyes to the truth (Matthew 13:15). If I have the attitude that I will not listen to or read what anyone says on a particular subject because I have my mind made up, I might discover it is because I am indeed prejudiced. A good slogan for prejudice is: Don't confuse me with the facts, my mind is made up.

#### A Failure To Define Terms

So often we are all guilty of this problem. Someone makes a statement and we automatically say, "that is not correct." However, when that person is given the opportunity to define what he has said, we see that we are in agreement with him. So often when we are reading a book or an article we come to a statement with which we do not think we are in agreement, and we lay aside the book or article without reading further to see if the author has defined his terms. We might also add that sometimes those of us who speak and write are guilty of not defining our terms so that others may understand them. It is easy for one to do so because he understands perfectly what he is trying to get over, but it may not be that clear to the one who is listening or reading.

You will note that in the teaching of the Lord there were things that his audience did not understand. However, those things that he wanted them to understand he defined for them and made an explanation of them. We would do well to follow his example. In John 6, for example, Jesus made a point that men would have to eat his flesh and drink his blood. Many of his disciples were upset and turned back and walked no more with Him. However, Jesus was not talking about his literal flesh and blood. But his disciples did not ask nor wait for an explanation. But notice what was said by those who stayed when asked if they would also go away. "Peter answered him, Lord to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). The results of not waiting or asking for an explanation meant that men were leaving the only one who could give them eternal life. The same is true today. Men turn aside from truth not realizing they are perhaps turning away from the very truth that they need to save them. This could happen to us if we have this attitude.

#### Blind Acceptance of Tradition As Authority

The word "tradition" is used in two different ways in the Bible. Paul used it in II Thess. 2:15 with reference to the teaching of the Holy Spirit. However, the sense in which we are using it is found in Matt. 15:2-3, where Jesus condemned the Pharisees for transgressing the commandments of God for the sake of their traditions. Some people think that because we have been doing a thing a certain way for a number of years that therefore it MUST be done that way or else we sin. For

example if we have always been accustomed to having the Lord's Supper BEFORE the lesson, we should not change and have it AFTER the lesson. But it is tradition as to what point in our service we have the Lord's Supper, Because we have always done a thing in a certain way (if it is a matter of judgment and not one of scriptural principle) that doesn't mean that when we do it another way we are sinning.

But let's look at the other side of the coin. We ought not have the attitude that because of the longevity of a thing that that infers authorization. This was the problem the Pharisees had They taught that if a man did not wash his hands before he ate that he sinned. They had made "authority" out of the traditions of men However, we need to understand that a thing is authorized in matters religious ONLY because God's Word authorizes it, and not because "we have always done it."

### **We Become Angry**

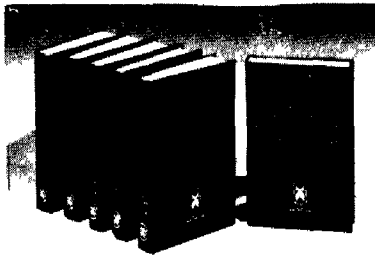
One thing that I want to add to Mr. Bacon's list is the above heading. It has been said of religion and politics that men become angry quicker of these subjects than any other. Sometimes if we become angry we do not hear what is said. We will not consider what a person is saying because we are angry with him. This ought not to be so. James said, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19).

### **Conclusion**

Yes, because we are human we have all of the above mentioned problems. We all need to work on these problems and try to overcome them and try to arrive at the truth on every subject that involves our soul's salvation. For Jesus said, "... the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

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## THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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### NEW CONGREGATIONS

**PITTSBURG, PA**—Beginning Sept. 7, 1980 a sound congregation made up of some college students, a family from Tomlinson Run in Georgetown, and a family from the Franklin Farms congregation in Washington, PA will begin meeting in eastern Pittsburg. If anyone knows of members living in or moving to the Pittsburg area please contact Mike Silva, 2047 Garrick Dr. Pittsburg, PA 15235. Phone: (412) 824-5843. The new congregation will be known as the Eastern Pittsburg church of Christ. Brethren traveling through the area are encouraged to stop and worship with this new congregation.

