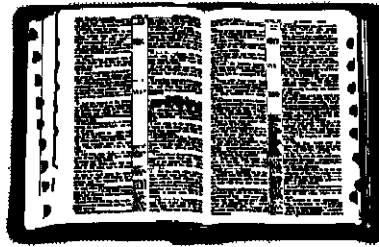


# SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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 Thessaionica 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

NOVEMBER, 1981

NUMBER 11

## Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

*Ken Green*

2212 Jordan Lane, S.W.  
Huntsville, Alabama 35805



### ON BEING HUMAN

From the Denver Post Oct. 15, 1980, came this Associated Press Article regarding the \$50,000 bribe which was accepted by Michael Myers. Audio and video tapes were made of meetings in which secret agents posed as aides to a bogus Arab sheik who was willing to pay the former congressman for favors. Myers was convicted of bribery and conspiracy and was expelled from Congress. The attitude of many of his constituents amazes me.

"He did take the money, but that doesn't bother me," said bartender Rich Francolino. "... if someone offered you \$50,000, it would be awful hard to refuse too. I can't blame Ozzie (Myers) for being human."

Doesn't that take the cake? These days, every form of sin, crime, and ungodliness is flippantly excused with the line, "That's just being human!" When folks let their tempers fly away and they tear up things, relationships, and feelings, who can blame them? They're just being human. But God's word still exhorts us to: "Be ye angry and sin not. . ." (Eph. 4:26). It is natural to be angry at times, and even needful. But that is no excuse for sin.

People fulfill their fleshly lusts with no regard for God, others, or even themselves beyond immediate gratifications. But we are reminded, "They're just being human." But our God says, ". . . abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. . ." (1 Peter 2:11).

The past few decades have produced a generation of covenant breakers. It is no longer the norm for a man's word to be his bond. Even within the church we find more and more examples of undependability. While it is human to err, and sometimes, to forget, Christians should strive to keep their word. Jesus said, "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil..." (Matt. 5:37).

What the bartender called "being human," the Lord calls "walking after the flesh" (Romans 8:1-9). While most of our fellowmen may not blame us for such, let's be reminded that "...he that judgeth me is the Lord" (1 Cor. 4:4).

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### AND THEY WERE RIGHT

*Eternity* magazine (Jan. 1981) quoted the opening sentence in the *New York Times* story: "Atlantic City— In a campaign to stop a huge increase in crime that has followed the legalization of casino gambling here, 112 persons were indicted today on burglary, theft, and narcotics charges." *Eternity* commented: "Before casino gambling was opened in 1978, opponents, including all the churches and many civic groups, argued that legalization would create a huge increase in crime, especially burglary, theft and narcotics."

They were right.

Gambling interests are continuing to capitalize on the attitude that legalized gambling can provide funds which will relieve the growing tax burden. Yet, the liabilities of such vices always exceed the benefits.

Thomas Dewey said: "It is fundamentally immoral to encourage the belief by the people as a whole in gambling as a source of revenue. . . The entire history of legalized gambling in this country and abroad shows that it has brought nothing but poverty, crime and corruption, demoralization of moral and ethical standards, and ultimately a lower living standard and misery for all the people."

Our Lord said, a corrupt tree can bring forth nothing but corrupt fruit (Matt. 7:17,18).

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Connie W. Adams -- Owner

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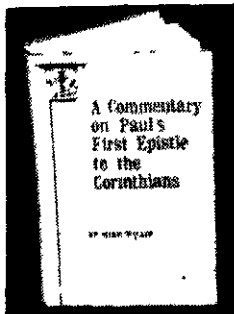
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# Editorial

*Connie W. Adams*

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## PREMILLENNIALISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

In the late fall of 1980, Robert Boyd of Louisville, Kentucky and another American premillennial preacher visited Mindanao in the Philippines and succeeded in convincing a few preachers of their doctrine. With funding from premillennial churches in the United States, they now have radio programs on six stations, all in Mindanao, with the bulk of their effort zeroed in on Davao City, the large and principal city on the east coast of that large island. With the exception of one program in Davao City on which a native Filipino preaches their doctrine, the other programs are taped segments of "Words of Life", on which Robert Boyd preaches and which is now heard in several parts of this country and in some foreign lands.

There is evidence that this speculative false doctrine is having effect on some young, untaught preachers and some congregations made up of babes in Christ which congregations lack adequate leadership and regular teaching. One congregation in Davao City which had a building of its own, has defected to this error. Juanito P. Balbin, a preacher whom I have known now for over 10 years, lives in Davao City. He is an able preacher and a first rate debater. In 1971 when I first visited the Philippines, the late and lamented Romulo B. Agduma told me that brother Balbin was then the ablest young debater in Mindanao. A few years ago brother Balbin lost all his support. But he never did quit preaching. Sustaining his growing family the best he could, he continued to preach as time and opportunity afforded. A sister in Louisville, Kentucky has supplied him with enough funds for him to preach on the same radio station the native premillennial preacher is on, in fact, immediately after this man, Gesulga. He has been exposing the error of this system.

As a result of this, a debate was set between Balbin and Gesulga which was scheduled for October 24. Two propositions were arranged and the plans called for 10 hours of debate on that one day. Robert Boyd promised to return to the Philippines for some lectures and to assist Gesulga in the debate. It is strange that the premillennial brethren in the Louisville area have become so sweet-spirited that they would not touch a debate there with a ten foot pole. But this man can go 10,000 miles to encourage a native Filipino preacher to do what he himself would not condescend to attempt.

When some of us learned of this development, and

read the appeals for teaching materials to help counteract this invading system of error, it was thought that it would be helpful to the cause and especially a moral boost to brother Balbin if one of us could go and not only help him before and during the debate but also stay long enough to do some additional teaching in that area to help equip brethren to resist this error. Ben Shropshire, Dudley Ross Spears and the writer all considered going but could not handle the scheduling problems on such short notice with other commitments already made.

J.T. Smith of Miami, Florida agreed to go provided the brethren there desired his presence. They were most anxious for him to come and by the time you read this his trip should have been completed. J.T. Smith and the writer made a trip together to the Philippines in 1971 during which time J.T. debated the Filipino, Lacuata, on church benevolence and the sponsoring church. That debate did much good and the effects of it are still being felt in that country. It was put in print and widely circulated over that country resulting in a number of preachers leaving liberalism and embracing the truth. Because of his good work in this regard and other favorable impressions he created during our month-long stay, he is highly respected among those brethren. He planned to moderate in the debate for brother Balbin, has prepared a series of charts which will be made available to those attending the debate, and was to present a series of lectures on Premillennialism the week before the debate and then again the week after. As soon as we can we will carry his report of the trip and its results.

