

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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TIMES HAVE CHANGED

If there is one fact clearly taught and illustrated in the New Testament it is that God's word does not change and will not permit the changes that are found in religious bodies today. Jesus said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Paul said: "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. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8,9). He also said: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written . . ." (1 Cor. 4:6 RV). John said: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10,11).

The same New Testament that is referred to in these verses as the "gospel", "things which are written", "my words," and "doctrine" is used by most denominations today, but the application has greatly changed, and the expressions have been altered so as not to make them recognizable to the Bible student. When these facts are called to the attention of denominationalists, they answer by saying that "times have changed." The implication, of course, is that since times have changed the word of God must be adapted to these changing times. No other conclusion could be reached.

A letter received some time ago from a lady in the far north is an example of the changing times and the efforts to transform the New Testament to a system acceptable to the loose concept of God and the church today. She informed me that the word of God has not changed and that it is fully capable of directing men in the right way. This is exactly right. But she then began to explain that the word must be made applicable to this generation. A strange contradiction, wouldn't you say? The SPIRIT of the letter, she said, was much more important than the LEGALISM that some people follow today. Whether she realized it or not, her concept of "spirit" vs "legalism" destroyed the New Testament truth that "words", "gospel", "things which are written", and "doctrine" are unchangeable. There is no such thing as "the spirit" apart from "words" written in the New Testament. By "spirit" they usually mean the "intent" — "general idea or purpose" of the word of God. But how does one know the intent apart from the written word?

The changes in expressions and ideas may be illustrated by reading Acts 2:14-42 and then comparing it with the following "intent" as may be expressed by the religious world today:

"But Reverend Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them . . . Ye men of Israel, hear this spirit of the letter; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by seeming miracles and wonders and signs . . . him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God raised up according to Jewish legend . . ."

"Now when they heard this, they were quickened by the baptism of the Holy Spirit and said to Reverend Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do now? Then Reverend Peter said, If you have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you are saved; but if not, accept Christ as your personal Saviour and pray for the outpouring of the Spirit upon you. For this promise is unto you and to all your infants . . ."

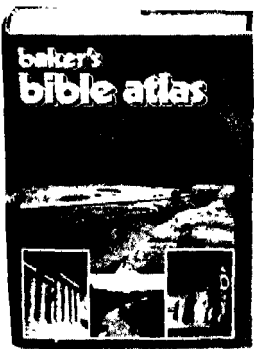
"Then they that gladly received the Lord as their personal Saviour and were saved by grace were sprinkled, and the same day about three thousand

joined the church of their choice. And they continued to follow the dictates of their consciences, and to have fellowship with all other churches."

The preceding three paragraphs are NOT the word of God, but they do express the doctrines of denominationalism today. Times have changed, and men have tried to change the word of God, but every such change takes away the power of God to save. God's power to save is the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16). There is no other gospel (Gal. 1:7-9). The gospel must be expressed in the words of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Peter 4:11). No other doctrine is to be taught (1 Tim. 1:3). We must insist upon sound words that cannot be condemned.

When we accept the fact that the church in many parts of the country has changed over the past 25 years, and is continuing to change, we are ready to find the reasons and the remedy. Many brethren have their heads buried in the sands of ignorance and apathy and refuse to acknowledge the reality of the moral decline, liberal teaching and denominational practice that characterize so many "churches of Christ" over the land today. We who call attention to these changing times in the church are labeled "negative" and "pessimistic" in our attitude. Call it what you may, the church is changing for the worse day by day. Certainly this is not true of every congregation. Many are sound in the faith and working hard to keep the church pure from all innovations.

The church that Christ built is unchangeable and inalterable in doctrine and practice. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28). The word of Christ does not change (Matt. 24:35). We must resist the dogmatic and subtle changes that are coming upon us from the god of this world.



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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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TOUGH DECISIONS

Surely it is the fervent prayer of every child of God that our nation, as well as other nations around the world, will not be plunged into another war fraught with global consequences in this nuclear age. The clouds are gathering in the Persian Gulf region. At this writing over 50 Americans are still held hostage in Iran with no immediate solution in sight. Nearly 100,000 Russian troops now occupy Afghanistan. Strong words are being uttered by national leaders in Washington. The mood of the country is restless and the fires of patriotism are leaping higher with each passing day in spite of the protests of some. There is a rising resentment among citizens of this nation over the international mistreatment of our official representatives and encroachments upon our national interests.

Our President has proposed that draft registration be reinstated and that all young men from 19-26 should register just in case the draft has to be revived. I am not a statesman and this publication is not a voice for political views. But I am a Christian and a father with two sons who fall within the registration age. They, along with multiplied thousands of young people who are trying to serve the Lord, are going to be faced with decisions which have far reaching consequences. All who fall into this category will have to act according to their own consciences as they wrestle with the prospect of possible required military service. Each will have to grapple with this question: **TO WHAT EXTENT, IF AT ALL, CAN I SERVE IN THE MILITARY?**

There have been honest differences of views among brethren on this question for many years. In the Civil War there were Christians who fought on each side, including some gospel preachers who laid down the sword of the Spirit to take up a different kind of sword. There were others who refused to participate and chided those who did. The question surfaced among brethren during World War I and again in World War II. Others faced it during the Korean conflict and most recently, the Vietnam war.

We are fortunate that citizens of our country are granted some leeway because of conscience. All governments have not been that considerate in such times when conscription of troops was thought necessary. But it is important for young men to know that they do have a choice.

What Are the Options?

1. There are those who feel that the demand for

obedience to the civil ordinance, as taught in Romans 13:1-7, justifies their participation in the military in any capacity. They believe they may train for combat service with the ultimate goal being the use of weapons of destruction against an enemy on land, at sea or from the air. These see no difference in the role of a soldier and the duty of a policeman who must at times use force to uphold the law, and who regard both actions as justified.

2. There are others who would agree with the first position, provided the military action is defensive and requires such response to an outright attack on our men, bases, land or national interests. While opposed to aggressive, expansionist type war, they see no difference in defending their nation against aggression and in defending their own home against criminals. These are selective as to what kind of war they will approve. It was for this reason that many opposed the Vietnam war, although it was strange to see some who were committed to situation ethics arguing about an immoral war when they had espoused a philosophy which ruled out any standard by which morals could be decided.

3. There are some who believe that they may enter one of the branches of military service and perform there any act which is right to perform anywhere else, such as driving a truck, working in an office, cooking, working in a supply depot or rendering medical service. But they draw the line at training themselves in the psychology of combat readiness on the ground that no soldier, sailor or pilot can successfully function in such activity without first working up a strong hatred against the enemy. To them, this stands opposed to all the Lord taught about loving your enemy, feeding him if he is hungry and praying for those who abuse you. This is the position this editor took when he had to register after World War II and not long before the Korean conflict broke out. It is still my conviction. Those who take this view, as well as the next one to be mentioned, has better be prepared to state their case clearly and know well their reasons. In peacetime this position is not likely to encounter as much rough treatment as in time of war. All sorts of questions may be asked. Ridicule and sarcasm from others in the service may be expected.

4. There are yet others who do not believe they can enter any branch of the military and perform even a non-combat job. They are convinced that any such service contributes, if even indirectly, to the maiming, killing and inflicting of anguish on the enemy, all of which, to them, is contrary to what the Lord taught. These must be prepared to be conscripted for some civil service duty for a period of time, possibly service in a hospital. The more adamant may be given jail sentences. I know some who have taken this position in the past who received civil service assignments and some who went to prison instead.

In all of these categories there have been, and yet are, brethren who act in all good conscience. So far as I know there has been no division among brethren over this subject because it falls in the realm of

individual conscience in which the choice and action of one does not affect that of another. There have been times when the discussion got heated. A potential feud is possible whenever you have the parents of a conscientious objector in the same Bible class with the parents of a marine, or member of any other combat unit and the passage for study in Romans 13. In all such cases, brethren ought to be able to state their views and then respect the sensitivities and consciences of those of contrary persuasion. Some have challenged the patriotism of those who differed from their choice. In reality, the most patriotic thing any of us can do in wartime or peacetime is to be a devout Christian, contributing the salt, light and leaven of a godly character, for after all, "righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

Of necessity, these questions will have to be pondered by young men and anxious parents in the days ahead. The prospect of war on any scale in a frightful thing to contemplate. The unrighteous environments which surround military bases around the world and entice young people far removed from the direct influences of godly parents and interested brethren have contributed much to the spiritual decline and downfall of many. On the other hand, the presence of young people who were devoted to the Lord even under adverse circumstances has been responsible for the establishment of congregations all over the world. Whatever route one takes is not easy to pursue especially in wartime.

