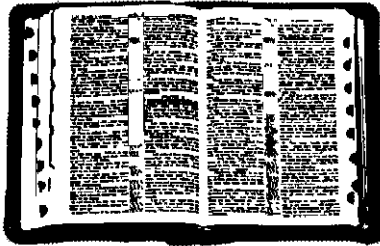


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXII

OCTOBER, 1981

NUMBER 10

ANSWERS

for our hope

Send Bible questions to:

Marshall E. Patton

10511 Moonlight Way
Valley Station, KY 40272



BACK TO HUNTSVILLE

Early this year I made known to the church in Valley Station, Ky. that my plans would involve a change in the work there later in the year (July). The following excerpt from *Valley Tidings*, June 1981 issue, sets forth the facts pertinent to this move:

"We are returning to Huntsville, Alabama and to the Weatherly Heights church where I formerly worked for eleven years. Brother Guy McDaniel now serves as the faithful evangelist here. Using this as "home-base" I look forward to being somewhat free of the restrictions and limitations of full time local work and more free to do the work of an evangelist in a wide field—hold more regular meetings, weekend meetings, and series on special topics, etc. On Sundays when I am home and with support from the Weatherly Heights church I shall be helping the recently formed church in Scottsboro, Alabama. Our goal is to help them secure property, preach for them until they can secure a full time evangelist, and to help get a sound church on its feet in this city. We solicit your prayers in our behalf in this new field of labor."

Plans relative to this move have now been realized. Currently I am enjoying preaching on Sundays for the Eastside church in Scottsboro. This work offers good potential and is encouraging.

I expect to be present hereafter with this column on a regular basis.

Satan—Did He Fall From Heaven?

QUESTION: Does the Bible teach that Satan was once in heaven and because of sin was cast down to earth? In answering this question, please deal with the following scriptures: Isa. 14:12, Lk. 10:18; Rev. 12:7-9.—M.B.

ANSWER: No, the Bible does not teach that Satan was cast from heaven to earth because of sin on his part. If so, I do not know of any Scripture that so teaches. The references cited do not so teach and efforts to so use these verses involve a mishandling of the word of God.

Isa. 14:12 is a "proverb" (a wise saying—in this instance a prophecy) spoken against the king of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar) because of his arrogance and pride. Verse four of this chapter says so! Verse twelve is obviously within the context of verse four and is part of the "proverb." The word "Lucifer" signifies the morning star—a bringer of light—which, if applied to Satan, involves incongruity in the highest degree.

Luke 10:18 is in response to the report of the Seventy concerning their victory over demons (agents of Satan). Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." The lexicographer, A. T. Robertson, comments: "As a flash of lightning out of heaven quick and startling, so the victory of the Seventy over the demons, the agents of Satan, forecast his downfall and Jesus in vision pictured it as a flash of lightning" (*Word Pictures In The New Testament*, p. 148).

Many authorities agree that "heaven" must refer to the lightning and not to Satan. If so, then Jesus, in a vision, saw Satan go down in defeat (in a flash—as lightning from heaven) as his agents were overpowered by the Seventy.

Some, however, see "heaven" as relating to Satan symbolically (Cf. N. A. S. V.; *Meyer's Commentary On The New Testament*, Vol. II, pp. 386, 387). Such use is often found in prophetic or visionary language. If so, then Jesus saw Satan thrown down (in a flash) from his seat or position of power, symbolized by the word

"heaven."

In either instance we have no proof of a literal casting down of Satan from heaven.

Rev. 12:7-9 is in that book in the New Testament by which the truth under consideration is "signified" unto us (Rev. 1:1). The message is prophetic or visionary and, therefore, involves symbolic language. The war which took place between Michael and his angels and the dragon (the devil, v. 9) and his angels was not a literal war in heaven, but a spiritual struggle in which the devil (symbolized by the dragon) suffered defeat. After all, do literal wars take place in heaven? The results of this conflict, shown in the context (vs. 10ff), reveal the fulfillment of that which God had purposed, planned, promised and prophesied—salvation, the establishment of the kingdom, the reign and authority of Christ, as well as the defeat of Satan. This struggle began with the fall of man and reached its climax in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. All men may now receive salvation through Christ, and Satan who formerly "accused them before our God day and night" can no longer make such accusation.

Concerning the origin of Satan, much of that taught today is pure speculation. Many of those things we would like to know are among the unrevealed things which belong unto God (Deut. 29:29). While there are some reasonable inferences that follow from things revealed, one cannot speak with certainty of the subject. We need most of all to face up to the reality of his existence and to the need of being delivered from his "power of darkness" and being "translated into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13). We need to realize that ultimate victory comes to those who are "faithful unto death" (Rev. 2:10).

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Volume 22 OCTOBER, 1981 Number 10

Published Monthly at
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Second Class Postage Paid at Brooks, Kentucky
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CONNIE W. ADAMS, Editor

Office of Publication
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Editorial

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IS THE SALT LOSING HIS SAVOUR?

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Mt. 5:13). With these words our Lord impressed the need for the saving influences of the righteous. The uses of salt are varied. Salt preserves. Salt seasons. Salt destroys. Each of these uses is beneficial. But when the salt has lost its savour, it is powerless to render good results.

There are other references to the influence which God's people are expected to have on a sin-cursed and benighted world. In the same context above, our Lord likened the citizens of his kingdom to light but warned of obscuring that light under a bushel. Paul said "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life...." (Phil. 2:15-16).

The good done by even one candle is amazing. A few weeks ago we took a tour through Mammoth Cave. Deep in the bowels of the earth, the plug was pulled and we were in total darkness. Nothing was visible, not even a hand in front of your face. Then a match was struck. Just one match. What a difference it made. This is the answer when a Christian despairs of doing good because "I am just one. What good can I do?"

Jesus said "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, til the whole was leavened" (Mt. 13:33). Leaven works quietly, but it does work.

But what happens for the good of this world when there is no more leaven to work, no more light to shine and no salt to season and save? Jesus said that salt which had lost his savour was good for nothing but to be cast out. Sodom did not have enough righteous salt to make it worth saving. Only righteous Lot and two of his daughters escaped. God brought out what little salt was left.

A Distinct People

The very process of conversion separates us from the world of sin. We are "delivered. . . from the power of darkness" (Col. 1:13) and called upon to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). The church is a sanctified, cleansed and washed body to be presented "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without

blemish" (Eph. 5:26—27). Those who make up the church are told to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1 Jno. 2:15—17). We are charged to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17).

While in the world we are "strangers and pilgrims" and are to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11). We cannot save the world by plunging headlong into its unrighteous course. The manners and morals of this world are foreign to the people of God. There can be no sober, righteous and godly living without first learning to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:11—12). The very presence of a righteous life stands as a rebuke to the licentious course of this world. This is the reason the wicked are so intolerant of the godly. Jesus came into a world of gross wickedness but did not stain himself with its vices. "He did no sin" and thereby "left us an example" (1 Pet. 2:21-22). He was tempted in all points, as we are "yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). He was saving salt, brightening light and spreading leaven. What if that salt had lost his savour? What if that light had been hidden under a bushel? What if that leaven had not worked? What hope would we have?

Shameful Evidences

While searching for signs of good among those washed in the blood of the lamb, we would be foolish to close our eyes to shameful evidences, which become apparent with each passing day, that some of the salt is losing its savour. In traveling among brethren throughout the nation we see many encouraging things. But the joy of all that is tempered with the alarming rate at which so many who once walked in robes of righteousness are now swallowed up in the course of this world.

(1) The pursuit of **Mammon** has become the overpowering purpose of all too many. The lust for material goods, for the life of ease, for the delicacies of affluence—these have become thy gods, Oh Israel! No time is left for public worship. Fathers and mothers are not home enough to even attempt to train their children to serve the Lord. Young people are growing up more influenced by drug and sex oriented friends and by the blare of television and hedonistic music than they are by the word of the Lord. Many of those who reluctantly attend worship gatherings with their parents, sit at the back, act bored or overtly misbehave, and maintain an attitude of open disdain for what is done there. Some of these have seen such an inconsistency between public profession and private life in their own parents that they simply bide their time until nobody can "make" them come any more.