Readers of this paper will recall that last year we carried an exchange in this paper concerning a report issued by two brethren who were critical of the work in those islands and many of the men being supported to preach there. While the report was principally aimed at curtailing excessive support and stopping support of unworthy men, the effects have been much more extensive. In fact, there has been a serious curtailment of support for men throughout the Philippines, a number of whom are tried and true. With their means of support cut off, they have had to spend the bulk of their time doing whatever they could to provide for their families. A number of these men had been able to establish several congregations and divided their time visiting each of them as often as possible to ground these babes in the truth, hold training classes to help develop leaders and generally prepare them to stand alone. But now, many of these congregations are left without adequate teaching and are prime targets for premillennial wolves and other false teachers to make havoc of these flocks. It is indeed a critical time in several places in the Philippines and especially in Mindanao where the brunt of this battle must be fought.

We are certainly not in favor of American churches supporting any unworthy man anywhere. We are also fully convinced that everywhere congregations are planted in any country that they should be taught to be self-sufficient as soon as possible. Many good men in the Philippines have embraced the truth at great

personal sacrifice. Some gave up much greater financial support in order to preach the gospel. Their work has been successful beyond imagination in many instances. I have a growing file of letters from older men who have been tested for years and who have done outstanding work for the Lord who now have been cut off by supporting churches and in some cases with direct reference being made to the critical report which we printed and reviewed last year in this paper. This is not being written in order to stir an old controversy but to simply report on some of the results. Much time, money and effort have been spent by American brethren and native people to build the cause in the island nation. We urge brethren here who have been supporting men there to think before dumping all those men in the same basket and assuming that they are all unworthy. Have you considered what is to become of congregations consisting of babes in Christ who have been established and nourished by the very men you have been supporting? Is that not why you supported them?

For my part, I do not believe that developing churches in that nation should be abandoned to false teachers who come with their smooth words and fair speeches to impose the yoke of sectarian bondage on unsuspecting babes. It is urgent now that faithful men have the necessary help to resist this threat and to help stabilize these churches. By all means, investigate men supported. Gather the best information you can. Weigh it objectively. Require regular and full reports. But don't judge all men by the ungodly conduct of the few. Brother Smith is to be commended for being willing to go and help at a critical time and so is the North Miami Ave. church for standing behind him and encouraging him in this effort. We anxiously await his report.

#### **THE HOUCHEM—PHILLIPS EXCHANGE**

With this issue we bring to a close for the present the discussion of the issue of "praying to Jesus" in so far as this paper is concerned. We have had letters and articles from a number of brethren about this matter and think it necessary to state our intention regarding it. Both H.E. Phillips and Hoyt Houchen are mature, experienced preachers and writers. Both have been on the battle line for truth and right for all of their adult lives. They are personal friends. Both are friends of the editor. It is my judgment that they have brought before our readers the strongest effort on their respective views of the subject under discussion that can be found. Both views have been adequately and fairly represented. To extend the matter and enlarge the number of articles touching this subject would tend to blow it out of proportion and neither the editor, nor brethren Phillips and Houchen believe this to be in the best interest of the cause. Each has researched his material carefully, presented it forcefully, been considerate and brotherly with respect to the other and we believe that is enough to air the different views. I have consulted with both these brethren and they concur in

this judgment. We are not averse to controversy. There are divine principles by which honest and earnest men should be governed even in controversy and we believe these have been observed in this case. We thank both brethren for their contribution to the study and thought of us all. We ask you to read carefully and thoughtfully the final articles by these brethren carried elsewhere in this issue.

#### **AND NOW—A "CHURCH OF CHRIST" STILL**

#### **"WILLIAMSTOWN SCHOOL PLANS TO USE JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE AS BUS FUEL"**

**William B. Murrell  
8 Brown Ave.  
Parkersburg, WV 26101**

The above title was the heading for an article in the Parkersburg News, Sept. 9, 1981. The article went on to say that the Williamstown church of Christ was going to build a building and a still to make alcohol to fuel its buses. They have received a \$26,270.00 grant from the U. S. Department of Energy for this purpose.

II John 9, says, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." In the past forty years I have seen some of my brethren do so much that is beyond the teaching of Christ that I thought I was beyond the point of being surprised at anything they would do, But I was shocked at hearing this on the news and later reading it in the paper. Just how far can a congregation go without ceasing to be "of Christ"? I can't answer this for even in "Ole dead Sardis" there were a few names who had not defiled their garments (See Rev. 3:4).

I consider the act described above not only to be unscriptural but also unconstitutional. It seems to me that it is a violation of the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. Besides this, our nation was founded on the basis of separation of church and State.

The late Bro. J. D. Tant used to close most of his articles to religious papers with the words, "Brethren, we are drifting." Brethren, many have now drifted, run through the rapids, and are on the brink of the falls and are about ready to have our candlestick completely removed.

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## A REPLY TO H. E. PHILLIPS

*Hoyt H. Houchen*  
1838 S. Fairplay St.  
Aurora, Colorado 80012



In the February, 1981 issue of *Searching The Scriptures* is an article penned by me and entitled, "Praying And Singing To Jesus". My article affirms that the scriptures authorize us to pray and sing to Jesus, as well as God the Father. H.E. Phillips believes that it is wrong to pray to Jesus, so he has written two articles in reply to mine—one appearing in the July issue of *Searching The Scriptures* and the other in the August issue. I am grateful for the opportunity to respond to his two articles. Brother Phillips and I have been good friends for a number of years and our pleasant associations of the past are recalled with pleasure.

I am willing for my first article to stand upon its own merit; for I set forth what I firmly believe the scriptures teach. Rather than examine my arguments one by one, brother Phillips has chosen to state what he believes. Really, I am surprised at some things he does believe and the position that he takes.

### A Clarification

First, I wish to make it very clear that I do not in any way approve of the disgusting repetitious "dear Jesus" phrases which are uttered by Pentecostal groups and others, who are carried away by the charismatic movement. My article simply declares that the scriptures authorize us to pray and sing to Jesus. Whatever abuses may result from what is right is another matter.

And, it is true that generally brethren address their prayers to God the Father. Under most circumstances, I do the same. I do believe that we are praying to Jesus when we sing such songs as "Jesus Keep Me Near The Cross". So, even though we address our prayers to God the Father most of the time, to deny that it is scriptural to address prayers to Jesus is an entirely different thing.