So then, brethren, and especially young men and concerned parents, study the matter in light of what the Bible teaches. Keep cool heads and honest hearts. For the sake of helping clarify these issues, we are willing to carry an article of reasonable length, written in the right spirit, from a representative brother on either side of this matter. We do not propose to turn this paper over to a running battle on this issue, but feel that the times warrant some help for all of us. Stay tuned.

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A CHRISTIAN'S REVIEW OF "CAMPBELLITE QUESTIONS AND BAPTIST ANSWERS"

(No. 3)

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Before we study question 4 and the Baptist answer, we need to make a careful study of the term "Baptist" and try to settle the issue on what name we are to wear. This has been referred to, and will be again in this study, so we need to learn the truth on the name controversy before we go further.

What did the name "Baptist" mean when used with reference to John in the New Testament? When we learn this, we should know whether or not we are to wear the name today, or whether it can or should be applied to the average member of the Baptist Church.

What did Zacharias and Elisabeth name their son? "And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John, . . . And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John" (Luke 1:60, 62, 63). That settles that! Then why was he called "Baptist" and what does the term mean?

"BAPTISTES a baptist, is used only of John the Baptist, and only in the Synoptists, 14 times." (Expository Dictionary of N.T. Words, W.E. Vine, p. 97) ". . . a baptizer; one who administers the rite of baptism . . ." (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, p. 95).

It is obvious that no one today can wear the name Baptist with the meaning that it had when used with reference to John. The only other meaning is "a baptizer" or one who baptizes. Members of the Baptist denomination do not baptize, therefore they are not baptists or baptizers. In the true sense of the term, anyone who baptizes people is a baptizer, but it is something to be done and not a name to be worn. I have in my library a copy of a translation called "The American Bible Union New Testament." It was first published in 1864. It grew out of a controversy which the Baptists had with the American Bible Society over whether the Greek word for baptize or baptism should be translated by the English term "immerse" or an equivalent. The Society discouraged such rendering, since those who accepted sprinkling and pouring for baptism could not conscientiously circulate a version which consistently employed the word immerse or an equivalent. "The Baptists took offense and a controversy ensued." (Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. II, p. 92). The direct outcome of the controversy was the formation of the American Bible Union. This new society decided to make a translation which would conform as nearly as possible to the original, and

they "secured the services of a number of Baptist and other Biblical scholars, especially the Rev. Drs. H. B. Hackett, A. C. Kendrick and T. J. Conant."

They produced a good translation. We now note certain verses from it:

"In those days comes John the Immerser, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1). "Verily I say to you, among those born of women, there has not risen a greater than John the Immerser. But he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11:11). "And he said to them: Go into all the world, and preach the good news to every creature. He that believes and is immersed shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15, 16).

What is my point in referring to this translation? It is this: Although this was a work of the Baptist people, the word "Baptist" is not in it! They had translated the terms correctly, but then realized that they had translated themselves out of a name! To be consistent, they had to call themselves "Immersers" or stop the publication and circulation of their translation. They chose the latter.

Speaking of Christ and their relationship, John the Baptizer said: "Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:28-30).

The church or kingdom is the bride of Christ. The analogy between husband and wife and Christ and the church is presented in several scriptures. For example, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4). See also Second Corinthians 11:2 and Ephesians 5:22-32.

John observed this relationship by speaking of Christ as the bridegroom and the church as the bride. What position did John occupy in this arrangement? He was "the friend" of the bridegroom, or as we would say in the vernacular of our time, the best man. Now, whose name does the bride take, the name of the bridegroom to whom she is married or the name of the best man in the ceremony? She takes the name of her husband! Whoever heard of a wife wearing the name of a friend of her husband? But that's the way the Baptist people think about John and Christ. They want to be married to Christ but wear the name of John. What Baptist preacher would allow his wife to wear the name of his friend?

John's understanding of the true relationship between Christ and the church, was also understood by A. J. Gordon, a famous Baptist preacher who said: "If the church is the bride of Christ, the bride must have been the same as the bridegroom. If the church is the body of Christ, she must have the same name as her head. It would be strange if my body

and my head should bear different names. In some comments on the passage, 'The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch,' it is held that the name was given in derision. I think not. If you study the use of the Greek word 'called' you will conclude that they were divinely called Christians. God gave them that name." (Select Northfield Sermons) On this same point, Charles H. Spurgeon said, "I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the Baptist name will soon perish; but let Christ's name last forever." (Spurgeon Memorial Library, Vol. I, p. 168)

Some in the church at Corinth were wearing the names of men such as Peter, Paul and Apollos (1 Cor. 1:12). The inspired apostle Paul rebuked them for this, and then emphasized a great truth by asking three questions: "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:13) The answer to each of these rhetorical questions was NO. If Paul is teaching anything, he is teaching that we can wear only the name of the one who was (a) crucified for us, and (b) in whose name we are baptized. Who is that? The Lord Jesus Christ! If it was wrong for them to wear the name of Peter or of Paul, would it not have been equally wrong for them to wear the name of John? Is the same true today? Certainly it is!

The Bible says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Is that name Baptist? No. It is "the name of Jesus Christ" the "stone" which is "the head of the corner" (Acts 4:10, 11). After the uniting of Jews and Gentiles in the one body (Isaiah 62:2) the disciples of Christ were called Christians (Acts 11:26). Paul persuaded King Agrippa to be a Christian (Acts 26:28, 29). Peter wrote, "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf (in this name, ASV)" (1 Peter 4:16). Where do we find such teaching in the Bible concerning the name Baptist? Be honest about it. Where is such teaching? Where was anyone other than John called a Baptist or Baptists? Where did any inspired man command or admonish anyone to wear the name Baptist?

We are told to do all things in the name of Christ, and to give Him preeminence in every way (Col. 1:18; 3:17). How can one do this while wearing the name of John the Baptist? This can be done by wearing the name Christian. It is a patronymic name — a name formed by the addition of a prefix or suffix indicating relationship. The Christian is related to Christ, and the spiritual name is formed by adding the suffix-ian. When one is called a Christian, the name of Christ is sounded and He is given the glory and honor which He demands. Who is honored and glorified by the name Baptist? Not the Lord! Surely everyone can understand this. Will everyone accept this plain and simple truth? If you are a Baptist, the decision is yours, but please remember that there is salvation in no name except the name of Christ!

(This study will continue in the next issue.)

ARROWS of TRUTH for denominational error

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"FROM FIRST TO TWELFTH"

Admittedly, we are all numbers orientated. When we walk into a church building, about the first thing we look for is the attendance record. We are accustomed to asking preachers about the size of the congregation where they preach. Some go far enough to "judge" a preacher's success by the size of the group for which he preaches! If he preaches for a large congregation, he is a "big" preacher, and if he preaches for a small group, he is a "little" preacher. We hear about numbers and more numbers. Several years ago a church in Tennessee and one in Texas got into a challenge as to which of the two congregations had the largest attendance. I understand the one in Tennessee won by claiming to have about five thousand in attendance. It was then announced that this congregation was the largest Church of Christ in the brotherhood. Many congregations looked on with envy because of the so called success of that congregation. What does all of this mean? Well, it means that some have made an idol out of "numbers" rather than the living God!

In one of the issues of *ENSIGN*, Carl Ketcherside bemoans the fact that the Church of Christ has toppled from first place to twelfth. He says, "This means there are eleven other sects now enjoying greater popularity than our own. When we were 'top dog' upon the score chart, the Lord was blessing us. Now satan is working overtime to push others of his choice to the fore-front. Any time anyone passes us, it is satan in the saddle and the Lord is in deep trouble." I notice that Carl uses the word "popularity" in comparing the Church of Christ with the sects. This is the first time I knew the Church of the Lord was engaged in a popularity contest. Perhaps this has been our problem through the years. We have been more interested in numbers, which brings us popularity rather than in the simple gospel of Christ. He also tells us that when the sects pass us in numbers, Satan is in the saddle and the Lord is in deep trouble. I am sure the Lord appreciated Carl telling him that he was in "deep trouble!" I have news for Carl and that is the Lord has never been in trouble, it is his vain people who are in trouble.

Some may ask, why so much talk about numbers? The answer is simple; there is power in both money and numbers. Both inflate the "ego" of mankind but these items do not have that effect on the Lord. So many problems in the church are over power struggles, and are precipitated by power hungry

brethren. They do their work under the disguise of loving the Lord and working for his cause but actually they work for self! If the church has fallen from first place to twelfth, so what? Does this of itself mean the church is unsound? Hardly. We have become so enamored with numbers we can't reason without counting noses. We talk about churches "dying on the vine" and boast about the numerical growth of others. Brethren, I say again this means absolutely nothing. The Lord at one time had "large" numbers following him and then later He had "small" numbers following him but He was still the Lord! Let us swallow our pride and get back to the basics. Let the word of God be our standard of authority. If the gospel brings us a great in-gathering of souls, let us give God the glory and rejoice in the harvest. However, if we find the hearts of the people are hardened, let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not (Gal. 6:9). Let us thank God for the "few" whose hearts have been tendered by the glorious gospel and press on.