(2) The goddess of **pleasure** has called and her admirers have fallen before her feet. Athletic contests have become far more stimulating to the carnal mind than spiritual activities. Television has done much to strip away our sense of outrage against sin and has diluted our ability to blush. Movies full of profanity, sex and gore have become common fare with many

young people (and some not so young). Over the past few years we have been in congregations where there were problems of drugs, unwed mothers, alcohol, homo-sexuality and other forms of ungodly conduct. If we cannot even influence our own children better than this, then how much salt is left?

(3) **Marriage failures** have reached epidemic stage. We are appalled to learn in every part of the country of families of Christians splitting up. We are even more distressed to learn every week of such developments among preachers and elders and their wives. At one place you learn of an elder involved with a secretary at work, or one of the sisters in the congregation. A preacher's wife runs out on her husband and children. A preacher gets involved with a sister he started out to counsel. Infatuation evolves into determination to put away his wife, shame his children and himself and leave the church which trusted him in shambles. "Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? . . . Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery" (Rom. 2:21—22)? This outrageous conduct is not limited to any one part of the country. It is seen from one coast to the other and from border to border. The children of one preacher sent word to me asking if I would write to their father and rebuke him for his adulterous marriage. This spiritual cancer is being aided and abetted by those who have advocated permissive views regarding divorce and remarriage. The wife of one preacher is now married to a man who was put away for the cause of fornication and withdrawn from over it. Yet, there are those who contend that even the put away fornicator has a right to remarry. In society at large in this country we are now to the place that 50% of all marriages contracted end in divorce.

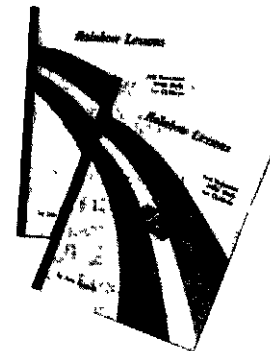
It is high time for elders, preachers and their families to practice what they preach. We are going to have to set the standard high and live by it. We should set our own standards just as high as the Lord ordained in his word. Rather than bringing God's standard down to man, we should aspire to rise to his standard. The concept of one man for one woman for life must be preserved. It must be branded on the minds and consciences of our children. Children have a right to see from a father what it means to love his wife even as himself, and from a mother what it means to reverence the husband. Otherwise, our example paves the way for their future failure. Without distraction we must seek first the kingdom and school our children on that same determination. Congregations must purge out the unrighteous leaven of fornicators. Preachers and elders and others who are often called on for help in marital difficulties, are going to have to exercise the good sense to have their wife present, or one of the older sisters or another of the brethren to "provide things honest" in the sight of all. Husbands and wives must learn not to "defraud" their companions thus adding to the temptation to stray.

Improper conduct on the part of those who would teach others weakens their efforts. There is a moral power that shines through when those who teach the

word of God have molded their own lives to the very pattern of sound words they would bind on others.

Brethren, perhaps we are looking in the wrong place in trying to explain our failures in both personal and public evangelism. Could it just be that we are rapidly becoming a people (not just a few isolated instances) who "say and do not"? Are we trying to teach others while not instructing ourselves? Are we binding heavy burdens to lay on other shoulders while unwilling to lend a little finger to lift our own? Could it be that we cannot see clearly how to remove motes because of the beams in our own eyes? Can we expect to be taken seriously when calling for purity in terms of the nature, organization, work, and worship of the church, when we have allowed the world and its evil standards to seduce us? Will churches ever rise any higher in purity and practice than the examples set by those who teach and lead? The world needs to hear the gospel in order to be saved by it. But the world has a right to expect that those who bring it are living examples of what they seek to instill in others. Brethren, are we losing our savour and therefore becoming good for nothing?

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WHAT IT MEANS
TO BE SAVED (2)

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In an article under the above heading, it was pointed out that to be saved from sin, means to be delivered from its guilt and to escape its just punishment. In this article I propose to discuss

What God Has Done To Save Us.

A fact that should never be lost sight of is that in all of God's dealings with man, there has been, and is, the divine side and the human side. God does for man, and has done for man, what man cannot do for himself. This is true in nature as well as in grace.

I recall hearing a preaching brother tell of visiting in a home where the wife was a Christian; but her husband was an atheist. He did not believe God existed. When they sat down to the meal that the wife had prepared, she suggested to her husband that he ask the preacher to give thanks for the food. He indignantly refused, saying that he had worked for that food and had no one but himself to thank for it.

There was something, however, that he overlooked. Granted that he had worked to produce that food, he ignored the fact that God had provided the soil, the sunshine, and the rain, without which there could have been no food. For those things he had been dependent on God even while refusing to acknowledge his existence.

In the plan of salvation there is God's part, and man's part. God has done for man what man could not do for himself. God has provided what man could not provide. Some of the terms that represent God's overtures, we shall now discuss.

Propitiation.

The first of these terms that I want us to notice is the word, propitiation. This word occurs three times in the New Testament in the following scriptures.

"But now apart from the law, a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing I say, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and

the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:21-26).

"And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

It will be noticed that in the above scriptures, the word propitiation is used with reference to Christ. The writers tell us that he is the propitiation for our sins. This can be appreciated only as we understand what is involved in propitiation.

It may be defined, generally, as a sacrifice that is offered with a view to making atonement (the Old Testament counterpart) for sin; of satisfying the demands of justice; or appeasing the wrath of an offended god. In the latter sense it was used by the heathen. While pagan religions are usually a corruption of the true religion of Jehovah God, they sometimes retain some of its essential features. This was seen when a heathen mother would one time throw her babe into the jaws of a crocodile. Supposing that she had offended one of the many gods that she worshipped, this was her way of making propitiation for her sin.

As used in the New Testament, the word, propitiation, has reference to satisfying the demands of God's justice. In the scripture from Romans the third chapter, given above, Paul said that the purpose of God's setting forth Christ as a propitiation, was to show his righteousness, because of the passing over of sins done aforetime (vs 25). He then added in the following verse, "That he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus."

To appreciate the force of Paul's language in these scriptures, it is necessary that we remember that when laws are violated, justice calls for punishment of the offender. This is seen in nature, where the laws are rigid, and exact some punishment when they are broken. If any one doubts it, let him try flouting the law of gravity.

The principle of punishment of lawbreakers has been recognized since the beginning of man's history, and has been practiced even by heathen nations. A story that comes down to us from antiquity tells of a king who lived some five hundred years before Christ. His laws were rigid, and lawbreakers were summarily punished. One of his laws required that anyone found guilty of adultery was to be punished by having both eyes put out. When his own son was found to be guilty, the king was placed in a dilemma. He knew that to fail to enforce his law would be a mockery of the whole judicial system. To enforce the law would leave his son blind for the rest of his life. So out of compassion for his son, and at the same time to uphold the law, the king offered to have one of his own eyes put out and only one of his son's. In that way the law was upheld, and the punishment for the crime was exacted; yet the king was able to show a measure of compassion in that his son was spared from total blindness. It may thus be said that in part, at least, the king made

propitiation for his son's crime, by sharing the penalty with him.

Man had sinned by violating God's law. That fact is made clear in the first three chapters of Romans where both Jew and Gentiles are charged with sin before God. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Justice demanded that the price be paid by the sinner. But that would require that the entire human race perish; for all have sinned (Rom 3:23). God would not be just if he did not punish sin.

God did punish sin. One of the cardinal facts of the gospel preached by Paul is that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:4). Again he wrote, "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Thus God himself paid the penalty for man's sin by sending his only begotten Son as a sin offering. In allowing Christ to die for man, God's justice was vindicated, and he is the justifier of him who accepts the benefits of that sacrifice through faith.

Reconciliation.

A second word that is frequently used with reference to God's part in the plan of salvation, is the word, reconciliation. To the Colossians Paul wrote,

"For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fullness dwell; and through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in heaven. And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouvable before him" (Col. 1:19-22).