### No Parallel

At the outset of my article I observed that well-meaning brethren, who in their efforts to prove from the scriptures that we must pray to the Father ONLY, cite the several passages which mention praying to God the Father but they ignore scriptures which have reference to praying to Jesus. They conclude that we must address our prayers to the Father ONLY. This is the method used by the Baptists when they attempt to prove faith ONLY. They list all of the passages which teach faith, but they fail to recognize the other con-

ditions of salvation. The two approaches are parallel. But brother Phillips thinks I made the same argument as that made by members of the Christian Church; because when we have listed all of the verses in the New Testament which mention singing in worship, they charge us with concluding that we cannot use instrumental music in worship. They would be correct if there were also examples of instrumental music in worship, but there are none. We do have examples of prayers addressed to Jesus, so he does not have a parallel between what I said and the argument made by members of the Christian Church. There are examples of prayers to Jesus, but there are no examples of instrumental music. That is the difference, brother Phillips. So, my argument and that made by members of the Christian Church are far from being "exactly the same in form and fact", as he says.

### The Nature of Christ

We worship Christ because He is God. But while brother Phillips agrees that Jesus is GOD, and should be worshipped, he denies that we can pray to Him. Hear him: "I affirm that songs of praise, exultation and adoration to Jesus, to the Father or to the Holy Spirit are scriptural. But I affirm that praying to Jesus or to the Holy Spirit is unscriptural and wrong."

We agree that there are three separate persons in the Godhead—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. They are not only coexistent, but they are CO-EQUAL. To understand this fact is basic to this discussion. When Jesus descended to earth and became incarnate (Jno.1:14), He was not divested of any divinity or nature, thus He did not cease to be GOD. He was the eternal LOGOS (Jno. 1:1) and continued to be God. He assumed a different role, becoming a servant and being made like man (Phil.2:6,7); but His nature was the same. God the Father and Christ the Son are different in role, but the same in nature. This being the case, He is worthy of the same honor as the Father. "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father that sent him" (Jno.5:22,23).

### Prayer to Jesus

From the time that the wise men worshipped Him who was laid in His humble manger at Bethlehem, men have worshipped at His feet. Many sought blessings from His bountiful hand while He walked upon this earth. Never did Jesus refuse homage upon the basis that He was the improper object, nor did He forbid petitions being made to Him. Men, and even an angel, did refuse such honor (Acts 10:25,26: 14:14,15; Rev. 19:10). But Jesus is GOD, and men not only petitioned Him while He was upon this earth, but also after He went into heaven and became our mediator, high priest and advocate.

That worship of Jesus sometimes included petition, as well as adoration and exultation, is obvious. A leper came to Jesus and "worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Matt. 8:2). Jairus "worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she

shall live" (Matt.9:18). ". . .the mother of the sons of Zebedee, with her sons, worshipping him, and asking a certain thing of him" (Matt.20:20). The woman of Canaan "came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me" (Matt.15:25). The father of the poor lunatic came "kneeling to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son" (Matt.17:14,15). Jesus was not only petitioned upon earth, but also after He ascended to heaven as was clearly pointed out in my first article (Acts 7:59; 2 Cor. 12:8,9; Rev. 5:9; 22:20). But brother Phillips contends that he can praise, exalt and adore Jesus, but it is unscriptural and wrong to pray to Him. By his conceding our right to worship, as far as I am concerned, he cannot logically deny our right to petition Him.

### **An Old View Revived**

The homoousios (Geek word, "of the same substance), was generally believed by early Christians. The idea that Jesus and the Father are of the same nature, and therefore should be equally honored, was commonly believed until the fourth century A. D. when a dispute arose about it. Arius began to teach that Christ is subordinate to the Father. Athanasius championed the cause of truth by opposing the view of Arius. The Nicene council met in 325 A. D. to settle the dispute. It merely confirmed what the scriptures already taught upon this question. But false doctrines do not remain dormant. In the sixteenth century A. D., Faustus and Laelius (nephew and uncle) formulated and promoted the view that Jesus was not equal with God, and therefore that He should be worshipped next to the Father. Upon this basis the defenders of Arianism and Socinianism deny the right to pray to Jesus. While brother Phillips does not hold to all the specific points of these doctrines, and I am not accusing him of such; nevertheless, his conclusion is the same—we are not to pray to Jesus. We had thought this question had been settled centuries ago.

### **The Position of Jesus**

Jesus is said to have all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt.28:18); He is king and judge (I Cor. 15:25,26; 2 Tim. 4:1), He is the searcher of hearts (Jno. 2:25 Rev. 2:23), He is the author of our salvation (Heb. 2:10); He is our high priest (Heb.4:15); He is our mediator (I Tim. 2:5) and He is our advocate (I Jno. 2:1). Please notice all that is attributed to Him: omnipresence (Matt. 28:20), omnipotence (Matt. 28:18), omniscience (Col. 2:3), eternity (Jno. 1:1; 8:58; Jno. 17:5), an equal share in honor with the Father (Jno.5:22,23), absolute oneness with the Father (Jno. 10(30) and a like claim upon the trust (Jno.14:1), the father (Jno.15:27) and the hope (I Cor.15:22) of humanity. He shared in the creation of all things (Jno. 1:3). He is the preserver of the world (Col.1:17). He is Lord of lords and King of kings (Rev.19:16), the brightness of the Father's glory and the very image of the Father's substance (Heb.1:3).

More could be given as to the position of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Jesus is our king. Are we to suppose that citizens of the heavenly kingdom have no right to petition their king? Jesus is the head of the

family, the church. Are the members of this great family not allowed to address their head? Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). He sits and rules at the right hand of God above all rule, authority, power, and dominion and is above every name that is named (Eph.1:21); but brother Phillips says it is unscriptural and wrong to pray to Him. Frankly, I am embarrassed that this should even be a matter of dispute among brethren.

### **What Prayer Involves**

Prayer consists of several elements: (a) praise and adoration, (b) thanksgiving, (c) confession of sins and (d) petition. ALL of these elements are involved in prayer, and if one of them is permitted (praise) then that is PRAYER—the same as if one other (petition) is uttered. Brother Phillips does not seem to recognize this. Webster defines the word "pray": (1) to make entreaty or supplication (2) to address God with adoration, confession, supplication, or thanksgiving (Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 667). Charles Hodge states this clearly. "As prayer, in the Scriptural sense of the term, includes all converse with God either in the form of praise, thanksgiving, confession or petition; all the ascriptions of glory to Him as well as all direct supplications addressed to Him, come under this head" (Systematic Theology, Vol.3, p. 700-01). But the dictionaries and theologians do not have to define prayer for us. When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Hallowed be thy name," that was praise and exaltation. So, praise and exaltation to Jesus is an element of prayer. I had stated that those who object to songs or prayers specifically addressed to Jesus can sing or pray to one part of deity, but they cannot pray to another part. Brother Phillips wants to know why it is not wrong to sing and pray to the Holy Spirit, and he wishes to know if I advocate praying to the Holy Spirit. This poses no difficulty. It so happens that brother Phillips is doing what all of us do when we praise the Holy Spirit. Praise is a part of prayer, so in that sense he prays to the Holy Spirit when he praises and adores Him. He is doing the same when he praises, exalts and adores the Father and the Son in song. He is actually doing what he thinks he cannot do.