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

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THEY'RE STILL MARCHING

The Madison Church of Christ now has its "Family Life Center." This was headlined as "A Giant Step Forward" in the *Madison Marcher* of Nov. 15, 1978. It's a giant step all right. We have serious questions concerning the direction.

What is a Family Life Center? According to their report, it includes a gymnasium, an exercise room, a reception room, and a fellowship room. The latter "has been designated for suppers and banquets" naturally.

Raymond Harris puts it succinctly: "**Why not just call it the Community Church and get it over with? The Madison Church derives income from: interest, funds transferred from special savings accounts, syndication of a T.V. program, baby sitting fees, Bible class contributions, dividends, child care funds, memorial gifts, estate gifts and camp fees. Church expenses include such items as: lake repairs, kitchen expenses, craft supplies, pool expenses, horse expenses and rifle range expenses.**"

"Ira North, preacher at Madison, is also Editor of *The Gospel Advocate*. His Associate Editor, Guy N. Woods, recently went on record as claiming that he didn't know of any churches of Christ that were supporting recreational activities. I know some preachers who would like to give Brother Guy a tour of East Nashville.

What did Paul mean, I wonder, when he wrote, "**And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation**"(1 Cor. 14:34).

But where Madison leads, others soon follow. The Nashville Banner of August 14, 1979 reported the dedication of a new \$450,000 family life center at the Jackson Park Church of Christ in Inglewood. The gymnasium can accommodate basketball, skating, and volleyball. Volunteer staff will direct the recreation each evening except Sundays and Wednesdays.

Brethren, not only is recreation being financially supported by liberal churches of Christ, it is infiltrating even the worship and study periods of these churches.

For some time, denominational groups have used everything from Karate to strippers to attract an audience. Now, according to a newspaper ad from Washington, D.C., the church of Christ at Falls Church, Virginia, sponsored what they call "Inspiration Time," August 24-26, 1979.

Featured was a gymnast who promised an exciting new stunt to be revealed for the first time on the steps of the Nation's Capitol, and a beauty queen who holds the title of Miss Georgia. Along with these, a couple of preachers were mentioned. (Poor fellows, I'd hate to follow those acts!) While nothing was said of the Biblical scholarship of these men, readers were promised that they are "unique, dynamic, exciting, explosive, enthralling, and inspiring."

Perhaps the title of the next item would have been more descriptive of this one.

THAT'S A LOT OF GARBAGE

A curious item, this one. It comes via Gene Taylor and *The Truth Seeker*, bulletin of the Northwest congregation in Evansville where Gene preaches.

According to a UPI release at Chicago which was reprinted in the Nov. 4, 1979 issue of said publication, "Mary McCarthy, a 67-year-old retired cleaning woman, says long working hours and harsh winters prevented her from taking out her garbage for 17 years.

"City sanitation crews, bearing a search warrant, entered the woman's home Friday and spent the next three days hauling away 20 tons of the refuse that accumulated in the maggot-cockroach-and-rat-infested house.

"Neighbors said the small gray South Side house emitted a particularly foul stench.

" 'I didn't get time to take it out,' Mrs. McCarthy said. 'I worked 5 (in the evening) to 12 and during the day I took care of a neighbor of mine who was sick. In the winter, I couldn't take it out because the snow was blocking the way. I couldn't shovel it.'

"Melvin Dubrock, a work supervisor with the sanitation crew, said when the refrigerator was removed Saturday, rotting food covered with maggots was discovered inside.

" 'We want to get in and get out as quickly as possible,' Dubrock said. 'It's not the easiest job for the crews.'

"To remove the rubble, workers had to take the front door of Mrs. McCarthy's home off its hinges.

"City building inspector said there was so much garbage in the frame house the door wouldn't open and there was barely room to move around."

Now, a number of good lessons may be drawn from such an occurrence. For example, dutiful wives may find help here in emphasizing to their lazy husbands what can happen if the garbage isn't taken out.

Spiritual garbage (sin) has a way of accumulating, too. Over a period of 17 years, or so, it can pretty well fill up a person's life. And the longer it accumulates, the more sickening the condition becomes. Jehovah described the condition of Judah at one point in these words: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the soul of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores .. ." (Isa. 1:5, 6).

And you know, when that spiritual garbage piles up, freedom is quite restricted. Procrastination is the progenitor of bondage.

I like the point that Brother Taylor makes: "Why do people who know what to do to take the corruption of sin out of their lives not do it? Why do people who know and understand gospel teaching concerning the cleansing of their souls not obey that teaching? What reasonable answer can be given? None! Their 'reasons' are akin to Mrs. McCarthy's reasons for not taking out her garbage . . . just feeble excuses:

"1) 'I don't have the time'; 2) 'Other things are more important right now (such as caring for a sick neighbor)'; 3) 'Something is blocking me from obeying.' "

Just a lot of garbage!

God says, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doing from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well . . ." (Isa. 1:16, 17). -----o-----

50 PERCENT INCREASE IN SICKNESS

That's what Boston officials predicted as city hospitals made preparations for the pope's recent visit to our country. That visit is now history, and whether the prediction proved accurate, I haven't heard. But I found the contrast between Jesus and Pope John Paul II who claims to be His Representative, and between Peter and the pope who claims to be his successor, glaring, to say the least.

The AP article stated that Boston hospitals were planning their busiest day ever. They were making elaborate plans to cope with the 50 percent increase in heart attacks and other medical emergencies that were expected when the pope celebrated Mass on Boston Common.

The increase was expected due to "a lot of ill people (who would) make the effort to see the pope in the hope it will help them by receiving special blessings."

Apparently, the medical authorities weren't as hopeful as these poor deluded souls.

Funny, when the multitudes flocked about Jesus, ". . . He healed many that were sick of divers

diseases . . ." (Mark 1:34). And when the sick were brought to Peter, "they were healed every one" (Acts 5:15,16).

WRITING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Winston Churchill was supposed to have remarked that the English and American people were separated by a common language. Whether it were he or someone else, it makes a good introduction for this article.

I've written for several publications, and one editor informed me that my articles were as nearly ready for the printer as any of those which he received, from the standpoint of spelling, punctuation, and grammar. After seeing some of the manuscripts which are presented for publication, that editor may not have been saying too much at that! If an editor were to say the things I intend to say, it may have an adverse affect on the number of manuscripts which he receives. Maybe I can say a few things which will help the editors of various publications, as well as those who write.

Both writing and speaking can be cultivated until they are an art within themselves. If either speaking or writing become boring to those doing them, you can rest assured that they are even more so to the reader and the hearer. It is next to impossible for the extemporaneous speaker to be grammatically perfect. Sometimes a sentence is begun in such a way that you have one of two alternatives—either back up and start over, or finish it incorrectly. With writing we can be more exact, though not perfect, because we have the luxury of erasing the offending portion, or throwing it in the trash can and starting over. Even with all these precautions, some printer will leave out or add a letter, a syllable, or a word at the most strategic places. Occasionally, they may leave out an entire sentence, and on at least one occasion, someone lost my whole article! The reader was not to be spared so easily—I re-wrote the whole thing.

It is evident that some writers need to review basic sentence structure, including parts of speech and punctuation. I'm sure that some editors deserve an "assist" by the time our articles see the light of day, but when we act as our own editors, we lose that advantage. I refer to the many bulletins published among us, with as many editors. I think some writers use the exclamation point (!) more than they use the period or the question mark. This can only be explained by one of about three alternatives, unless I have overlooked something. These prolific advocates of the exclamation point either don't understand its meaning, have a typewriter with an unusual keyboard, or else they think that almost everything they say is of such profound importance that the

period is unworthy to herald the climax to their exuberant utterance. Then, if they really want to impress us, they simply add a sufficient number of exclamation points (thusly, !!!) befitting such a gem of grammatical grandeur. Generally, those in this category are the younger journalists, and after that particular key on their typewriter becomes warped from excessive use, and they stand ankle-deep in pieces of chalk which have contacted the chalkboard too forcibly, they will settle down to a more sedate manner of expressing themselves.

We don't have to be highly, or even formally educated, in order to be effective in speaking or writing. Some' who have speech impediments are still interesting speakers. And, if we can't write long sentences easily, keep them short. Some questionable words and phrases (such as "ain't"), may be permissible, and even effective, when used sparingly and purposely. Some of the worst offenders are the highly educated who can't (or won't) express themselves in language which can be easily understood.

When writing an article, make a rough draft or outline, then type from it. Let the article "season" for a few hours, or even a day or two, then re-read, re-type, throw it away, or send it to the editor. Double-space your manuscript, and leave suitable margins for corrections or additions by the editor. He may want to add a line of praise to your literary effort, but he can't do it if you don't give him room. You can check the Appendix of any good dictionary for helpful points in writing.