Thus does Paul tell us that whereas man had been alienated, and an enemy of God by reason of sin, God has reconciled us to himself through the death of his Son.

The word, reconciliation, is a compound word, composed of the prefix re, which means again; and the word, conciliation, which means to make friends. So the word reconciliation means to make friends again, or a restoration of friendship. It suggests that a friendship that once existed has been destroyed. One could not become a friend again with another, unless they had at some time previously been friends.

The fact that a reconciliation was brought about between God and man implies that an enmity had existed. That enmity was the result of man's sin (Col. 1:21) Sin is rebellion against God.

To bring about a reconciliation between estranged parties it is necessary that there be a mediator. This mediator God himself provided in the person of his Son. Paul said, "For there is one God, one mediator between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

Redemption.

A third term that designates God's part in saving man is the word, redemption. To the Ephesians Paul wrote, "In whom we have our redemption through his

blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). To the Galatians Paul wrote, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13).

The word, redeem, means to buy back. It is often used to describe business transactions. Sometimes when a man defaults on paying his taxes, his property will be seized. But there is usually a provision made whereby he can recover the property by paying what is owing against it. Thus, in effect he buys it back. What he has to pay is the redemption price.

So when the Bible speaks of our being redeemed, it means that we have been bought back. It was pointed out in the previous article that continued practice of sin makes one a bondservant of sin. We are, in effect, captives of Satan. Paul speaks of some "recovering themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will" (2 Tim. 2:26).

Redemption from our bondage to sin requires a redeemer. Christ is that redeemer (Titus 2:4). It requires a redemption price be paid. That price was Christ's blood. Peter said, "Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver and gold from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers: but with precious blood as of a lamb without spot and without blemish, even the blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18,19).

These terms, propitiation, reconciliation, and redemption thus represent God's part in the plan of salvation. They represent what God has done for man that man could not do for himself. In an article to follow I shall discuss some terms that are used in connection with man's part in the plan of salvation, and which will give us further insight into what it means to be saved.

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I met a man who heard from some source that I did not believe that a church of Christ could pay a preacher in order that he might preach for another congregation.

First, if I can, let me state in just as plain language as I can what I believe about the matter. I believe that a church can pay a preacher in order that he might go anywhere and start a church of Christ; I believe that a church can pay a preacher in order that he might preach for a church already established but is too weak to pay for the preaching; I believe that a plurality of churches can pay a preacher to preach in a place, either to establish a church or to preach to a church that has already been established, but is too weak to pay a preacher.

I have preached the gospel of Christ and while doing so was being paid by a plurality of churches. In each instance, each church sent the wages they paid directly to me. This is entirely Scriptural because this is what the Bible teaches (2 Cor. 11:7-9; Phil. 1:3-5; 4:15-20).

In the New Testament one can read in Acts 11:19-26 of the church in Jerusalem sending Barnabas out to preach the gospel and he went as far north as Antioch. In fact, verse 26 shows that Barnabas preached unto the church in Antioch. I understand by the expression, ". . . they sent forth Barnabas. . ." to mean that the Jerusalem church supported him in this preaching. We learn from Acts 15 that there were churches between Jerusalem and Antioch, and I am willing to say that Barnabas preached and taught the word of God to some of these along the way to Antioch.

I learn that the Philippian church paid Paul when he went into the city of Thessalonica for the very first time (Phil 1:3-5; 2:25; 4:15-20). She also sent time and again unto Paul.

In 2 Corinthians 11:7-9, I learn of the churches in the province of Macedonia sending unto the Apostle Paul to enable him to preach the gospel in the city of Corinth and to the Corinthian church when it was small. Paul says that while the churches of Macedonia sent to him that he did the Corinthian church service. Here we have a plurality of churches sending wages unto the gospel preacher so that he might live and preach the gospel to those whom he had opportunity to reach.

In each of these instances, a careful examination of

the New Testament reveals that each church had a direct relationship with the preacher. No New Testament church ever sent a contribution to some kind of a missionary society in order that the society might in turn forward the wages on to the preacher. Neither did any New Testament church become a missionary society through which churches sent and she in turn forwarded the wages on to the gospel preacher. It was centuries after the close of the New Testament when men became dissatisfied with the Lord's plan that either of these two plans was invented.

It was not even dangerous for a church or for a plurality of churches to send to a preacher in New Testament times. It has been feared that if each church sent directly to the preacher that he might get more than he should have. In New Testament times "wages" were sent to the gospel preacher (2 Cor. 11:8). God did not intend that a preacher should receive money from many churches and in turn hire and send out more preachers, any more than he intended that churches should receive money from many churches and in turn hire and send out more preachers.

The Lord's plan will always get the job done, save souls, cause the gospel to be preached, and please God, when it is respected and followed.

In 1910 there was an effort to get many churches to send their contributions to one church and let that one church hire and send out a preacher or preachers. This was what the church in Henderson, Tennessee was proposing to do. This was opposed by David Lipscomb and J. C. McQuiddy. Of the Henderson church undertaking the work of receiving contributions from several churches, J. C. McQuiddy wrote in the *Gospel Advocate*, 1910, pages 392 and 393, "The work proposed is nothing less than a missionary society in embryo. The board of elders in Henderson is the board to control the funds contributed by not only the Henderson church, but by all the churches of West Tennessee. This is a combination larger than the organized church of the New Testament which is the only organized body ordained by Jehovah for doing mission work".

In his book, **The Life and Times of David Lipscomb**, on page 271, Earl West said, "The practice in Texas was for the churches holding annual or state meetings, giving reports of the past year's work of the various congregations, and then, putting the work under one local church for the coming year. The plan was that all of the churches in the state would work under the eldership of one church to preach the gospel. Lipscomb frankly rejected this. . . The matter of the many churches working through the eldership of one church was wrong in Lipscomb's conception because it made out of the elders of a local church a missionary society in embryo".

Brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr., said in the *Gospel Advocate*, May 14, 1931 page 580, ". . . if the elders of one congregation solicit the funds of other congregations for general distribution, then the elders of one congregation usurp the functions of the

congregations whose funds they receive and disburse..

For one church to help another bear its own burdens, therefore, has Scriptural precedent. But for one church to solicit funds from other churches for general distribution in other fields or places, thus becoming a treasury of other churches, is quite a different question. Such procedure makes a sort of SOCIETY out of the elders of a local church, and for such there is no Scriptural precedent or example".

Commenting on Phil, 4:15 and 16 Brother Guy N. Woods said in the *Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary on Bible Lessons*, published by the Gospel Advocate Company in 1946, Page 341, "Here, too, we see the simple manner in which the church in Philippi joined with Paul in the work of preaching the gospel. There was no "missionary society" in evidence, and none was needed; the brethren simply raised the money and sent it directly to Paul. This is the way it should be done today".

Brother H. Leo Boles said in the *Gospel Advocate*, November 10, 1932, on page 1213, "The missionary received help from the church that sent him out, from those in the field where he labored, and from other churches; but in all of this work there was no common fund for churches, no "central church" with a treasurer to receive the funds from other churches, no general treasury to take care of the funds, no call from any church to other churches to help them do the work which fell in their province to do".

Brother F. D. Srygley said in the *Gospel Advocate*, in 1892 on page 386, "The *Advocate* called the *Standard's* attention to the fact that in New Testament times churches sent money direct to the missionaries instead of sending it to a missionary society to be, by the society, paid out to the missionaries". On page 449, brother Srygley said, "In mission work each church, in New Testament times, sent its contribution direct to those who were doing the work".

Brother M. C. Kurfees said in the *Gospel Advocate* in 1894 on page 160, "The churches themselves, as such, were the divine organizations for mission work, and were in direct communication with those whom they supported. Hence, it is simply an incontrovertible fact that in working through the church apart from all other inventions and organizations, that dealing directly with missionaries in the field, we are following the expression of divine wisdom, and are, therefore, infallibly safe".

I believe that a church can send to a preacher wherever he may be to preach for another church or to establish a church. I have read such from the New Testament and also given you quotations from some brethren from the pages of history that they also believed what I believe now. Such none will deny as being Scriptural.