### **A False Distinction**

Brother Phillips believes there is a distinction between singing and praying. Hear him in his first article: "One of the main pillars upon which this idea of praying to Jesus rests is that songs we sing—the good old popular and well known songs—are prayers to Jesus. This is not true! There is a difference between praying and singing." There we have it. We all agree that there are separate items of worship revealed in the New Testament: prayer, singing, the Lord's Supper, etc. He does not seem to recognize, however, that singing can be praying. Some songs are prayer songs. For instance, "Tarry With Me O My Saviour" is a prayer song. According to him, we can address Jesus WITH A TUNE, because singing is not prayer. However, we cannot address Jesus WITHOUT A TUNE, because that would be praying to Jesus and he

says that it is unscriptural and wrong to pray to Jesus. We would all agree that some prayers are not songs, and some songs are not prayers; but that a prayer cannot be sung is absurd. One problem, though, is solved for brother Phillips. He can have that "little talk with Jesus" or he can "tell it to Jesus alone" if he sings to Jesus because he does not believe that singing is ever praying. According to his position, he is not praying; he is only singing. He can praise and adore Jesus if he SINGS. It is disappointing that brother Phillips would involve himself in that kind of argumentation.

He attempts to show a difference between singing and praying by referring to Eph.5:19 and Col.3:16,17. He thinks Paul makes a distinction between singing to the Lord (Jesus) in the first clause and praying to God the Father in the last clause (Eph.5:20). But this is unwarrantable; for to begin with, it is his assumption that this is the distinction that Paul makes. I do not believe that he correctly construes the verse. The Greek term *kurios*, translated "Lord" in the first clause does not always refer to Jesus. It may designate either God the Father or Jesus, depending at times upon the context. For specific examples, the reader is referred to Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, under *kurios*, p. 460. Furthermore, the distinction that brother Phillips makes in this verse is not made by any critical commentary that I have checked. While commentators vary in some particulars, none of them make the distinction in this verse that he does. And what is more, if this verse were the proof for the definite distinction between singing and praying that brother Phillips makes, then it would contradict any other scripture which teaches that singing and praying is ONE act, simultaneous.

Now let us consider a scripture which is the devastating blow to his contention.

### Acts 16:25

"But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them..." "Praying" is a present participle and "singing" is an imperfect verb. Lenski says that "the present participle and the imperfect verb express simultaneous action: their singing was praying". (Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles, p. 672). This is the only interpretation that this grammatical construction will allow. Praying, they were singing. It was ONE act. A. T. Robertson comments: "Present middle participle and imperfect active indicative: Praying they were singing (simultaneously, blending together petition and praise)" (Word Pictures in the N. T., Vol. 3, p. 259-60). Others express the same thing (Alford, Hackett, Ellicott etc.) There is no way for brother Phillips to get around the force of this verse. It is irrefutable and it completely demolishes his argument that there is a distinction between singing and praying. He is wrong.

Incidentally, some of us are made to wonder about his comment on Jas. 5:13: "Is any among you afflicted! let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms". In his effort to prove his distinction between praying and singing in this verse, we are made to wonder if he

thinks it would be proper for us to pray when we are merry and sing when we are afflicted (i. e. funerals, etc.).

### The Lord's Supper

I do not agree with his illustration of the Lord's Supper—that it is an act of worship directed to a single person exclusively. He only assumes it. The Lord's Supper commemorates the death of Jesus, but that its observance is directed only to Jesus is gratuitous. When we partake of the Lord's Supper we acknowledge God's love (Rom.5:8), His grace (Heb.2:9) and His mercy (Tit.3:4-6). The Christian gratefully acknowledges all of these (Col.3:17). The Lord's Supper is one of the "all things" we do in the name of Jesus, giving thanks to God. Brother Phillips is wrong again.

### Explanations of Examples Examined

Brother Phillips attempts to explain away the examples of prayers to Jesus in my first article, contending that they serve as no proof for us to pray to Jesus today.

His explanation of Stephen's prayer (Acts 7:59) is shocking indeed. "Lord Jesus receive my spirit". Hear brother Phillips: "There are special miraculous circumstances surrounding this scene that make it an unusual setting for the statement made by Stephen. If I were in the same situation as Stephen was and saw what he saw, I suppose I would speak to Jesus just as he did. But in the absence of this miraculous setting at any subsequent time, we have no evidence that this was ever repeated in history, especially in Biblical history". So, he tries to dismiss this example upon the basis of its "special miraculous circumstances". If this be true, I submit to you that almost every single case of conversion in the book of Acts would be invalid because, with few exceptions, they were surrounded by "special miraculous circumstances". I am really surprised that he would come up with this. What a loophole this would provide for those who would like to escape the force of Acts 2:38! Those conditions are surrounded by "miraculous circumstances. And, whether or not Stephen was inspired, does not alter the fact that it was a prayer to Jesus. He was a godly saint, a Christian, and he prayed to Jesus. He prayed to Jesus who is our high priest and mediator, one who in heaven occupied the same position that He does now. I might also add that his petition was not accompanied by a tune, but yet it was a prayer—he prayed to Jesus.

He refers to Matt. 15:25 where the woman of Canaan came "and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me". Brother Phillips adds, "Now since she worshipped him, she must have sung and prayed to Jesus. I don't believe it". No one said she did sing to Jesus, brother Phillips. She prayed to Jesus and she was not singing. She did what you say is wrong for us to do. Does brother Phillips think he is not **praying** to God the Father when he addresses Him, "Dear Father, help me"?

Then he comments on 2 Cor. 12:8 where Paul besought the Lord (Jesus) three times to remove his thorn in the flesh. Now hear his explanation. "If this is

an example of praying to Jesus, it is also an example of Jesus replying directly to us in His own WORDS." I am shocked by this effort to explain this example away. Because Jesus answered Paul directly with His own WORDS does not alter the fact that Paul prayed to Jesus. This fact is what bothers brother Phillips and he cannot justifiably deny it. Paul prayed to Jesus which is an example of prayer to Jesus. According to brother Phillips, no one can pray to Jesus because He is our high priest and mediator. But Paul did and others did, and these are valid examples. As to 2 Cor. 12:8, let us not forget that revelation was not completed, nor was it in the cases of conversion; but whatever miraculous circumstances circumscribed them, they still nevertheless serve as examples. Brother Phillips should know better than to offer this kind of explanation.