If you really want to improve your writing, you can obtain something like Walsh's Plan English Handbook, take a correspondence course in English Composition (if it isn't convenient for you to attend classes), and check the library or bookstore for related material. It would even be helpful (especially to the editors), to read up on the basic laws which pertain to journalism. There may not be much of a problem in religious journalism pertaining to copyrights, plagiarism, and libel, especially among brethren, but editors still have to protect themselves and practice that ethical behavior which promotes responsible journalism.

There are those among us who are certainly more qualified to write on this subject than am I, but I haven't seen much effort along this line, and thought the several editors may appreciate some help. If you stick to the Bible in your writings, you won't have to worry about the content of your writing; the more you quote from the Bible, the less you will have to be concerned about sentence structure and grammar; and, by improving in the remaining areas, your literary offerings can be interesting and informative. Good writing! Full Speed ahead!! And hold down on the exclamation points!!!

(EDITOR'S NOTE: An article of this kind is long overdue. I am sure other editors will join me in thanking brother Casebolt for this. While I appreciated all he said, his comments about the use of the exclamation point are especially needed. There is a proper place for it but it should be used sparingly. When over-used it is an expression of doubt on the writer's part that he has adequately said exactly

what he meant to, or else that he fears the reader may not have the discernment to recognize brilliance when he reads it. Incidentally, brother Casebolt practices what he preaches along this line. We have seldom caught any kind of flaw in one of his manuscripts. CWA)

Behaving Oneself in God's House

J. Wiley Adams

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A GOOD NAME

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour than silver and gold" (Proverbs 22:1).

We need in our time to instill in our children the value of a good name. A name sums up all we are. I have the same first name and middle initial as my father. He is called by his first name and I by my second. Many times I have been asked what the "J" stands for. Let me tell you a little about that "J".

It stands for a man who is great because he has no idea that he is. A man born of poor parents in eastern North Carolina who spent his early years learning to farm and driving a team of mules "snaking" logs. His mother died when he was twelve largely due to the hardships of the times. As the oldest he was needed to work while the other five children went to school thus preventing his finishing elementary school. Born to strong conservative views he always wanted to be a preacher. Tried in the crucible of hard times, he developed a strong body accompanied by an honest heart.

What does the "J" stand for? A man who pursued his girl friend to eastern Virginia when her widowed mother took her children there to make a living by running a boarding house. He married her and that area became home and still is. The "J" stands for a man who through struggle was fitted to withstand the depression of the 1930's as few others were. It stands for a man who told a bootlegger to move his wares when we moved into a house in which he had his product stored even though he offered him money for the storage space. It stands for a man who in the midst of hard times bought some land, cleared it, sawed logs, hauled them to the mill, built a house of green, rough lumber, taught his sons to pull a crosscut saw. The "J" stands for a man who in the midst of hard times set an abundant table, felt for the underdog, extended hospitality to so many they are Legion, and became a blessing to his neighbors. Supported by a wife who was as prepared as he for those days, together they farmed, raised chickens, paid for their "place", raised two sons and a daughter, gave a home to my grandmother, my great

grandmother, his unmarried sister, his aged father.

What does the "J" stand for? A man who led his family from digression to truth in the early 1940's, who later led them away from liberalism to continue in the way of truth. When his sons left to preach and his daughter married a preacher, the thought of an empty house was too much to consider. They took in foster child after foster child and provided a type of care they never dreamed existed.

What does the "J" stand for? An honest man who has been known to pay his bills at the rate of 50 c a week, a man whose practice was to always look a man straight in the eye, tell him your situation. No one ever refused him credit. The "J" stands for a man who has become a preacher after all through the eldership and his children and grandchildren who preach.

What does the "J" stand for? It stands for all we have mentioned and many more abundant memories, so many they would fill a rather large volume. I pray that I can do as well with the "W" as my father has done with the "J".

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. . ." By JOYNER WILEY ADAMS

LUTHER G. ROBERTS
1903 - 1979

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On the evening of December 21, the gentle spirit of the amiable Luther G. Roberts took its flight to the better world.

During the last two years, brother Roberts' health rapidly declined (mainly because of Parkinson's disease). He became conscience of his failing health in 1977 and saw it was best to "retire" from full-time work with the North Freeport church, Freeport, Texas which he did in September of 1977. From that time until his death, he lived with his beloved and devoted wife Christine in Refugio, Texas.

The last nine months or so were especially hard for him. It is difficult to describe the anguish and heartache he felt in not being able to communicate with those he loved. But, he faced the inevitable with great courage and confidence. And, oh how he loved and appreciated his beloved Christine. She was an ever-present help and joy at his side. No one has ever been blessed with a more loving and sacrificing wife.

Dean Bullock, long-time friend and co-worker, conducted the funeral December 24, 1979 in Refugio, Texas. He spoke of the life-long service brother Roberts rendered to the Lord and His church. Brother Bullock's main topic was 2 Timothy 4: 6-8, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but

unto all them also that love his appearing." He related how well this correlated with the life and service of Luther G. Roberts.

Born near Wildersville, Henderson County, Tennessee, February 28, 1903, he was raised by godly parents, whose primary concern for their children was their education. Luther grew up on farms in Henderson County and attended such "country" schools as Cross Roads, Sandy, Long Sought, and Wildersville. In the fall of 1918, his family moved to Henderson, Chester County, Tennessee. Here he attended Freed-Hardeman College grade school part of 1918-19; and then from 1919 to 1923, he attended Freed-Hardeman College High School. In the fall of 1923, at the invitation of A. G. Freed, he entered David Lipscomb High School and graduated in the spring of 1924. After being out of school for some two years, he again entered Freed-Hardeman College in January of 1927 and finished Junior College work in the spring of 1928. Some of his teachers during this period were A. G. Freed, N. B. Hardeman, L. L. Brigrance, W. H. Owen, E. H. Ijams, W. E. Morgan and M. S. Mason. He completed his work for his B. S. degree at West Texas State College, Canyon, Texas in 1930.

Luther did his first "local work" with the church in Canyon, Texas. From there he moved to Post, Stephenville, San Angelo and Amarillo, Texas. In the fall of 1943, he moved to Abilene where his first wife Anna served as Dean of Women, while he devoted his time wholly to meeting work. From Abilene he moved to Dallas, then to Pampa, Texas. In February of 1948 he accepted the invitation to work with the church in Clovis, New Mexico, where he stayed four years, then, he moved to Corsicana, Borger, and again to Amarillo, Texas. From Amarillo he moved to Salem, Oregon where he preached for ten years and did some of his most satisfying and profitable work. Anna died at Salem in December of 1965. He married Christine Evans in 1967, and in 1968 they moved to Tucumcari, New Mexico. From Tucumcari he moved to Freeport, Texas, where he preached until he retired to live in Refugio, Texas, in September of 1977.

Ira A. Douthitt, under whose preaching Luther was persuaded to obey the gospel and by whose hands he was baptized, used to tell of Luther's conversion and subsequent life as a gospel preacher to his audiences to emphasize what the value of one life can be for the Cause of Christ. It would be impossible to conceive of the many people brother Roberts' life has influenced for good. His direct preaching and his association with people have led thousands to know Christ and what it means to be a Christian and to reverence and obey Christ. This good influence is yet with us and will continue on and on.

Luther preached in half the states and Canada. He engaged in debates to uphold the banner of truth. He was editor of "THE PRECEPTOR" magazine from May 1955 through April 1956. He edited "THE ORACLES" from January 1961 through January 1963. THE ORACLES was dedicated to fight

against institutionalism and liberalism, especially in the Northwestern states.

His preaching was characterized by clearness, forcefulness, and was always marked with emphasis on the scriptures. He spoke in a most pleasing manner with precise diction, good grammar and complete sentences. The greatest aspect of his preaching was his love for the truth and an uncompromising spirit.

Luther worked tirelessly in an effort to serve Christ in the things that would promote the kingdom of God upon the earth. His devotion to the cause of truth had been unquestioned. He stood with the truth when it was not popular to do so, especially at the time institutionalism became an issue.

We extend our sympathy to sister Roberts and his son John T. Roberts of Salem, Oregon. The exceeding great and precious promises of God are theirs; while their husband and father rests from his labors and his works will follow after him.

Truly the life of Luther G. Roberts is a song to be remembered. The song is ended but the melody lingers on.

Using Great Plainness
of Speech

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EVIDENCES — JESUS LIVED

In this article we want to give some external and internal evidences that Jesus of Nazareth actually lived. Not only do we have the words of those who wrote the New Testament that Jesus lived, but historians who were contemporary with Jesus have recorded things concerning his life and death. (Much of the documented proof that will be cited will be taken from the book, *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, by Josh McDowell).