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Restoration Footnotes

Carl Kimbrough

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A GRANDMOTHER'S WISDOM

Paul paid tribute to all righteous grandmothers when he memorialized Lois, Timothy's grandmother, in telling of her "unfeigned faith" (2 Tim. 1:5). Through her good influence, and that of his mother Eunice, Timothy from childhood knew the Holy Scriptures that made him "wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:14-15). Any child with a grandmother like Lois is blessed beyond measure.

H. E. Phillips, the highly respected gospel preacher and former editor of *Searching the Scriptures*, is one of those fortunate to be surrounded in early life by devout parents and grandparents. His paternal grandparents lived with his family, and from this close association an extra-special bond developed between young Elwood and his grandmother.

Her gentle and loving wisdom that guided him to an understanding of the gospel plan of salvation is a story with a lesson for today. From the earliest traces of memory he recalls being taught the Bible at home by his parents and being carried by them regularly to Bible school and worship. But even so, questions arose in his mind when at twelve his thoughts turned, quite naturally under the circumstances, to his being baptized.

Hearing Foy E. Wallace Jr. in what was probably his first meeting at the Twelfth Street Church in Bowling Green, Kentucky, sparked in Elwood a strong desire to preach. He wanted to do what he was seeing Wallace and others doing in the service of Christ, but he knew that some other things must take place first. He then decided that he wanted to be baptized but thought he had better talk to somebody about it. So he asked his grandmother if she thought he was old enough. He relates the following account of her prudent handling of his question.

"She said, I don't believe that its important how old you are, but what you know." And so I asked her what I needed to know, and she questioned me and we talked for a while, while she was cooking (this occurred in the kitchen, I recall). And she suggested that before I decided to be baptized that I ought to read the book of Matthew, and so I did. I read it myself. I don't know how long it took me, but it didn't take long; probably within a week.

"It may have been at that point I was more eager to be baptized than anything else, because I think I was

influenced greatly by that I was seeing and the preaching, and I knew it was right. I knew my parents would be happy and my grandparents, but I don't think I was doing it as much for somebody else as I was to be able to be what I was seeing in other people.

"When I went back to my grandmother and told her I had read Matthew, she asked me what it said, here and there through the book, and what I had to do. I remembered the last part of it, especially what it said about baptism and I asked her about it. She said: 'Well now that's fine; you know quite a bit. Now maybe if you go read Mark, maybe you'll know a little more.'

"So I read the book of Mark and asked my mother a lot of questions about it, as she was sewing. I remember talking to my father a time or two about it and he would give me some questions, but mainly I talked to my grandmother.

"When I finished Mark the same thing happened. She talked to me a little while, and said, 'Maybe if you read Luke.' This went on through John, and then she, said, 'Now if you'll read the book of Acts, I'll know that you'll know.' I read Acts and I saw why people were being baptized. I began to understand, even as a boy at twelve, what some of these things meant.

"I look back now and see the wisdom of my grandmother in not telling me, 'You're too young to be baptized,' or to say, 'When you're a little bit older,' or, 'You don't know enough,' or something. She rather gave me a reason to bit by bit read until I had 'graduated,' insofar as her knowledge of the Bible went." (Taken from a Taped Interview with H.E. Phillips.)

Many years ago, T.B. Larimore, recalling the influence of his own poor mountaineer grandmother, wrote: ". . . parents and grandparents have more to do with shaping the destiny of their posterity, for time and for eternity, than any other mortals on earth, of course; and they are ruthlessly robbing their posterity, for whose very existence they are voluntarily responsible, of sacred rights that they can never restore, when they live ungodly lives." (Life and Letters of T. B. Larimore, Vol. 2, pp. 360-361.)

Elwood's grandmother may not have said it as eloquently, but she understood fully what Larimore meant, as her righteous life testifies through her descendants.

The value of a righteous grandmother, like the worthy woman of Proverbs 31, must also be considered as "far above rubies."

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DESTINED TO DIVIDE?

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We preach what the Scriptures teach on unity. The Scriptures require unity of professed followers of Christ (John 17:20-23; I Cor. 1:10). "We" means brethren, members of the body of Christ. However, we divide and fragment faster than we establish new local churches of Christ. Why? Are we destined to divide? Some Christians can remember at least a dozen major divisions among those who all claim to be the body of Christ. Others have witnessed an even larger number of minor squabbles that have rent local churches in twain. We are not destined to divide—we seem simply bent in that direction. Can we recover?

Division is sometimes the only answer for those determined to be right with God. No unity in error can please God. Christians must separate themselves from error. Paul applied a combination of the prophecies of Isa. 52:11 and Ezek. 20:34 to a situation in the church at Corinth. "Wherefore come ye out from among them and be ye separate. . . and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17). The Corinthians had come out of the world, they had expelled the evil fornicator from their midst and were admonished to remain pure. Faithful Christians who find themselves in a situation where those who should be excommunicated are given full fellowship and where error is taught unchecked, should get out of such a situation. Where institutional or digressive error is taught and where immoral conduct is condoned, and where no chance to correct the situation exists, there is no possibility for faithful Christians to remain. But in leaving, they are not guilty of division, if they have done all within their power to correct the error.

A separation from error is not always an immediate necessity. Error can be tolerated in only one way. Where opposition to error is allowed, the error can be tolerated—and corrected. The Corinthian congregation tolerated error in their midst, but they also admitted Paul's instruction to them and the result was that they changed. When those who are guilty of error refuse to allow opposition to their error to be heard, unity will be destroyed. A tyrannical error creates a situation where people are destined to divide.

Sometimes division has a divine purpose for the faithful. "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (I Cor. 11:18-19). Paul uses the word "heresies" in this verse. These are the things that try the patience and the faith of the saints. The word refers to a disposition that leads to division, more than to a doctrine or idea that is taught. "**Heresis** signifies the temper of mind which produces **schismata** (division,

DRS), the disposition to think and act to please oneself rather than for the edification of the many" (Cambridge Greek New Testament). It tries the faith and patience of the saints to endure the heretical ideas and maneuvers of a schismatic group within the church. Factionists rarely see their own heretical disposition at work. They "draw away disciples" piously proclaiming that they were either forced to do so for the sake of righteousness or to "save the church." What the factionist does not see (ever) are his own pet ideas and foolish notions being pushed to the extent that brother divides from brother. God never approves of such, rather He approves those who endure it and stand.

Divisions should be avoided at all acceptable costs. To split a good congregation over personality conflicts, personal likes and dislikes, preacher preferences, etc. is manifestly sinful. One way to avoid such stupidity is to review the various reasons churches have suffered such terror in the recent past. When we look carefully into the real causes of division, perhaps we will be able to recognize the tendencies and trends that will lead to division and evade them in the future. Someone said, "Twenty years from now, our children will ask each other why the church divided, and will be ashamed to give the real answer." Let us look at a few of these divisions and the areas in which they have occurred.

The Problem of the Preacher

The problem of the located preacher is largely the problem of hiring one or firing one. A congregation may get ready for a preacher to leave before he does. They ask him to move on. He does not want to just now. He gets highly incensed and hurt, his feelings are crushed and he seeks sympathy. He gravitates to his closest friends. They have a meeting at one of their homes. Then a meeting is called with the elders or the church (in the case of no elders) and the question of why is raised. At first the questions and answers are quite reserved and sensible, but then the motives of some are questioned, the conversation heats up, thoughtless words are uttered and before things can be cooled down, a split occurs. The preacher goes out with his friends to start what he commonly calls, "a new work." He has to have support for this "mission field" so he pleads with congregations that know him for help and without investigation, they provide "support for the mission field" to him.

Many a preacher has been done wrong in such cases. Many preachers have done wrong also. Many of the problems of a preacher are self-inflicted wounds. Even in the event the preacher is done wrong, a split church is too high a price to pay to undo that wrong. A wise man once said, "It is always much better to leave brethren in peace when they all want you to stay, than to try to stay when most of them want you to leave." It is hard to uproot the family, sever close ties, and move, but it is better than a church split.