Revelation 5:9,11,12 is symbolical, but it does not contradict the fact that Jesus is an object of prayer. If He were not, there would certainly have been no prayer addressed to Him, even in a symbolical setting. That which is unscriptural and wrong would not appear in any setting, symbolical or otherwise.

As to his comments on Jno.14:14, for lack of space, I simply refer the reader back to my original article and the comments upon its grammatical construction.

Brother Phillips thinks the one making the statement in Rev.22:20, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" was made by the Holy Spirit, and not the words of a man praying. Again, this is only his assumption. I have many commentaries in my library on the book of Revelation, and there is not one that I have examined that takes the position that he does. Nearly all say it was John (a few say it could be the seven churches) and these include such books as those by Barnes, Lenski, Beckworth, Homer Hailey, Hendriksen, Hinds, McGuiggan, Summers and Earle. These are but a few, and none agree with brother Phillips. The context shows clearly that it was John who made the statement, and it is a prayer.

#### More Examples

In Acts 1:24, when the apostles were assembled to select one to take the place of Judas, "they prayed, and said, Thou Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show of these two the one whom thou hast chosen. That this is a prayer to Jesus is made most clear from the fact that the selection of the twelve apostles was the prerogative of Christ. The apostles were selected by Jesus and they were known as the apostles of Jesus Christ, and not God the Father. Also, Jesus does know the hearts of all men (Rev.2:23). This is strong evidence that the prayer was addressed to Jesus. This is attested to by such scholars as Barnes, Lenski, Hackett, Alford and Bengel. They agree that the apostles invoked Jesus as Lord.

Paul addressed the church at Corinth, "with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place" (I Cor. 1:2). It is plain here that prayer is referred to, and the prayer is to Christ. Saints invoke Him. Albert Barnes comments: "The expression 'to

call upon the name', to invoke the name, implies worship and prayer; and proves, (1) That the Lord Jesus is an object of worship and (2) That one characteristic of the early Christians, by which they were known and distinguished, was their calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus, or their worship to him. That it implies worship, see note on Acts 7:59; and that the early Christians called on Christ by prayer, and were distinguished by that. . ." (I Corinthians, p. 3). J. W. Shepherd, who edited the commentary on Romans by David Lipscomb, comments on this verse: "To call upon is to invoke his aid. To call upon the name of Jesus Christ is to invoke his aid as the Christ, the Messiah predicted by the prophets, and is our almighty and sovereign possessor and ruler" (I Corinthians, p. 21). Language could not be plainer that prayer to Jesus is taught, and I have not found a commentary which states otherwise. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown observe on this verse that, "the worship due to God is here attributed to Jesus" (Critical and Explanatory Commentary, Vol.2, p. 263). Socinians render the phrase passively "all that are called by the name of Jesus Christ". But "the verb followed by an accusative case, usually, if not constantly, is used, in its active signification, to call upon, to invoke" (Richard Watson, Theological Institutes, Vol. 1, p. 601). So, not only is the position of brother Phillips, that it is wrong to pray to Jesus, contrary to the scriptures; but scholarship testifies against it.

Paul prayed conjointly with the Father in behalf of the Thessalonians. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father. . .comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word" (2 Thess.2:16,17). "Both are the one object of prayer, are to the apostle divine; for Divinity alone is the living object of adoration" (John Eadie, Commentary on the Greek Text of Thessalonians, p. 298). The honor of the Son is not less than that of the Father. The reader may also refer to Leon Morris (Tyndale series, Thessalonians, p. 139).

I Tim. 1:12 is another example of prayer to Jesus. "I thank him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful. . ." Paul expresses his gratitude to Christ, and thanksgiving is an element of prayer, as we have shown.

Early martyrs died with prayers to Jesus on their lips, and from the time of Stephen their voices span the chasm of the centuries.

#### Conclusion

Someone has taken the time to count sixty-one songs which we would consider "prayer songs" in the "Sacred Selections" song book. They are addressed directly to Jesus, the doubtful one not counted. These are considered the "classics" which brethren have sung for years. They are dear to us, not only because we love to sing them, but they express the truth which we believe is taught in the word of God. God forbid that a few brethren would "put the scissors" to "My Jesus As Thou Wilt", "I Need Thee Every Hour", "Jesus Keep Me Near The Cross", "Tarry With Me O



My Saviour" and many more. We rue the day when the attempt is made to remove such songs from our worship.

I have examined the two main arguments which brother Phillips makes in his two articles: (1) That there is a distinction between singing and praying (article 1) and (2) that we cannot pray to Jesus because He is our high priest, mediator and advocate (article 2). That Jesus has made it possible for us to pray to the Father is one thing, but to deny that we can address Him in prayer is an entirely different matter. I pray to Jesus because He is GOD, and with Thomas, I address Him as my Lord and my God.

My reply is written with love and kindness. My attack is upon the position of brother Phillips, and not upon him personally. I have no animosity in my heart toward him whatsoever. I simply disagree with him. I do agree, however, that this issue should not be pressed to the dividing of brethren. By mutual agreement, this will be my last reply in this exchange. May we ever desire the truth, and may we always manifest a spirit of love and kindness toward one another is my prayer.

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## **A REPLY TO HOYT HOUCHEN**

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In this issue of *Searching The Scriptures* brother Hoyt Houchen has A Reply To H. E. Phillips regarding the issue of "Praying And Singing To Jesus." I would suggest that the reader get the February, 1981 issue of this paper and read brother Houchen's first article on this subject, and then my articles of reply in the July and August issues. By reading these first you will have a better understanding of the two articles in this issue.

Brother Houchen and I are brethren and good friends of long standing. Our discussion of this issue is not to be construed as personal attacks upon each other. I love and respect him. I think he is wrong on the subject of praying to Jesus, and he obviously thinks I am wrong. I shall press the point as long as I am convinced that I have the truth of God.

In this article I shall try to respond to him, section by section. Both time and space prohibit a close review of his article as I would like to do. I received his article several days later than I should, due to no fault of brother Houchen, but to the slow U.S. mail.