**BRANDON, MS**—Earlier this year a group of brethren left the Skyway Hills church in Pearl, MS because of a liberal element in that congregation. They are now meeting in the Rankin County Livestock Pavilion on Hwy. 80, across from the Crossgate Shopping Center. They are having about 25 to 30 in attendance and the preaching is done by the men of the church. The church's mailing address is P.O. Box 197, Brandon, MS 39042. Phone: (601) 825-3926. Services are at 10 AM and 6 PM on Sundays and 7 PM on Wednesdays. This makes two conservative churches in the Jackson area, Clinton Blvd. is on the West side, and Brandon is on the East. Both places are easy to get to via I-20.

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA**—If you know of those in or around Charlottesville who would be interested in forming a congregation of the Lord's church according to N. T. principles, please contact Terry Hunt Tooley, 1108 Stonefield Ln., Charlottesville, VA 22903. Phone:(809) 977-8173.

### PREACHERS NEEDED

**BLACKFOOT, ID**—The church at Blackfoot, ID is looking for a preacher. Blackfoot is on I-15 between Pocatello and Idaho Falls in eastern Idaho. The population is 10,000. There are 11 members of the church here, four of which are men. The attendance averages around 25. They own a nice building and are presently able to pay a man \$50 per week. If interested contact the church at P.O. Box 158, Blackfoot, ID 83221. Or call Ray Mitchell (208) 785-6653 or Tom Mitchell (208) 684-4904. For those entering or leaving Yellowstone National Park from the west, we are only 130 miles southwest of the west gate. Stop and worship with us.

**NEWPORT NEWS, VA**—The church here in Newport News is looking for a preacher. It is a small congregation with 22 members and can offer partial support. Bro. Tim Kinzel is moving Oct. 1 to begin work with the German School Rd. congregation in Richmond. For more information about the work in Newport News contact Tim Quinn, 212 Larissa Dr., Newport News, VA 23601. Phone: (804) 599-5907.

**JAMES A. BRUCE**, 108 Birdie Hills Rd., St. Peters, MO 63376. After one year with this congregation we are greatly encouraged. We have for the past year been trouble-free, happy and growing. This has been accomplished through a joint effort of the members of this congregation, which has resulted in 24 responses. Of these there were 8 baptisms, 5 restorations, and 11 who placed membership. However, we are saddened that some have gone astray, and one family has moved away. We have set new records, both in attendance and contribution. For this we give God thanks, and all praise. At present our attendance numbers in the 70's. The fields are white in our area.

**THOMAS ICARD**, Rt. #2, Box 117, Georgetown, PA 15043. The Tomlinson Run Road congregation has just closed a 5 day summer Bible study on the subject of the Beatitudes with Bro. Jimmy Tuten. Our spring meeting was held with Bro. Ron Halbrook preaching on the deity of Christ. These meetings were attended well by members, visiting brethren, and people from the community, Bro. Glenn Young is to hold our fall meeting Sept. 22-28. The work here is encouraging with the congregation growing peacefully and brethren working in unity with each other. Our attendance runs about 150 for all services. At present the congregation is partially supporting nine preachers. 1980 has been an encouraging year with several baptisms.

**RAYS CORNS**, 123 Sunset, Gibsonburg, OH 43431. In a meeting at Cob Hill, KY July 14-20 hearts were made to rejoice with 2 baptisms and 2 restorations. I will not be accepting any more meeting work this year due to pending surgery.

### A CORRECTION

In the May, 1980 issue of STS concerning the work in Sembach, Germany, Jack Miller's name was incorrectly listed as the contact for the congregation. The contacts for the church are Dennis Poyner, PSC Box 519, APO NY 09130 Sembach Military 7201/7015. Or Fred Gosnell PSC Box 2281, APO NY 09130 Sembach Military 7889.

## Please Renew Promptly

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