The Preachers and Other Preachers

Many divisions are the direct result of two preachers falling out with each other. Sometimes it is the result

of a camp of preachers against another camp of preachers. There seems to be a growing amount of rivalry, jealousy and competition among preachers that breeds this hideous situation. The real reason why preachers should have problems with other preachers lies in what is preached—not how it is presented. But preachers can choose up sides and post lookouts, send out spies, and observe what another camp of preachers is doing. When the "shibboleth" is not precisely enunciated, the sniping begins. There usually follows a lot of gossip, whispering and backbiting—yes, among preachers who preach against such ungodliness.

Let's take a case or two in point. They are not really fictional but they are hypothetical. One preacher asks about another preacher, "Have you seen the fancy suits brother A has?" "Man, yes," replies another, "You know I would not wear something like that in the closet, much less in the pulpit." "I know what you mean," responds the first preacher, "you know he's just asking for trouble with the women." This immediately sticks in the memory banks of the second preacher and when the next conversation takes place, it goes like this. "You know, I have heard that brother A has been accused of being too familiar with certain of the good sisters; have you heard anything like that?" he asks. "No," another answers, "but it wouldn't surprise me any, seeing how he struts around and dresses like a proud peacock." Now, at this point other reasons are suggested and it winds up with the overly dressed preacher being a ladies' man and a proud peacock. After it goes through several such conversations about (not to) this overly dressed preacher, his friends defend him, his enemies condemn him, those who do not know avoid him and the rest join in with his enemies. Division is under way.

Case number two goes like this. "Have you heard that old brother B takes the Fuqua position of marriage and divorce?" "No," comes the astonished reply, "I thought he was sound on that—what makes you ask?" The first man then says, "Oh, I don't know really, I just heard that since his brother had recently divorced and remarried, that he probably would justify it, and besides, I have never read anything from him or heard him say anything that would really come down hard on these unscriptural marital relationships, have you?" The second character in this case admits, "Well, now that you mention it, not really—and you know he held a meeting recently over at Podunk where brother C preaches and there is no doubt that he is a Fuqua man. I guess he does take the Fuqua position." It goes on and on and on. It leads to division among preachers.

Elders and the Congregation

Divisions have come in churches over elders. The problem arises in the form of strife among the elders themselves, sometimes. Like the preachers problems, the elders can be infected with jealousy and envy of each other. Peter commanded elders not to "lord it over the flock of God" (I Pet. 5:2-3). When one elder begins to run things and the others simply become his lackeys people are destined to divide. There should be complete harmony among elders in a local church and

the word of God should be recognized as the one and only rule. As long as this attitude prevails no division will come.

Often, elders become the targets of factious members who have no intention of respecting the elders guidance. They just totally ignore Hebrews 13:17. They can detect any weakness or flaw in the life of an elder. They begin telling others how unqualified the elders are. They forget that the men were amply qualified when installed. They now begin their nefarious work of "ousting the eldership." They generally proclaim loud and long that they are engaged in an enterprise designed for the "good of the congregation." Like the fighter-bomber pilot in Vietnam said of a village he had just leveled, "We had to destroy it to save it," the factionist leads a rebellion against the elders to save the congregation. This is not to say some elders do not need to be asked to step out of the work, but it is to say that the factionist wrongly goes about it.

The Bible gives the pattern of how to deal with elders who make mistakes. "Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses. Them that sin, reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear" (I Tim. 5:20). It is sad that the procedure is almost totally ignored. When elders sin, and indeed they all do, the text does not require their removal. It requires a public censure. When they correct the matter, it is resolved and the work goes on. When brethren begin finding fault with elders, they will meet secretly to plan their strategy of getting rid of the elders, go about the membership destroying confidence in the elders, then all of the sudden, announce publicly that "we no longer recognize these men as our elders." If that is Bible, I have read the wrong book that is called "the Bible." This procedure definitely leads to division.

The Elders and the Preachers

The working relationship between elders and preachers should be the most harmonious one there is. However, when a preacher moves into a new work at the invitation of the elders, he is often turned against the elders by those who are the elders most severe critics. Most of the time it starts at the "social get-togethers." The topic is introduced that the elders have really not done their duty in the past. It is suggested that the hopes of the future of the congregation lay in the ability of the new preacher to straighten out the situation. The preacher may be unduly influenced and become party to the same behind-the-back accusations against elders. He becomes entangled in plots to remove the elders. He suddenly has a revelation—the elders are not really qualified. He forgets the fine judgment they displayed when they hired him—now they must be removed. The next step in the scenario goes like this. The elders learn that the preacher is joining hands with a factional group and they ask him to stop. He defends what he has done and they ask him to leave. He then informs them that they cannot fire him—yes, they could hire him, for they then had the qualifications and good judgment, but now that they

want him to move along, they are neither qualified nor have good judgment. The preacher seeks to override their decision, seeks some help and division is under way. They are destined to divide. He now announces another "new work," solicits support for evangelization work and on and on.

There is a way out of this. No one is destined to divide unless they want division. Those who do not want division or schism can avoid it. Elders and preachers must be much more considerate of each other. Congregations must respect the elders for their work's sake, and when they sin or make a stupid blunder, tell them about it—do it publicly. When the preacher and the elders do not see eye-to-eye, let them sit together prayerfully and discuss the matter and let them all be truly humble. When preachers talk about other preachers let them avoid gossip and whisperings. Elders, preachers and members of the church should have more respect for the word of God, themselves, and the cause of Christ than to allow such things to divide a congregation.

There needs to be more understanding of the appreciation for real "fellowship" in the work of the church. Paul used the words "brother, fellow-worker and fellow-soldier" of Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25). What has happened to our esprit de Corps, our camaraderie? We are all trying to do the same thing, working for a common Master and interested in a common destiny. Let us realize this fully. The Germans have two expressions that are appropriate. One is, "Eine hand wäscht die andere." That says, "one hand washes the other." That is true. We are "hands" of the Lord and are to aid and help one another. The other German expression is, "Eisen und Blut." That was Bismark's philosophy that problems were settled only by bloody conflicts. Two bloody world wars prove that this was the German solution. But it is not the right solution. We ought never to adopt such a sorry philosophy in the church. When problems arise, let us as hands, cleanse one another, rather than rip and tear.

More trust, patience, consideration and understanding are needed. This will bring on more genuine comradeship among all preachers, elders and Christians. Without these things we are doomed and destined to repeat the same stupid and reprehensible divisions we have experienced in the recent past. Senseless divisions should never have occurred. The hand that lends itself to rend the fellowship of a local church over some personal opinion or preference is the hand that should be cut off and cast into Hell. Are we destined to divide or will it be possible for us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Will our children be ashamed to tell others why their fathers were divided?

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"Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? . . . Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:25, 34).

If I were trying to characterize our age, as some other periods of time have been designated the Stone Age, Iron Age, Dark Ages, Renaissance, Industrial Age, Space Age, etc., I think I would call this the Age of Anxiety. The whole paragraph that we have quoted from in the Sermon on the Mount is a wonderful treatise on worry and anxiety. In one way, our anxiety today is more complex than that which filled the multitudes to whom Jesus spoke. He could bid them not be anxious about food and clothing because hunger and nakedness were real threats to their lives. Today we get the food, eat it, and then worry about digestion, ulcers, obesity, chemical additives and preservatives, and other related matters. We buy the clothes and become anxious about whether they really fit us or do anything for our figures, or whether they are the latest styles, and we are always scared to death we will meet someone wearing a suit or dress just like ours.

However, Jesus' admonition is a general one too: Do not be anxious about your life. That covers the whole area of human existence. Do not be anxious about tomorrow: that covers the future, everything that could conceivably happen to us. We must spend our time in this article zeroing in on some specific causes of anxiety.