### **A CLARIFICATION**

Brother Houchen does not approve of the Pentecostal type praying to Jesus. Well, as far as I am concerned it is not the "abuse of how it is done," but the fact that it is done. He also says that generally brethren address their prayers to God the Father, and "Under most circumstances, I do the same." We wonder why the partiality is shown between the Father and the Son Jesus Christ in the matter of prayer.

### **NO PARALLEL**

My response was made to what brother Houchen said in his first article, not to what he says in this last one. In the first he said nothing about passages that authorize praying to Jesus when a comparison was made to Baptist doctrine. But he knows that the Christian Church attempts to prove instrumental music in worship by citing verses from both the Old and New Testaments. There is a parallel, even though brother Houchen does not see it.

### **THE NATURE OF CHRIST**

It is superfluous for me to go over my material on the Deity of Christ. I spent about half of the first article on the divine nature of Christ. I understand by his context that by "CO-EQUAL" he means the nature of the Father and the Son, not their relationship to each other.

## PRAYER TO JESUS

Until we can arrive at some accepted definition of "prayer" as it is used in the New Testament, we will never come to an understanding of the truth.

Prayer is worship, but all worship is not prayer. Do not assume that prayer is included every time the Holy Spirit used the word "worship." Adoration and exaltation do not always imply prayer, and prayer is not always adoration and exaltation. Hence, when we find Jesus being adored or exalted, do not jump to the conclusion that it necessarily implies prayer. It doesn't!

All of the references cited in this section of people coming to Jesus with requests while he was in the flesh do not prove authority to pray to Jesus now. Read under the sub-head: "Proof Texts Examined" in the August issue.

## AN OLD VIEW REVIVED

I resent the implication of his little historical essay about Arius, Athanasius, Faustus and Laelius. Even though he says that I do not hold to "all the specific points of these doctrines. . .", I am charged with what he says are the consequences of "Arianism and Socinianism" to "deny the right to pray to Jesus." Does he really believe that the doctrine of Arianism and Socinianism had to do with the denial of the right to pray to Jesus? I vehemently deny any convictions or conclusions to anything akin to Arianism. Read my articles in the July and August issues. The truth of the matter is, the "Old View" went farther back than Arius. The Pharisees and Sadducees did not admit Christ to be the Son of God. They charged him with blasphemy because he said he was the Son of God.

## THE POSITION OF JESUS

Read my July and August articles for my belief in the position of Christ in the whole scheme of redemption.

Lest someone should think there is some point in the argument that the citizens of the kingdom have a right to petition their King, thus we have the right to pray to Jesus, I want to suggest a question or two which will present some problems with his arguments.

He says, "Christ is our King." So he is! But is Christ the ONLY King? Does this heavenly kingdom have ANOTHER King? If not, why does brother Houchen admit: "And, it is true that generally brethren address their prayers to God the Father. Under most circumstances, I do the same." If citizens have the right to petition their King (Christ), why not petition him all the time? unless, of course, he is a subordinate King who may be petitioned some of the time, but most of the time another is petitioned and the King is left out?

The same is true of the figure of Christ being the head of the family, the church. If members of this great family are to address the head, Christ should be addressed as "Father" because the New Testament teaches that the husband and father is the head of the wife and children. If we address "Our Father, which art in heaven," and then address Christ who is the "Son of God" now in heaven at the right hand of the

Father, we either have TWO heads of the family, or we are addressing one who is not the head of the family. Which is it? Brother Houchen, are you being driven to Polytheism?

These are not my problems. These are problems of those who strain at figures of relationship to establish a point that can not be established any other way. I believe that Christ is the King of the kingdom and the head of the church. The Bible plainly says so. But these relationships do not call for all human activity to exist between deity and humanity in the figures.

But if these activities are justified in the figures of Christ's relationship to us, please explain why the King (Christ) should not reply directly to the citizens who petition him? What head of a family would continually hear his family call unto him and never reply to them?

## WHAT PRAYER INVOLVES

Brother Houchen attempts to define prayer to support his proposition of praying to Jesus today. I do not believe he understands the difference between "prayer," "worship," "praise," and "adoration." He makes these words equal so that when one prays, he is praising; when he worships, he is praying; when he sings, he is praying; when he prays, he is singing, and so on and on. He says of me, "Praise is a part of prayer, so in that sense he prays to the Holy Spirit when he praises and adores Him. He is doing the same when he praises, exalts and adores the Father and the Son in song. He is actually doing what he thinks he cannot do."

Brother Houchen, I know the difference between SINGING and PRAYING. The two actions are as different as "repenting" and being "baptized."

## A FALSE DISTINCTION

Brother Houchen seems astonished that I believe there is a distinction between singing and praying. It never dawned upon me that I would have to try to teach a gospel preacher the difference between "singing" and "praying."

He says, "Some songs are prayer songs." Yes, I know that some songs are "prayer songs." Some are "patriotic songs," some are "love songs," and some are "battle (war) songs," but such distinctions do not make them scriptural. Songs that do not teach the truth are not spiritual songs that can be sung in worship. To argue that "singing can be praying" is like arguing that "singing can be dancing." I can produce definitions of the word "sing" that include dancing. Brother Houchen, will you accept the position that singing can be dancing, and that it is scriptural to sing (and dance) to the Lord?

He says he has one problem solved for me: "He can have a 'little talk with Jesus' or he can 'tell it to Jesus alone' if he sings to Jesus because he does not believe that singing is ever praying. According to his position, he is not praying; he only singing." Now, Hoyt, you know very well that you are not stating my position as it appeared in my July article. You are stating the very opposite to what I said. (p. 447) Please do not charge

me with the consequences of your own logic.

I hope brother Houchen remembers his exegesis of Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16,17 a little later in this reply to him. Please remember that he is making the point that we cannot be sure about whether the Greek term kurios, which is translated "Lord," refers to Jesus or the Father. I agree that the word for Lord must be determined by the context as to whom it may refer. Both Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16,17 show by the context that the term refers to Jesus Christ.

### ACTS 16:25

Now we come to the "devastating blow" to my contention. The passage is Acts 16:25! He gave us a little Greek grammar lesson and some comments from Len-ski, A. T. Robertson and some other commentators of reputation, and then he concludes: "There is no way for brother Phillips to get around the force of this verse. It is irrefutable and it completely demolishes his argument that there is a distinction between singing and prayer. He is wrong."

Please notice what brother Houchen is trying to prove me wrong about: "... completely demolishes his argument that there is a distinction between singing and prayer." That is what this argument is all about, and don't forget it! Well, I do not think that even Acts 16:25 will prove that there is NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN SINGING AND PRAYER. Watch his "devastating blow" disintegrate before his eyes. He wonders why I cited James 5:13 in my previous articles. I did so to show that the scriptures made a distinction between singing and praying.