During the lifetime of Jesus, there were historians just as we have historians today. A Roman historian named Cornelius Tacitus, born A.D. 52-54, was the son-in-law of Julius Agricola. As concerning the reign of Nero he writes of the rumor that Nero had ordered the fire at Rome. "To suppress the rumor, he falsely charged with the guilt, and punished with the most exquisite tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. Christus, the founder of the name, was put to death by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius: but the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time broke out again, not only through Judea, where the mischief originated, but through the city of Rome also." (Annal XV.44).

Flavius Josephus a Jewish Historian, born 37 A.D. became a Pharisee at the age of 19; and in A.D. 66

he was the commander of the Jewish forces in Galilee. He was captured and attached to the Roman headquarters. He is quoted as saying after his capture, "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ..." Antiquities XVIII:33. (Early second century).

Not only do we have external evidence in the form of the above quoted historians, and many others could be cited, but since we have shown in previous articles that the Bible is the Word of God, and affirms that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), we now turn to the internal evidence.

The first prophecy that was given concerning the Christ was in Genesis chapter three after Adam and Eve had sinned in the garden of Eden. God said concerning Satan and the woman, Eve, who was deceived by Satan, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). This is the one and only time the Bible refers to "the seed of woman." However the matter is explained more fully in Isaiah 7:14. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This prophecy was fulfilled in Mt. 1:18-25. Though many claim to believe in Jesus, they scoff at the idea of a virgin (a woman who had never cohabited with a man) bearing a son and make Genesis 3:15 and Isaiah 7:14 myths never fulfilled.

Many in derision have said that the account concerning Mary being found with child before she married Joseph was true, that Jesus was an illegitimate child, and that Mary had conceived the child by a Roman soldier who was its father. Such is nothing more than blasphemy. It is also interesting to note that they acknowledge that the account concerning her being with child is a factual account, while in the same context that which was spoken concerning her virginity is not true. Jesus was born of a virgin according to the Scriptures. That's not about it, that's it!

To deny that Jesus lived would be to deny secular history. To deny that He was born of a virgin—thus The Son of God, is to deny Devine history.

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MARRIAGE ARRANGEMENTS PLANNED BY PARENTS



Harry Persaud

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My dear beloved brethren: I am indeed perplexed over a most ungodly condition which is very prominent in our nation today. For example, the rapid rate of increase in divorce, abortion, and premarital sex statistically is alarming.

We may well ask who or what is responsible for this deteriorating condition, which continues to create many problems? Is there no cure for these ills, and solution to these problems? Will you kindly permit me to share with you some of my humble experiences while in Hinduism?

Fifty-six years ago I was born a Hindu in Georgetown, Guiana, now independent Guiana, South America. My ancestors came from India, being brought to Georgetown by the British people as immigrants to work in the sugar plantations.

At the age of twenty (February 1944), I was married to my wife, under the Hindu culture, and in keeping with Hindu tradition. My wife was thirteen years of age at the time. This beautiful and harmonious marriage has lasted for some 36 years in which our family has grown to include 3 sons, 1 daughter, and two grandsons. The young age of marriage may be attributed to Hindu custom and tradition, the system being characterized strictly by parental arrangements and supervision by both sets of parents. In the best interests, and in consideration of the best welfare, parents of both myself and my wife were seeking and choosing the wife and husband respectively. With this thought in mind, both sets of parents will investigate and examine thoroughly the background and history of each prospective husband and wife; sometimes requiring months of periodical meetings together between the parents before they finally decide upon the proper partners for marriage. The final decision in this important matter is based upon the findings and analysis of the parents. While all this investigation and study is being done by the parents, the boy and girl do not even see each other. When the decision has been finalized by the parents, agreeing for the son to marry the daughter, the parents of the son will then bring him to the girl's parents home to meet the parents and his prospective bride. This is the first time the boy and girl have any knowledge that they are to become husband and wife. Thus according to Hindu custom and tradition, the boy and girl have no choice but to respect the decision that has been made for them by their parents. They understand that just as was the case in the lives of their parents and grandparents, they must live together "until death do us part." Under

Hindu arrangements, divorce, fornication, adultery, abortion and things of this nature were relatively unknown. In fact, virginity was highly respected and honored, and both husband and wife under this arrangement have the highest regard for each other, although neither knows God or Jesus Christ or the gospel.

The girl was brought up to understand and came to a realization that her husband was all she possessed for the rest of her life. She must serve him "till death do us part." This she has inherited from her Hindu culture.

I would now like to present some very interesting facts of the Hindu system which regulate the conduct of the prospective marriage partners: after the boy and girl have seen each other, they are not permitted any association with each other until after the marriage. Please note, that this rule does not imply a lack of trust, but I know it defeats the Devil in his devices to corrupt the prospective marriage partners before the marriage. During the waiting period before marriage, there is absolutely no love-making; in fact, we did not know or understand what love-making meant or was all about. We were simply following the rules and examples of our ancestors, and this we understood that once married, it was for all time, and despite the hardships and trials they stuck together till the end. Since it was not possible to visit or touch your future companion until after marriage, we were ignorant of romance, dating, love-making, courting, kissing, etc.

Although Hinduism is idolatry, and it may be backwardness in culture, with the prohibition of the contact between the prospective partners, the Devil has a difficult time of exercise of his plan. We may not altogether agree with these Hindu principles or Hindu culture but I believe we can see the wisdom in some of these principles. In Hinduism, young women are taught by their mothers and grandmothers to love, respect and serve their husbands till death. During the Hindu wedding ceremony, the garment of the bride and the garment of the groom are literally tied (joined) together. As they walk slowly forward, she follows behind him in symbolic recognition of her husband as her guide and leader, and in humbleness of heart she never feels equal to him. This is in great contrast with the attitude of many (some Christians) today. Too many wives today have very little if any regard for their husbands, and this in a so-called "Christian nation."

Now, what is your estimation of the value of these Hindu principles? Please consider, if you will, that young people in our day and culture are most fortunate; living in a fully developed western civilization and "Christian" influences. They have the right or freedom of choice and decision. We are characterized by a society which professes to know God and His son Jesus Christ, and yet we are besieged by the most degenerate prevailing conditions. The divorce rate is alarming, abortion may be had almost at will, and premarital sex is free on demand. Where are we lacking, and who is responsible?

(Editor's note: Brother Persaud does not recommend that in our culture marriages must be arranged by

parents without the consent of their children as is practiced in Hinduism. But he does make an interesting point as to the lasting nature of such arranged marriages in contrast to the devastating rate of divorce in a society which boasts that its freedom rests upon divine principles of truth. What we see is the abuse of privilege under law to Christ. Ponder his words well. CWA)

CAN MAN BELIEVE IN GOD? (3)

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Every effect requires an adequate cause. All that now exists is the effect of whatever caused it to come into being. We ask, then, what caused the universe and all that's in it? However one answers, his solution must be sufficient to adequately explain it all; whether he looks to God or to some chance accident for his answer, he must be able to demonstrate the adequacy of that solution.

Look at two effects: a wrist watch and a car. How do we account for their existence? What caused them? Did they suddenly appear out of the air? Did they result from a chance explosion of gases and other elements? Could a horse have made them, or did they grow on a vine? We readily recognize these "causes" as neither adequate nor rational.

And why are those causes insufficient? Because the two effects show intelligence in their design? Because they exhibit careful engineering and workmanship? Who would deny that these "causes" are the only rational explanation? What, then, explains them: a blind accident of "nature" or an intelligent and skilled workman?

The livable earth and our orderly universe are effects which also demand an adequate cause. Are they marked by chaotic disorder or by detailed design, skillful craftsmanship, marvelous engineering, and awesome intelligence? Do we see such qualities of an intelligent personality which explains the wrist-watch but refuse to see them as explaining the solar system, from which the watch was copied? Do we demand an intelligent cause for the car but not for the laws of science and physics which make it possible to make and to operate it?

When we see the inescapable evidences of intelligent planning, skill, engineering, mathematical precision, and workmanship in our livable world, logic requires us to see behind them an Intelligence and a Power adequate and infinite enough to explain them: and that Intelligent Power is the Almighty God revealed to us in the Bible. No other cause is either sufficient or rational.