HEALTH: The thrust of "How are you?" and "How do you do?" seems to be an interest in the other person's health. One of our strongest impulses is to let other people know when we are in pain. Poor health with its pain and suffering is one of our greatest fears. Being a Christian does not immunize us to pain and suffering and the mental strain which it produces. So, what good is there then in being a Christian if you are still bound to suffer and eventually die like other men? The Christian's perspective is that we can suffer pain and mental anguish and not be overcome by the suffering because we know that in the experience of suffering our basic character is being fashioned, and because we know that the God who loves us and knows our needs is with us in the suffering, and that the agony of body and soul will contribute to the formation

of a stronger and nobler character, a greater person. Otherwise, we enter a vicious circle where the mental anguish over the loss of health becomes a contributing cause of further health problems. The anxiety may even become the sickness. To the Christian, the future will not be rendered meaningless by the loss of health but may be even more meaningful when in the experience of loss we learn what life is all about. "We cannot take it with us" is true of physical health but not of character and a right relationship with God.

POSITION: We seem to be too concerned about our standing in society. If we occupy a low position on the scale we resent it and strive to overcome such, anxiously pulling ourselves up the ladder. If we occupy a high position we are afraid we will lose it, so we see every eager and ambitious fellow on the way up as a threat to us. To man, the social creature, his standing among his fellows is his life. Yet, Jesus says, "Do not be anxious for your life". What does life hold for the man who loses his place among men, or who fails to gain favorable recognition? What if the people whose approval means more to us than all else in life refuse to be impressed by us?

No normal and sane person is completely unmoved by what others think of him. But the key to the whole matter is the question, "Which others?". And a companion key is the question, "Do we do what we do in order to gain approval by others, or because it would be contrary to our very being to do otherwise. To truly live a man must be willing to jeopardize his standing among his fellows in order that he may clarify his position with God. He must be willing to forfeit his future, his career, everything with men to be true to God. Like the Hebrew children facing the prospect of the fiery furnace, the Christian says, "I do not know whether God will rescue me or not, but whether He does or not, whether I live or die, I will be true to Him". There is nothing in the spirit of Christ that courts the favor of men, or conforms to what men expect in order to gain their approval or support (Cf. Gal. 1:10; 4:16; 1 Peter 4:4; 2:12).

SECURITY: Our anxiety today is not primarily for what we do not have, but rather the fear of losing what we have. We feel economically insecure because of the high rate of inflation now and the high cost of fuel now but our greatest anxiety is over what it might be tomorrow! We are worried over our present relationship with Soviet Russia but our real problem is that from the present we try to predict a bleaker future. The trend of pornography, infidelity, homosexuality, etc. finds us bodily in 1981, but our worry calendar has us living in 2000. Does Jesus offer us an acceptable solution in our passage? His answer is, "Behold the birds of the heaven", and "Consider the lilies of the field" (vv. 26-30). Do Jesus' simple words have any relevance to our situation today, or are they mere idle poetry, the idealistic babblings of a dreamer who supposed that the life of man is as uncluttered and uninvolved as the simple life of a bird or a flower blooming in the fields. I insist there is a greatly needed relevance here. If God feeds the birds, through their

own industriousness, He will surely care for His children, the apex of all living beings. The birds do not have the capacity to fret over tomorrow—they live each day to the fullest. The lily is not toiling and spinning like man, but it has a beauty and fragrance for today that is not robbed by the prospect of facing tomorrow. All of this touches upon the life of man. Today is the day of our salvation. Today is the day that God has given to us, to rejoice and be glad in it. Tomorrow there may be less prosperity, more war, and less righteousness in the world. Will anxiety over that prospect make it easier for us when it comes? No! It will only rob us of the joys of today's blessings. Tomorrow we shall grow old and fade as do the lilies of the field, but living today in the service of Heaven's King fills a reservoir of memories of worthwhile experiences for our declining days and eternity. If we can only savor each day's joys and take each day's sorrows up into the whole experience of life, then today's sunshine will not be spoiled by tomorrow's clouds.

This is not an "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die!" philosophy—a carnal and fatalistic approach to life. Rather, it implies that our capacity for receiving, enjoying, and accepting has to be exercised, and the only way we can be prepared for what will come tomorrow is to fully receive what today has to offer. If we close our hearts to the good things of today, out of dread of tomorrow's evil, how shall we receive it if the morrow brings more good instead of evil? And if we fill up our hearts with tomorrow's evil today, how shall we absorb the evil when it does come? Jesus said it this way: "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day are the troubles of the day" (v. 34).

DEATH: Underlying all our anxieties is the ultimate fear—that of death. **What is going to become of me?** That is the question. This is a much deeper question than: Will I be hungry and cold next winter? Will I get the job I have been wanting? Will the world I have learned to live in survive the current crises?

This question has to do with the very essence of life itself. It is the deeper implication of what Jesus meant by the words: "Do not be anxious about your life... Is not life more than food?". Life is indeed more than the food that we consume, but what is to become of the life of men? I am convinced that the marked increase in anxiety in our society is in direct proportion to the decrease in a belief in life after death. If all the striving of the human spirit is mocked by the reality of death, then to what avail is the feverish activity of the human mind searching after the secrets of the universe? If human existence has no lasting and indestructible meaning, to what avail is the heroic spirit, the saintly life, the unselfish man rising above his natural inclinations to devote himself to the conversion of the lost, the care of the sick, or the service of one's fellowman. Are our lives like momentary flashes of light in the sky on a summer's evening, seeming to come out of nowhere, generated by the touch of natural elements, and fading into nothing?

It is not enough to say that man gains a sort of immortality of the race, that if a man has children he yet lives in his children, for his children also must die, and it becomes a matter of putting off final extinction one generation at a time, but with man knowing that in the end he will be the loser. The writer of Ecclesiastes pursues this theme time and time again, and I remember that he ponders: "... for who shall bring him back to see what shall be after him?"

It is not enough to say that certain individuals of outstanding accomplishment gain a sort of immortality in the esteem and memory of generations who follow. It is an immortality that can only benefit those who are alive upon the earth. If the individual does not know that he lives, what good is it to him that he lives? Such a rationale is a hollow cop-out by those who desperately try to find some meaning to life and death apart from an individual's eternal consciousness.

There must be something more. Jesus brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel. He taught that in man's proper alignment of himself with the Kingdom of God he participates in a blessed hope, the promise of eternal life. This eternal life is essentially a quality of life, a spiritual life of fellowship with God, not merely a quantitative reference to duration. Man may in a sense "have eternal life", and at the same time have the ability to forfeit that relationship. The "blessed assurance" is in the truth that if man will abide faithful, then God will faithfully guide him through the valley of the shadow of death.

Man's anxiety, in the final analysis, is anxiety which he feels when he stands at the door of the house of Death, and asks himself, "Is this the end of the line for me? After I pass through this door, am I to be no more?" Jesus answers man's anxiety as He says, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26).

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**Keith Ward
Rt 2 Box 135
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In 1975, I was preaching in snow country and was asked, "Is it right for us to take the Lord's Supper in our homes when we are snowed in?" After some study, I concluded that taking the Lord's Supper is a church activity to be done when disciples are "gathered together" (Acts 20:7) and "when ye assemble yourselves together" (1 Cor 11:20). Thus, I answered, "No." If a family was the church, it would be right, but as they are members of a church, they are to partake when assembled with the church. I still find no scriptural authority for individuals or groups to partake away from an assembling of the church. Just as sickness excuses one from partaking because he cannot assemble, so does severe weather.

The same principle soon led me to conclude that the Sunday evening serving had no authority. In one, we have the members scattered because of weather; in the other, because of time. In neither case was the member present when the church "Gathered together to break bread." I had no help in reaching my conclusions and was somewhat amazed to find that some well-known men held "my view," and that a small controversy raged about it.

Throughout the four years I held this position, I kept an attitude that it was in the realm of personal conviction. It is not any man's right to police the Lord's Table, to say who and when others may partake. I refused to have part in the second serving. I did not preach on the subject, but explained my views privately and rarely.

In the public discussions of the matter, many of the arguments on both sides lacked reason and scripture. It makes no more difference that the second serving did not begin until the forties than that the use of individual cups did not begin until the turn of the century, or that preachers did not "Go" by mechanical power until the 1800's. The germane question is, "Is it authorized?" Neither hypothetical or real situations about two churches in one building nor accusations about dividing churches, neither quibbles about 100% attendance nor problems with possible abuse constitute authority. The Bible is our authority.