I will not rest my case upon what fallible men say, no matter how great their reputation. Every scholar he quotes will teach some error which he will not accept. What I am saying is that the scholarly men we read, we do so with discernment because we know they are usually influenced by denominational error.

Len-ski is one scholar he quotes. In the same chapter of Acts, 16:31-33, he uses Greek grammar to prove that salvation is at once, a gift from God, and as soon as the jailor believed and accepted the Lord, he was saved. Len-ski says of verse 33: "The jailor and his family were baptized in the ordinary way by an application of water in the name of the Triune God. The quantity of water present is wholly immaterial." I know brother Houchen does not accept his own scholar on this exegesis of Acts 16:31-33. I cite this to simply show that neither of us really accept as final proof any word of uninspired man.

I will make three observations of Acts 16:25 in this present study. First, I checked 14 translations (I have several more) and all of them translated the verse using both words (prayed, and sang praises) as actions by Paul and Silas.

The best Greek scholars in the world combined their knowledge of the original Greek language and the English language and came up with the best "carry-across" from the original meaning to the exact meaning in the English. Their scholarship was on the line and I trust them to be more accurate with their

translation than a scholar who comments on a verse with a doctrinal beam in his eye.

Second, whatever Paul and Silas were doing upon this occasion, it was done to GOD. If they, "praying, hymned praises," they did so to God, not to Christ. I realize, however, brother Houchen is trying to prove that there is no distinction between singing and prayer.

Third, other passages in the New Testament that clearly distinguish between praying and singing leave no doubt for either commentators or translators. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1-4), he did not give them a music lesson; he taught them to pray. We can well establish the clear distinction between praying and singing.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER

He does not agree with my illustration of the Lord's Supper, and waves it off as if I had said nothing. The truth is, brother Houchen you cannot answer it, and I think you did the best thing in leaving it alone. My point in the illustration of the Lord's Supper was to show that when we do what the New Testament teaches us to do in partaking of the Lord's Supper, we can ONLY remember the "broken body" and the "shed blood" of Christ (Matt. 26:26,28; I Cor. 10:16; 11:24,25). Read my July article, page 447.

### EXPLANATIONS OF EXAMPLES EXAMINED

Brother Houchen comes again to Stephen's "prayer" as he was dying. He said nothing new that deserves a reply. Stephen SAW Jesus in heaven; Paul SAW Jesus near Damascus. Both talked to Christ and He talked to them personally. If this is an example of praying to Jesus, it is also an example of SEEING Christ when we talk to him and expecting him to audibly address us personally when we talk to him. That which proves too much, proves nothing.

In the third paragraph of this section he said the woman of Canaan worshipped Jesus but did not sing. The reason I used this illustration was because he argued that she worshipped Jesus, and worship includes prayer; and to pray to him was the same as singing. That was the point of his "devastating blow" from Acts 16:25. Go back and read it, Now he said: "No one said she did sing to Jesus, brother Phillips." She prayed to Jesus and she was not singing. The legs of the lame are unequal.

AS to 2 Corinthians 12:8 brother Houchen has already committed himself to the fact the we cannot determine whether kurios refers to the Father or to Christ. Since this is true, I could just as accurately say that Paul besought the Lord God, the Father, to remove the thorn from his flesh. Read again my articles on this subject.

He parades a list of men who have written commentaries and announces my demise because none of them agree with me. Brother Houchen, I have never sought to agree with men, living or dead. I have labored to be in harmony with divine truth, and the rest I discard.

### MORE EXAMPLES

The reference to Act. 1:24 is the record of an apostle being chosen by Christ in fulfillment of prophecy. One could no more draw authority for a general practice from Acts 1:24 than the specific appearance of Christ to Saul as he journeyed to Damascus should become general authority for Christ to personally appear to men who are to be saved.

The reference to 1 Corinthians 1:2 has no reference to praying to Jesus. It has to do with obeying the Lord—doing his will (Rom. 10:13). This is the fulfillment of Joel 2:32 and refers to all that is authorized for the remission of sins (Acts 22:16).

I can make a better case for praying to "father Abraham" than is here made for praying to Jesus. When a certain rich man died and lifted up his eyes in torments, he saw a certain beggar named Lazarus, who had died and was carried to the bosom of Abraham; he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me . . ." (Luke 16:24). Then in verse 27 we read: "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house ..." Shall we take this plain example of prayer to Abraham and exhort brethren to pray to him? No, certainly not! This is no more an example of prayer today than are those passages cited by brother Houchen.

He asserts that "early martyrs died with prayers to Jesus on their lips. . ." I just cannot accept his personal statement on this assumption. We are looking for Bible proof.

### CONCLUSION

In the July issue, page 447, I stated that one of the main reasons for this position of praying to Jesus was to save some of the songs we have cherished through the years, written by denominational men and women. Brother Houchen now makes the emotional appeal for the preservation of several "old favorites." This is pretty good evidence that saving the songs plays a major part in trying to find authority to pray to Jesus.

I do not think brother Houchen effectively replied to my articles. First, he did not address himself to the point I made in the context I gave on the deity of Jesus. Second, he totally ignored some, and scarcely mentioned other arguments I made. In the July article I had a bit to say about the nature and relationship of deity. He virtually ignored this. His examination of Ephesians 5:18-21 and Colossians 3:16,17 is very disappointing. To my section: "All Three Persons of Deity Involved In Prayer," he said nothing about it. He garbled his attempt to say something about the Lord's Supper; he missed my point altogether.

The first half of my article in August was given to the indispensable place of Christ in our prayers to the Father. He hardly mentioned this portion of my article. I think I know why.

I have written in love and have tried to be kind and respectful. I consider brother Houchen a brother and a friend. I believe he is very wrong on this issue of praying to Jesus. But whatever either of us may say,

the final judgment will be made by the word of God. We all must answer to God by Christ and his word in that great day. What we believe and practice will determine our eternal destiny.

I pray that brethren will study this issue and strive to know and practice the truth. We should not press a matter like this to the point of division while we are trying to learn what the word of God teaches. This will be all I will say on the subject for awhile. A booklet will probably appear from my pen at some later date.

### Restoration Footnotes

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### ANY PLACE WILL DO

The pioneer preachers of the Restoration movement were not finicky about where they preached. Any place people could be gathered would do. School houses were often available and frequently used. But when J. A. Clark went to Harrison County, Texas, a few years before the Civil War, the school houses were all closed to him because he opposed denominationalism.