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Overseas Preaching Report

Wallace H. Little

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Corinth, MS 38834



Glenn Jones, in a recent report from Germany, illustrates the problems facing men trying to spread the gospel in other parts of the world. He writes, in part:

"In our first session it was clear to me that Paul rejected God's existence, miracles, the inspiration of the Scriptures, sin, and judgment. This did not surprise me since this is a common view among German (and American) theologians. In our reading of Luke He spoke of the serious historical research behind the writing of the gospel (Lk 1:01-04). We also discussed the significance of basic presuppositions regarding our outlook on nature, showing how it was difficult for Mary and Zacharias to accept the miraculous births announced to them as long as they looked at natural law alone (Lk 1:18, 34); however with God in the picture all things, including miracles, are possible (Lk 1:37). The way Luke ends Jesus' genealogy with God (Lk 3:38) raised the question about how our own personal genealogy should be ended in order to explain our existence ultimately. What is the origin of man's personality: God or matter and energy? Does man possess a soul given by God, or is he a biochemical machine? These and many other subjects caused Paul to reconsider his views. It is evident that Paul does not know exactly what he should believe, and the inner struggle between belief and unbelief in the Biblical sense is still going on in his mind. However, we hope our continued study of God's Word with him will bring him to the belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Bob Nichols, whose experience in Japan is unmatched among preaching brethren today, has often said that one of the biggest problems there is to teach the concept of God. The Japanese are so steeped in polytheism their language does not have the words necessary to convey the monotheism of the Jehovah-God. While stationed there in military service, I saw a situation which well shows how difficult a problem this is. One young serviceman, a member of the congregation there, was dating a Japanese girl he eventually married. He very much wanted to convert her to the Lord. When he tried to talk with her about God, her answer was: "You are god enough for me." And we think we have problems!

You brethren who are supporting Filipino preachers, please take notice. Due to move induced and other address changes, I have lost contact with a number of churches and individual saints assisting in the work in the Philippines. I would like to regain

contact, and soon. Thus, when I return from my 1980 preaching trip there, I will be able to send you a copy of the report on that trip, and bring you up to date on what is happening there. Please, those who are presently supporting a man there, or who are otherwise interested in that work, drop me a line at: 1201 Meeks Street, Corinth, Mississippi. Place your name, address, his name and whether this is an individual or a congregation on a postal card and send it along. Do this even if you believe I do have your current address, "just in case".

Below is from **Royce Chandler**, on the work in **Columbia, South America**.

"From just one Christian to over 130 and in only 18 months! That gives you some idea of the growth of the Lord's work, of the hunger for the Word, and the diligence of brother Carlos Restrepo in the city of Bogota, Columbia. And our recent trip brought insights that were even more encouraging:

1) The continued, rapid growth in Carlos' spiritual knowledge and wisdom.

2) The dedicated spirit of the new saints, together with their warm, profuse, and genuine love which they openly display toward each other.

3) The relatively large number (8-10) of young, talented men who are eagerly desiring training and teaching, in order to spend their lives preaching.

4) The very high quality of the people who now make up the family of God there, in terms of personal traits, intelligence, family background (moral) and training, and diligence in Bible study.

"Brother Wayne Partain, who knows the work well, summarized it well when he said: 'I have no doubt but what Carlos' untiring, relentless teaching way into the wee hours of the morning of individual after individual is the main explanation for the strength of this group. Nestor, the Leon's, Castors, Jorge Gaitan, Hernan—I'd compare them with the average member in the States who've been members 10 years or more.' Noting that these young saints have been saints for only a year, that evaluation of their growth says volumes about the eagerness with which they search the Word.

"They continue to meet and study every night of the week (averaged 40 per night while we were there Nov 11-18, 1979), as they've been doing for several months. Many of those baptized have been lost to the Lord for a variety of reason; while some of these were just poor soil, like we find here at home, others of them have suffered great pressure and even physical abuse at the hands of parents, who are determined to see that their children remain Catholics. That so many of them have remained faithful is a tribute to their zeal, to Carlos' remarkable drive and work, and to the comfort and strength provided them by our Lord Jesus.

"We rejoice greatly in that work and in the Lord's granting us the opportunity to serve Him in that cause. Please pray for them."

Shades of faithfulness and 2 Tim 3:12! Persecution resulting from becoming a Christian, and remaining faithful to the Lord is one thing common to many places overseas. Brother Chandler wrote they lose some there because of this persecution. Well, we lose

(quite) a few here, without much persecution. I wonder what would happen if we had to face some real persecution? The early saints did; and some of the present ones do. Would we have the faith to stand? More important than the "we": would I (each one of us asking him/herself this question)?

Attention elders! A number of churches are assisting in work overseas, in such countries as Rhodesia, South Africa, Nigeria, India, Germany, England, Ireland, various nations in South America, the far east including Japan and the Philippines, and Australia. I have probably missed some. I mention this for two reasons: First, we might understand the liberals' claim that "the anti's are not doing anything" is false. It is true, however, we could and ought to do a great deal more, so let's not get self-satisfied. Second, to encourage elders in churches having part in these works TO GO THERE PERSONALLY, and see what your support is doing. For fifteen years, I have been trying to get elders to visit the work they support in the Philippines. To date, my record is unblemished: it is a "perfect" zero.

It is good when preachers go, and help spread the Word in these foreign places. In fact, in many places, if the preacher does not go, no Word will be spread. But it is important elders see the work also, to be knowledgeable concerning it, to insure proper stewardship is exercised. An additional benefit would be the eye-opening and startling awakening as to the conditions and difficulties of work in other lands. Such knowledge, such awareness would be very beneficial in sustaining our zeal in support of these works, and prevent growing weary in well-doing (Gal 6:9).

THE KINGDOM CAME

O. E. Watts
Box 895
Craig, CO 81625

God plainly tells us that the kingdom came, and when it did. Most of our religious neighbors are mistaken about it. We should have at hand the Scriptures which teach the truth on this. The claim of the Jehovah's Witnesses that the kingdom came in 1914 is involved as are the future-kingdom-on-earth theories of the denominations.

With Power

Jesus stated flatly that the kingdom would come in the lifetime of men listening to him. He did not say, "Maybe". He said, "Verily" in Mark 9:1: "Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power." The NASB reads, ". . . after it has come with power". To sincere believers in the error we should read this, perhaps over and over. Stress the words, "in no wise". The theorists have a choice. They can reject their theories; or they can reject the Word of God.

But it is of profit to pursue the idea of "with power" further. Per Luke 24:49 he told them, "But tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high". And in answering their question about the coming of the kingdom (Acts 1:6) he told them (Verse 8), "But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you".

Per Acts 2 the power came. The kingdom came and was ever afterward referred to as being in existence.

David's Throne

Much is said about prophecies concerning the throne of David in the promotion of "later kingdom" theories. On Pentecost (Acts 2:30) the inspired Peter said that David was a prophet and knew "that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne."

It is good teaching to stop right there and ask, "What was David talking about?" The consistent JW or premillennialist will start telling you that he was speaking of 1914 or of a kingdom yet future now. Then, we should kindly point out what the Spirit said that David was talking about. Verse 31 says "he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ."

The resurrection and ascension are sometimes spoken of as one. Ephesians 1:20-23 tells us when Jesus was placed over all things. It mentions God's might, "which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

The Kingdom Now

The apostle Paul wrote to Christians (Col. 1:13) that the Father "delivered us out of the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love." We can not escape the truth here. The kingdom was in existence. Christians were in it. No one could have been translated into something which was still 1900 years in the future.

The Spirit-led John agreed with the other inspired apostles. He wrote (Rev. 1:6) that Jesus "made us to be a kingdom". Honestly, friend, we can not get a future kingdom out of that statement. That had happened. Jesus had already done it! Then in Verse 9 we read, "I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus . . ." Can one be a partaker in a kingdom which does not yet exist?

Hebrews 12:28 in the American Standard Version is agreed by all scholars to be exactly what the Greek says: "Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe." Obviously the kingdom was present and their "receiving" it (present participle) had to be before the offering of service. The "translators" of the New World version of the JW's could not face this. So

they made it read "to receive" (future)! But God said "receiving" and they and their followers will face it at the judgment.

For those who want the truth on this subject there is the word of truth. If people reject that, there is nothing else that will set them free.

The Father has translated His redeemed into the kingdom of the Son of His love. Christians should glory and rejoice that Jesus, the King of kings, is reigning over them in his kingdom now.

THE PRIVILEGES OF SONSHIP

Romans 8

(No. 1)

Wilson Adams
317 Trinkle Ave. N.E.
Roanoke, VA 24012



The eighth chapter of Romans is (at least in this writers estimation) one of the mountain tops of the New Testament. In meaning to the Christian it portrays at once a beautiful picture of what it means to be a child of God, and as His child, an heir also of His glory. Excluding the epilogue and salutation from the book, one finds that the verbal as well as the logical center of this marvelous epistle lies in verses 16-17 of the eighth chapter:

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that *we are children of God, and if children, heirs also*, heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

There are two words in this text which in my appraisal suggests the whole train of thought in the chapter. One is "children," the other "heirs." By using the word "children" the apostle seems to express the simple thought of being born of God, of belonging to Him. Conversely, by using the word "heir," he suggests the idea of being one in a family of children that come together into an inheritance of an estate. The word "child" represents the position of a child as such, signifying what is to be expected from him in that regard. While the word "heir" conveys the position of the child in the family, denoting the blessings received. Let me suggest to you that there are twelve great thoughts in this chapter concerning the sons of God: six refer to the child-life (what is expected), and six refer to the family-life (blessings received).