Last May, Brent Hunter preached a meeting at Center Hill only three weeks after I arrived. A member asked about Sunday night communion and Brent referred to the second offering of the Passover under the Law of Moses. Immediately, I saw the force of the argument, but only changed after further study and meditation. I wish someone had made such a scriptural and clear argument three years ago. Perhaps I am slow-witted, but I could never see much force in the law of materiality proving the number of worship services

on Sunday is insignificant. If it is material that the Lord's Supper be taken as a body, then it must be done when that body is together. The number of other meetings of the body would be immaterial; what would be material is which one was designated as the one "When we were gathered together to break bread". If Rotary meets as a body to eat at noon and conducts business at 12:30, a latecomer or absentee cannot eat the common meal apart from the purposed time. Even if he comes in and eats leftovers (the same food) at three, he would not be eating WITH them. And if some or all stay around and watch him eat, they would not be gathered TOGETHER to eat. It is for the sake of others who are unsettled on this question that I submit the following.

The Authority of the Old Testament

Things written aforetime were written for our learning and for our admonition (Rom. 15:4, 1 Cor. 10:11). Though we correctly state that the O.T. is not a law to us, we ought never interpret that to mean it does not teach us how to behave. The scripture which Paul told Timothy was "profitable for teaching, . . .for instruction which is in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely" was a combination of the N.T. he had learned and of the sacred writings he had known from childhood. Every point made in Hebrews is proven by O.T. scripture; nothing is asserted on the basis of apostolic authority. Recognizing these facts, we know the O.T. can and ought to be used to establish principles of conduct and faith.

The Validity of the Comparison

A little meditation reveals many common points between the Lord's Supper and the Passover. First, Christ is our passover (:1 Cor 5:7). Second, Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper on the Passover. More to our point, the Passover was a feast to be kept when Israel was congregated in Jerusalem at a specified time, just like the Lord's Supper is to be taken when the church is together on the first day of the week (Deut. 16:1-8, 16). Although the Passover was an annual feast and the Lord's Supper is weekly, the principle that the people are to assemble to partake applies. Yet, when certain men were unable to assemble to partake of the Passover at the appointed day of the year, God made another day for them (Num 9:6-14). Those who were unclean or on a journey assembled at a later day than the rest of Israel. The parallel teaches us that as those who could not attend an annual feast assembled at a later date to partake, so may those who cannot attend in the morning assemble in the evening to partake of the Lord's Supper. It is still the God-appointed day. If we allow the O.T. to teach us anything, the second serving of the Passover will teach us that a thing commanded to be done in an assembling of the people of God may properly be done later by those who could not attend. But they may only do it at the specified time. God designated the alternate day for the Passover. So also with the Lord's Supper, we cannot serve it Tuesday for those who

cannot come Sunday. We may, however, serve it at a later hour on the authorized day. The late-partakers in Israel were not allowed to straggle along a few today, a few more tomorrow, but were themselves to assemble at a set time. This preserved the solemnity and holiness of the feast. So also, the Lord's Supper is offered at the second assembling on the Lord's day.

Others have ably dealt with most aspects of this question. I especially recommend Marshall Patton's articles in *Searching the Scriptures*. I hope this simple point will help others see the truth. Whatever, I plead that no man or group arrogate the right to refuse the Lord's Supper to any on the first day of the week.

Using Great Plainness
of Speech

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BECOMING NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANS

As we noted in our last article, if we are to become "New Testament Christians," we must follow the instructions of those who proclaimed its teaching after the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. As we observed from the last article, Christ's instructions were very specific as he commissioned his apostles to "go preach the gospel."

Also as we learned in the last article, a testament is of force after men are dead. Thus Christ's Testament (what we commonly refer to as the New Testament) was that which He was telling His apostles to proclaim. What did they teach as they went forth, guided by the Holy Spirit, proclaiming His Word?

We find the very first gospel sermon, in its completeness, being preached on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ in Acts chapter 2 when Peter and the rest of the apostles taught the people, saying, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made this same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:36-38). Notice how specifically Jesus' instructions were carried out. He told these men to go, preach the gospel, and to tell those who believed it (of course being understood that they confessed that they believed that Jesus was the Christ) to repent and be baptized that they might be

saved (Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47). Thus according to the above passages, the people on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus heard the Word, believed the word and confessed that they believed it, repented of their sins, and were baptized for the remission of sins.

According to Acts 2:41, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." What were they? Disciples, later called "Christians" (Acts 11:26)—New Testament Christians.

RAHAB

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Great prominence is given to one woman in God's Word. So few passages are used to do this that we list them all: Joshua 2; also in Joshua 6:17, 22-25; Matthew 1:5; Hebrews 11:31; and James 2:25.

Example

Rahab made the honor roll. What she did by faith is mentioned in Hebrews 11. There many others with faith are referred to. But specific deeds are told of only ten persons, eight men and two women. One of these was Rahab.

Then, in James 2, God had His writer to use two examples of justification by works. The man selected was Abraham. We could wonder why the woman chosen was Rahab. Receiving the spies and sending them out might not seem to be very much. But reading Joshua 2 and meditating upon it will increase our understanding and respect. She harbored and helped mortal enemies of her government.

How many individuals really rise above their environment and upbringing? How many women, all alone, have the courage and ambition to stand for what is right when it means working against their own neighbors? How many prostitutes forsake their associates and give up their income to lead a decent life against such odds? Few men, and fewer women, lay their necks on the line. Prisca did (Rom. 16:4), but she had her husband with her. Rahab ventured by herself. That is harder and more note-worthy.

Faith

It was "by faith" that our heroine so calmly carried out her life-risking plan. Where did she get that faith? Others heard the word of God, many directly as did Abraham. "Faith comes by hearing—the word—" (Rom. 10:17). Rahab read no verse of scripture. She heard the preaching of no prophet.

But she got "the word". The message of how Jehovah had miraculously delivered His people and later fought for them had reached her city. Joshua

2:11 records her telling of their fright. Rahab believed this report, which was God's word. She determined to serve the Lord. She resolved and acted. Is this not what God is showing us that we must do, also? To please Him we must imitate the faith of this great woman.

Works

We know what would have happened if Rahab had said, "God can see my faith. I do not need to do anything." In James 2:25 the Lord tells us that she was justified by works. In the next verse He states that faith without works is dead.

Joshua 2 shows that this woman was intelligent and resourceful. She hid the men properly. She threw the searchers off expertly. Then she revealed her faith in Jehovah and bargained, trusting His men. As Noah, another honor roll member, had done earlier she arranged for the saving of her family.

Rahab managed the escape of the spies by the same clever method used centuries later to deliver an apostle of her illustrious Descendant (Acts 9:25). Her advice, which the spies followed after leaving, was remarkable accurate psychologically. Tactically it was effective. Rahab was not content with such thinking as, "Do something even if it is wrong." She acted correctly upon careful reasoning. Here is a pattern for us in following the instruction, "In mind be adults."

Harlot

Adam Clarke claimed that Rahab was merely an innkeeper. But very nearly all other scholars state that our translations are correct. The word in Hebrew and the one in Greek mean a prostitute. She had been a harlot.

But why did God's writers continue to call her that? This bothers us. If a woman ancestor of ours had once worked at the occupation we would not now speak of her as, "Kate, the prostitute". God has a purpose in this. We must conclude that she had given up that way of life before the spies arrived. She said, "We have heard", and described how frightened she had been. James writes that she was "justified". So, in Joshua, as well as in Hebrews and in James, God is saying to us, "the former harlot". He keeps repeating that this type of woman can be converted (Matt. 21:31), can reform and serve Him faithfully, and can even make the honor roll. To the Corinthians (1 Cor., 6:9-10) He gave a black, "impossible" list and then stated, "And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."

Ancestor

Matthew (in 1:5) mentions Rahab without the "shady" designation. She was in the line of ancestry, the family tree of Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of Man. Two women (she and Ruth) were foreigners who overcame racial barriers to attain to that distinction. Surprisingly, one man, Boaz, was the son of the one and the husband of the other.

Rahab is one of the witnesses who, Hebrews 12:1 states, surround us. We can benefit from studying her brave deeds and letting her be an inspiration to us.

SEPARATED FROM CHRIST

**Ronald Drumm
Naples, Florida**

Being pressured on every side to follow Satan and a world of sin shouldn't we be interested in fellowship with God and unity with Christ that will result in something much better than what we now have? Of course we should! So let's consider a group of people that at one time were "separated from Christ" and thus had no hope and were "without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12).

From a close examination of Ephesians 2:11-22 we find the Gentiles were such a people. Surely it would be safe to say they were "sons of disobedience" walking "according to the course of this world, according to the prince (i.e. Satan, RLD) of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). In fact Romans chapter one depicts quite plainly their position before God (verses 18-32).

At this point one might ask, "What were the Gentiles to do?" or "How could they become united with God in Christ?" Ephesians 2:17, 18 reads, "And He came and preached peace to you who were far away (i.e. Gentiles, RLD), and peace to those who were near (i.e. Jews, RLD); for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father." Very simply then they had access in one Spirit to the Father by the preaching of peace which came through Jesus Christ.

When the Gentiles believed and obeyed this preaching of peace (See Romans 1:9, 16), they became reconciled with the Jews in one body to God through the cross for by it the enmity (i.e. sin, RLD) had been put to death (Ephesians 2:14-16).

Now here is the interesting result of their reconciliation to God: "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but are fellow-citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19-22).

How could anyone deny what these passages of Scripture teach? They emphatically announce fellowship with God and unity with Christ in one Spirit to all who heed the preaching of peace.

Let us denounce Satan and his followers, no longer living in the lusts of the flesh or indulging in the desires of the flesh and mind (Ephesians 2:2, 3) but rather hear and obey the unfathomable riches of Christ. For they have been written down by the

apostles and are now being presented by the church to all mankind (Ephesians 3:1-10).

In conclusion read Paul's summation in Ephesians 3:11, 12, "This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him."

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

Send all News Items to: Wilson Adams, 317 Trinkle Ave., N.E., Roanoke, VA24012

NEW CONGREGATION

YUMA, AZ—On July 8th we began a new work at this place. At present our attendance is about thirty. We are presently meeting in the recreation hall of a trailer park. Our temporary address is: 2255 Burr Street, Yuma, AZ 85365. Anyone wishing to contact this new congregation may either write to the above address or call Chuck McDade at (602) 782-4202, or H.I. Spencer at (602) 783-3286. Our services are 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Sundays and 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SHEBOYGAN FALLS, WI—Mature, full-time preacher needed for a challenging work. Middle-aged preferred. Contact church of Christ, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085, or write to Mabreyt Tayse, Rt. 1, Bridgewood Rd., Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085.

MOREHEAD CITY, NC—The church of Christ in Morehead City on the coast of North Carolina is seeking a full-time preacher. We are a small, sound, faithful congregation with an average attendance of 30. Partial support will be needed. Area desperately needs full-time preacher. If interested call (919) 326-2568. Or write to Ronnie D. Garner, Rt. 5, Box 413, Newport, NC 28570.

PERRY, FL—The Spring Warrior church of Christ in Perry, FL is looking for a full-time evangelist. We are a rural community five miles south of Perry. Our average attendance is 110. We are seeking a man who is willing to do personal work. We are self-supporting. Please contact the elders at Rt. 3, Box 338, Perry, FL 32347. Or call (904) 584-6443, 584-7255, or 584-5159.

CALERA, AL—The church in Calera, AL is presently looking for a man to come and work with them in the work there. The congregation is young (9 months), but has a good group of people who are willing to work. It is located in a small rural town in Shelby County. They have their own building which will seat about 100. They are small in number but rich in faith. Their attendance is about 12 for each service. They will be able to provide some support, but not much at present. Most support would have to come from outside. If you are interested in working with a fine group of Christians, please contact James Owens by calling (205) 668-0084 or by writing Bro. Owens at Rt. 1, Box 295, Calera, AL 35040. If you would like additional information you may contact Stan Adams, 2426 Tahiti Lane, Alabaster, AL 35007, or Pete McKee in Prattville, AL.

ALLIANCE, OH—The Homeworth Rd. church of Christ which meets 3 miles east of Alliance, OH is searching for a full-time

preacher to begin in October. Bro. Phil Duren, who has been driving a distance to preach for the congregation the past three years, is leaving to join a new work near his home at Greentown, OH. The church can provide approximately \$200 per month in support and names of other congregations that possibly could help. Interested persons should call either James Anderson (216) 821-9422, or Ervil Poland (216) 823-8700. Or write to the Homeworth Rd. church of Christ, 822 Homeworth Rd., Alliance, OH 44601.

FOREIGN NEWS

CARLOS A. CAPELLI, Casila #83, Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina—The Lord has continued to richly bless the efforts here. Five precious souls have recently obeyed the gospel here at Jose C. Paz. Two have recently been restored. We now have 22 members. Also there were souls added in other places. Three were baptized at the southside church in Derqui where Bro. Timoteo Guaymas preaches. One was added at the church in Mendoza where Bro. Fernando Venegas preaches. It is with great joy that I announce a new congregation beginning in San Miguel, Bs Aires which is about 20 kilometers from J.C. Paz. The church met for the first time on Sunday July 5th. We continue to enroll new students in the Bible Correspondence Course. We now have 40 registered. We visit them personally when they answer the last lesson. On a personal note, our daughter Jimena had her tonsillectomy surgery on July 16th. She is now doing better. Thank you for your prayers. Celeste and I will take space here to express our deep appreciation to all brethren who have encouraged us in our work. God bless you all.

PEDRO RAMIREZ, Agua Prieta, Sonora-Mexico. We are happy to report that two were restored here. During July I preached four times in Mexico City while we were there taking our son to the doctor. We must return for further treatment for our boy in January, 1982. Pray for us and him. Our boy cannot talk well yet, but is making progress. You can contact me through a U.S. address of Pedro Ramirez, P.O. Box 21, Douglas, AZ 85607.

ENRIQUE CISNEROS, Apartado Postal #1306, Hermosillo, Sonora-Mexico. The first week of July we had a gospel meeting with Bro. Santos Gomez of Tecate B.C. Mexico. We had one baptized. We were well edified and many non-Christians attended.

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RICHARD TERRY, P.O. Box 277 EG, Melbourne, FL 32935. Bro. Stephen Walker of Palm Bay, FL and myself are working on a new book called "On The Move With Personal Evangelism." We would like to solicit the assistance of our brothers who have had success with their personal work techniques, which we would like to include in this new publication. We have some ambitious goals, but the first

step in reaching those goals is the compilation of sundry materials that we can draw from in putting this new book together. We would appreciate any assistance that our brethren can provide. Send all material to Richard Terry at the above address. If reproduction of this material is necessary, please let us know of your expense in Xeroxing it and we will reimburse you for the same.

C. DAVID BOBBINS, R.R. #5, Box 188, North Vernon, IN 47265. The Westlaco, TX church has invited me to move and preach for them and my wife and I would like to move there as soon as possible. The church there has an adequate meeting house, paid for, and is able to provide about \$1,600 per month support. I will need about \$400 a month additional support and help with moving expenses. I will try and be there by November 1st. The work in the Rio Grande Valley will be a real challenge. I am 51 years of age with 25 years of preaching experience. References are the elders of the 10th St. church of Christ, Columbus, IN 47201. My address is above.

ODESSA, TX LECTURESHIP

This is to announce the sixth annual Crescent Park Lectureship in Odessa, TX. The dates will be November 1-5 and will feature such subjects as "Parables of Jesus," "Apostles: The Lord's Men," "Evidences of God," "God: The Trinity," "Attributes of God," "God's Plan For The Fallen Race," "God's Final Judgment," and others. Grover Stevens, Marshall Patton, Hoyt Houchen, Robert Goodman, Robert Gabhart, Mark Kercheville, Tom Baker, Jimmy Stevens, and Jesse Kelly will speak during the week.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	235
RESTORATIONS	96

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)