To understand this eighth chapter one must first realize that Romans is a book of contrasts, contrasting on the one hand the soul this is without peace, while on the other the soul that is at peace. Paul uses three words to express the condition of the soul before one becomes a child of God:

"condemned" by the law
"enslaved" by sin
"dead" to life

Yet, the apostle shows that children of God are no longer:

"condemned" "no condemnation," vs. 1
"enslaved" "hath made me free," vs. 2
"dead" "Spirit of Life," vs. 2

The once condemned, enslaved, and dead are now justified, free, and alive in Christ. How so? By becoming children of God!

Children of God, (vs. 16)

As children of God the apostle first acknowledges that God expects from us a spiritual life (vs. 1-3). We see in these verses a consideration of three laws: (1) the law of the Spirit of life (the gospel, Rom. 1:16), (2) the law of sin and death (involving the dominion which sin has over man and the penalty for such sin, Rom. 6:23; 7:23), and (3) the law of Moses. The point here being that the law of the Spirit of life is able to set you free from the law of sin and death which the Law of Moses could never do (Rom. 7:24-25). There was no way to destroy the reign of sin except through Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:23). Formerly sin reigned as master and held the sinner in captivity, but Jesus came and through His sinless life led captivity captive (Eph. 4:8). Christ came and conquered (1) the evil forces (Col. 2:15), (2) the devil (1 Jno. 3:8), (3) sin (1 Cor. 15:56-57), and finally (4) death itself (Acts 2:22-24). Thus, it is through Christ that we attain a spiritual life. The Savior Himself proclaimed, "I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly" (John 10:10). O but you say, "We are still tempted!" Yes, my friend, but once again Jesus leads us in a spiritual life for He proves the way of escape (1 Cor. 10:13).

Paul also proclaims that as children, the Lord anticipates from us a **spiritual walk** (vs. 4). Realizing that the requirement of the law of Moses was perfect obedience, we see that while not accomplished then, it is fulfilled NOW in those who obey the gospel ("in us"). The gospel, gentle reader, accomplishes what the old law could not — it makes us free from sin and thus righteous before God. However, at this point let it be noted that the old law WAS perfect as God intended, for we read in Heb. 8:7-8 that the fault was not with the law but with the people. The people sinned thus making it necessary for someone to fulfill the requirement of the law (Matt. 5:17).

Let me interject just here that there are three verbs in the New Testament that cover our whole experience as disciples: (1) "stand," (2) "walk," and (3) "sit." Our *standing* represents our position in Christ when after obeying the truth we stand firm upon the Rock of Ages. Our *walking* signifies our progress made after we have stood (Rom. 6:4). And third, only after we take our stand and show our spiritual walk can we truly *sit* with Jesus, There may be many a bump and bruise along the way, many a persecution, sickness, and sacrifice to be made, but as children, God expects us to press on toward the prize of the high calling of Christ.

Third, Paul informs us that in order to please Him we must have a spiritual mind (vs. 5-6). There are too many folks nowadays who have their minds set

on the flesh, devoting all of their time, effort, and attention on this world. Let me suggest to you that while the mind of the flesh cast it's eyes downward; the mind of the Spirit looks upward. The mind of the flesh feeds on earthly things and trivial matters; while the mind of the Spirit considers heavenly things. The mind of the flesh only gives death; while the mind of the Spirit gives life eternal. The mind of the flesh constitutes turmoil; whereas the mind of the Spirit gives the peace that surpasses our understanding. There are three words that explain the "spiritual mind": (1) reference, (2) deference, and (3) preference. The child of God lives with *reference* to God, with *deference* to the will of God, and with *preference* for the approbation and praise of God. Col. 3:2 sums up the goal of the spiritual mind, "Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on the earth."

Next, we see that God demands from His children a **spiritual growth** (vs. 12-14). There are two things here taught that are necessary for growth: (1) putting to death the deeds of the body, and (2) being led by the Spirit. As one is led by the Spirit he has new goals and new desires. He serves a new gospel, a new master, and has citizenship in a new kingdom. The one involves mortification; the other sanctification. The one involves throwing off the old and dead; the other, taking on the new and living. And while the one involves casting off the poison of the evil one; the other means enjoying the satisfaction of the Bread of Life. And yet, surprisingly enough many regard their spiritual growth with a certain flippancy and unconcern resulting in a multitude of spiritual dwarfs in the kingdom of God. And yes, isn't it a good thing that we don't dress physically according to our spiritual knowledge? Talk about indecency! Paul says as children God expects us to grow. Considering other passages such as Eph. 4:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:2; and 2 Pet. 3:18 will surely convince us of our responsibility in that regard.

Then in verse 15 we are admonished to have a **spiritual talk**. Parents not only expect their children to walk and to grow, but to talk as well. Do you realize that there are two words which are common for all children, of all ages, and from all continents? These are the words: "mamma" and "papa." While most words have an etymological source, the words "mamma" and "papa" have none, but rather come from the grammar of nature. We realize that a child uses the simplest of vowels and because he can make only one syllable he simply repeats — "pa-pa." And behold the joy in daddy's face the first time such is uttered! Now watch the similarity as Paul says that God gives unto us a spiritual adoption and because of such we cry, "Ab-ba! Father!" Did you know that the word "Abba" is Aramaic for "papa?" Realizing our spiritual adoption we cry forth "Ab-ba! Father!" And now see the joy expressed in our heavenly Father's face when we for the first time proclaim our relationship to Him.

Yes, what a blessing it is to have a spiritual talk. And without trying to intrude into your personal affairs dear reader, just let me pose this question: How often do YOU talk with the Father? There is in

our society a sad malady called the generation gap where a lack of communication exists between parent and child. Mother and dad bemoan the fact that after all they have done for their child, after all the blessings they have bestowed, and after all of the times of sacrifice and hardship given for their offspring — their children refuse even to talk with them! And they are CRUSHED and HURT so badly. My friend, now you know how God feels when as His child you refuse blatantly to communicate with Him! After all He has done for you. After all of the blessings He has bestowed your way, and after all of the sacrifices He has made for YOU — how can you refuse to talk with Him? And as mother and dad are hurt, let me suggest that SO IS GOD! Let us be more diligent in our spiritual talk, realizing that when we are faced with despair, trials, and tribulations — He is there and promises to help.

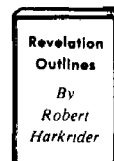
And finally Paul says that God gives us a **spiritual adoption** (vs. 15). The word "adoption" is used here differently than what you and I are accustomed to. Now, it means to take into the family someone not born into the family. However, then it meant by definition, "to attain majority" and referred to the declaration of a son's majority. We see from the old Roman economy that when a boy reached legal age, his father would escort him into the Forum and from the platform announce: "This is my son; he has now come to full age; he inherits my name, my prosperity, and my social position." At which time the father would take from his son the toga praetexta (the boy coat) and award to him the toga virilis (the man coat). Turning to the crowd he would again proudly announce: "THIS IS MY SON!"

Paul possibly refers to this in verse 23 when he says that we "wait eagerly for our adoption as sons," i.e. we wait for the full blessings that our adoption affords. While true that we are adopted upon conversion (vs. 15), we have yet to receive the full privileges of adoption (vs. 17). Our adoption upon conversion may be secret to the world, but the time will come when God takes us unto the Forum of the universe, and from the platform of space announces before all creation: "THIS IS MY SON!" Upon which He will give us a new coat, a new dwelling, a new home — HIS HOME! Why? We are His sons! And as sons "heirs according to the promise."

NEXT: The Privileges of Sonship — Heirs of God

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

SEND NEWS ITEMS TO WILSON ADAMS

Beginning with the April issue this column will be written each month by: Wilson Adams, 317 Trinkle Avenue, N. B., Roanoke, VA 24012. Send all news items to him. If he is not on your bulletin or newsletter mailing list, please add him to your list. Others are interested in the work where you live and would be edified by knowing of your progress. Wilson Adams preaches for the Georgia Avenue Church in Roanoke, Virginia and is the son of the editor. We appreciate his help with the paper and look forward to the news columns he will submit each month.

VERNON JUDY, Rt. 4, Box 362, Port Jervis, NY 12771—I have just started working with the church in Sussex, NJ. We are a small group and would greatly appreciate your fellowship if you are in the area. For information contact me at 201-293-7045. As of this time I still have only about 1/2 of my needed support. This is hindering my work here because of a secular job. If any can help in this it would be greatly appreciated.

NEW BUILDING IN JACKSON, TENNESSEE

RONALD B. ROARK, Jackson, TN—The Hollywood Drive church has moved into a new building located at 841 Old Hickory Blvd. The church here is growing and is taking a positive stand for truth in this area. We invite anyone passing through or living in Jackson or vicinity to worship with us. Phone 668-1794.

B. G. ECHOLS, 7 Ridgewood Ave., Glen Ridge, NJ 07028—Although 1979 was not one of our better years, we did see progress in the church in East Orange, New Jersey. Nine were baptized, two restored and three identified. Our average Sunday morning attendance rose to an all time high of 126 for the year. We start the new year spending \$775 per month on evangelism outside of New Jersey.

TO NORWAY

WALLACE H. LITTLE, 1201 Meeks St., Corinth, MS 38834—Tom Bunting (1327 Clifton Road, Savannah, TN 38372) plans to move to Norway to preach. God willing, he will depart in June, 1980 and remain there for several years. The few saints who formerly worshipped there are scattered. Some have passed away. Tom has been there before and knows the people, the country and the language. He is well qualified for the work. His wife shares his enthusiasm for it also. They are willing to go. Who will send? His total support requirement is \$2,000 per month. He still lacks

\$1500. The cost of living there would scare most of us. He will need every bit of this, just to get along. At that, it will be anything but "high on the hog". In addition, he still needs half of his travel fund. June is not that far away. He has much preparation to do and ought not to have to be concerned with the nagging bother over whether his support will be forthcoming. Brethren, consider this appeal. Contact him and offer your help in this. God will bless you for this.

LECTURES IN PASADENA, TEXAS

The Southside church in Pasadena, Texas where Dee Bowman and Fred Gore preach plans a lecture program for June 2-5. Speakers for the series will be Harry Pickup, Jr., Homer Hailey, Ed Harrell and Connie W. Adams. Specific subjects will be announced next month.

LECTURES IN MT. PLEASANT, TEXAS

PATRICK PARISH, 815 S. Jefferson, Mt. Pleasant, Texas 75455—The Southside church in Mt. Pleasant plans another lecture series for June 15-19. Housing will be provided for visitors who request it as long as space allows. The theme for this year is: SECULARISM. The following speakers and subjects will be presented:

Sunday—10:30 AM —"What Is Secularism?", Ed Harrell, Birmingham, Alabama; 6:00 PM —"Characteristics of Secularism", R. J. Stevens, Port Neches, Texas.

Monday—8 PM—"Which Things Are To Perish With the Using", Dee Bowman, Pasadena, Texas.

Tuesday—The Seeds of Secularism—9:30 AM —"Sensualism: The Lust of the Flesh", Tom Roberts, Fort Worth, Texas; 10:35 AM —"Materialism: The Lust of the Eyes", Ed Harrell; 11:30 AM —"Intellectualism: The Vainglory of Life", Dee Bowman; 8:00 PM —"Where Thy Treasure Is", Robert Farish, Sherman, Texas.

Wednesday—The Manifestations of Secularism—9:30 AM —"Animalism: Moral Decline", Dee Bowman; 10:35 AM —"Hedonism: Recreational Mania", Robert Farish; 11:30 AM —"Humanism: Antipathy to Spiritual Things", Ed Harrell; 8:00 PM —"What Doth It Profit a Man?", Tom Roberts.

Thursday—The Antidote For Secularism—9:30 AM —"The Word of God, Revealing Eternal Values", Robert Farish; 10:35 AM —"The Word of God, Converting Secular Souls", Dee Bowman; 11:30 AM —"The Word of God, Edifying Saints in a Secular Society", Tom Roberts; 8:00 PM —"Choosing Rather", Ed Harrell.

The singing will be directed by R. J. Stevens with the song service beginning at 7:30 each evening.

KEN WILLIAMS, 11 Compton Rd., Asheville, NC 28806—This past year has been a very good one for us. Our attendance is up five to ten more over what it was a year ago. We are averaging close to 50 on Sunday mornings. Several new families have moved in. Some of these are from a liberal background, but are showing a willingness to consider these matters open-mindedly. The highlight of the year for me was an opportunity to attend a private healing. I had been studying with Steve Jarrad, a man in the charismatic movement and was making great strides. In an effort to help him, his fellow-charismatics promised to prove me wrong by performing a miracle. I volunteered one of our members, a man born blind. They really believed they could do it. I still cannot understand how they could remain in their error after their complete failure that day. Steve, though, was more honest and broke with them completely after that. He now has his sights set on becoming a faithful gospel preacher.

WARNING

RODNEY MILLER, 15 Par St., Orlando, Florida—A 45-50 year old man, medium height, about 150 pounds with graying hair in a crew-cut is making the rounds of central Florida churches in January begging funds to get back to his home in Pasadena, California. He lists as his home address: 2535 Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, California. He presented himself as **DON HILL**, a Christian, out of duty since his wife and child were killed in an auto accident in 1968. He was supposed to be a member of the Bellaire church in Houston, Texas and uses Don Willis as a reference. He is extremely knowledgeable about the church and the issues of liberalism and conservatism. He seems to understand well the orphan home arguments and the weaknesses of brethren who support them out of the church treasury. He collected funds from Christians at several congregations by sincerely telling the above story to each and indicating they were the only ones in the area he had visited and asked for money. He drives a gray-green four-door Chrysler, 1972 model with California tags.

NEW PAPER TO FEATURE FIRST PRINCIPLES

JOHN McCORT, 637 E. Washington St., Greencastle, Indiana 46135—Harry Lewis and I, Along with several other preachers have started a 16 page monthly paper entitled "FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIAN". It will be professionally typeset and will deal solely with the first principles of Christianity. The single subscription price will be \$5 per year with reduced rates for clubs and bundles to churches.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: We have seen the first issue of this paper and it really looks good. The material is good and it is well laid out and printed. We wish these brethren well with this paper.]

NEW CONGREGATION IN MT. VERNON, INDIANA

QUENTIN GWIN, Box 291, Mt. Vernon, IN 47620—For several years seven families have been driving from Mt. Vernon to Evansville for services. The work in Evansville is going well and those in Mt. Vernon felt they would be more effective in the Lord's work by starting a congregation here. The congregation will be known as the Southwind Church of Christ and meets at 110 West Third St. in Mt. Vernon. We first met as a congregation on January 6, 1980 with 18 present. We have unusual hours on

Sunday AM so as to have Gene Taylor of Evansville deliver a sermon prior to the Bible Study meeting time at Northwest in Evansville. Gene also meets with us on Tuesday evenings for our mid-week service. On Lord's days we meet for worship at 8:15 AM with Bible study at 9:15. The evening service is at 6 PM. We meet on Tuesdays at 7 PM. The men of the congregation are delivering the Sunday evening lessons. We would be pleased if you will tell any that you know are going to be in the area about our new work.

BOB DOBSON, 520 Mary Esther Cut-Off, Fort Walton Beach, Florida 32548—We recently concluded a gospel meeting with Jack Kirby of Las Cruces, New Mexico presenting a special series called "Truth Vs. Error." As a skilled carpenter, brother Kirby showed from the New Testament glory and majesty of the Lord's church, and then exposed forcefully the errors of the doctrines of men and their churches. We had a number attend from various denominational groups. We recommend highly brother Kirby and his series of lessons as a tool to reach denominational people. Gospel meetings are very much alive and healthy when planned purposefully and carried out with enthusiasm and dedication.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SIMPSONVILLE, KENTUCKY—The church in Simpsonville would like to find a full time gospel preacher. Simpsonville is located 20 miles east of Louisville in a fast growing area. The congregation of about 45 prefers a man over 30. Most support can be provided locally. If interested contact Bill R. King, Rt. 3, Box 2, Aqua Shores, Shelbyville, KY 40065 or call 502-633-1599. **OCEAN SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI**—A small but enthusiastic congregation in a much needed area would like to locate a full time preacher. Ocean Springs is located 20 miles from both the Gulfport and Pascagoula congregations. We have our own building and much potential here. Contact Leo Hastings, Hwy. 90E, Ocean Springs, MS 39564. Phone 601-875-5432.

GRADY, ARKANSAS—The church in Grady needs a full time gospel preacher. Attendance runs in the 60's. We are self-supporting and can also furnish a three bedroom house for the preacher and family. If interested please write to: Church of Christ, P.O. Box 345, Grady, Arkansas 71644.

DEBATE

Nathan Haygood of Waverly, Tennessee will meet Jack Rudd, March 24-25, 27-28, in a debate on the sponsoring church arrangement and benevolent homes question. March 24-25 will be in the building at Eastside church in Waverly, Tennessee with the sessions on March 27-28 in the building of the Tennessee City Church. Sessions will begin at 7:30 each night. For further information you may call Nathan Haygood at 615-296-4657 or 296-7193.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

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