A wealthy planter named Edwards learned of the preacher's plight and offered the use of a building on his plantation. The structure originally had served as a school, but having been abandoned for such use, it now sheltered farm animals. When told the use being made of the building, Clark said, "Well, Mr. Edwards, my Savior was born in a stable, and I am not ashamed to preach in one." (F. D. Srgyley, *Biographies and Sermons*, pp. 83-84.)

The place was cleared of all appearances of a stable and cleaned up, as best it could be in short order and Clark held a gospel meeting there. Several persons learned the truth and were baptized, among whom were the planter's wife and young son.

Thousands were converted under similar circumstances in the last century and many churches had their beginning in such humble surroundings. The pioneer preachers like Clark were primarily men of the message; the place and condition of its delivery were relatively unimportant. These men, like the ancient Sidonians of whom the Lord spoke, may rise up in judgment against some today who will hardly preach any place, unless they are guaranteed a comfortable salary and a congenial setting.

"Shall we be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, while others fight to win the prize and sail through bloody seas?"

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED (3)

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Sask. Canada S6H2Z1



We continue our study of what it means to be saved, believing that we can appreciate salvation from sin to the extent that we understand what is involved in the transaction.

Having discussed in a previous article things that God has done for man that man could not do for himself—propitiation for sin (Rom. 3:25); reconciliation to himself (Col. 1:21); and redemption (Eph. 1:7)—I shall now discuss man's part in the plan of salvation, and the various terms used by inspired writers that help us to appreciate to a greater extent what is involved in being saved.

### Salvation

Prior to his ascension to heaven, to take his seat at the right hand of God, Jesus gave to his apostles what is known as the great commission. Mark recorded it in the following words, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15,16).

Here we have the word, saved, used to designate the result of believing and being baptized. It was pointed out in an earlier article that in its general sense, to be saved means to be delivered from impending danger, as we might say of one who has recovered from a critical illness, or who was rescued from a burning building, or from drowning, that his or her life was saved.

In giving the great commission with conditions of salvation, Jesus was not, however, speaking of being saved from physical death. He was speaking of salvation from the guilt of sin and its punishment. Paul, in reminding the Thessalonians of their salvation, said that they had been "delivered from the wrath that is to come" (1 Thess. 1:10). Peter told those to whom he wrote that they had "escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Peter 1:4).

### Remission of Sins.

In the second chapter of Acts is recorded the first sermon preached under the great commission. In that sermon, Peter, speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit, preached about Christ,—how he died, rose again, and ascended to heaven, where he will reign until his enemies are made the footstool of his feet (Acts 2:22-35).

The result of Peter's sermon, and his appeal to them to recognize Jesus as their Lord and Christ,

was that his audience was pricked in their hearts and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins..." (Acts 2:37,38).

Here we have the expression, remission of sins. What Jesus called salvation in the great commission, Peter, his inspired spokesman, called remission of sins in the first sermon preached under that commission. While the words, save, and remission do not have the same etymological meaning, they do have reference to the same transaction, each giving us some aspect of what occurs when one obeys the gospel.

The word, remit, means to send away. When we remit money we send it away, presumably for goods received, or services rendered. Thus the expression, remission of sins, means that sins are sent away. One of the aspects of the new and better covenant foretold by the prophet Jeremiah was that, "their sins will I remember no more" (Jer. 31:34. Heb. 8:12). Just as the sins of the Israelites were symbolically sent away into the wilderness with the scapegoat (Lev. 16:21, 22), so also when one is saved from sin, those sins are remitted—sent away into the wilderness of God's forget-fullness, never to return.

### Forgiveness of Sins

Still another expression that helps us to understand what it means to be saved, is found in the words of Paul in Eph. 1:7. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace." Thus we are told that in being saved our sins are forgiven.

What does it mean to be forgiven? One of the definitions given by the dictionary is, "To cease to blame, or feel resentment against some one." If you have ever forgiven someone of a wrong done to you, you don't need the dictionary to tell you what it means to forgive.

But there is a point that we need to recognize about forgiveness. It takes place in the mind of the one who does the forgiving. It is not some feeling of elation that takes place in the person forgiven, although he may rejoice when he knows he is forgiven. That is a basic mistake of those who rely on their feelings as evidence that their sins have been forgiven. They will pat themselves over the heart, and say, I know I am forgiven because I feel it here. That is no evidence at all. The only way that one can know he has been forgiven of a wrong is for the forgiving party to communicate the fact of forgiveness to the forgiven party.

Let me illustrate. Someone does you some wrong that hurts you deeply. But he comes to you and acknowledges the wrong and asks for your forgiveness. Now, where did that forgiveness take place? Was it some better-felt-than-told sensation that he experienced? No, it took place in your mind, didn't it? And what was it that took place in your mind? Was it not a change of mind,—a difference in your feeling toward that person? Where you had previously harbored feelings of malice, and perhaps even revenge, all

those feelings dissolved when you forgave, and you now feel kindly toward him.

And just so, when God forgives us of our sins, all his former feelings of disapproval and anger and grief are dissolved, and in their place are feelings of approval and favor.

### Made Free From Sin

Another aspect of salvation is suggested by Paul in Romans 6:17,18. "But thanks be to God, that whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness."

Thus Paul tells us that in being saved, we are made free from sin. It will be recalled that it was pointed out in an earlier article under this heading that sin enslaves. Jesus said, "Whosoever committeth sin is a bondservant of sin" (John 8:34). The natural desire of anyone who is in bondage is to gain freedom. Prisoners break out of jail to be free. Prisoners of war have often spent months digging tunnels and have risked their lives in a bid for freedom. Salvation is freedom from the bondservice that holds every sinner a prisoner. It is true freedom. Jesus said, "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

### Justified

To the Romans Paul wrote, "For he that hath died is justified from sin" (Rom. 6:7). Again, "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). Thus to be saved means to be justified from sin.

To be justified, according to the dictionary, means to be declared guiltless; to be absolved of wrong. It is a legal term, and means that when one has been acquitted of a crime with which he was charged, he was justified. To be justified from sin, is therefore to be pronounced guiltless, with no sin charged against him.

### Washed—Cleansed

When Ananias was sent to Saul of Tarsus in the city of Damascus, following Christ's appearance to him on the Damascus road, he said to Saul, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins. . ." (Acts 22:16). Peter said of certain ones, "But he that lacketh these things is blind. . .having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins" (2 Peter 1:9). Thus, in being saved we are washed, or cleansed from our sins.

There are two possible ways whereby a garment can be clean. One way would be for it never to become soiled. The other, having become soiled, is washed, and thus becomes as clean as if it had never been soiled. (Cleaner, if you listen to some of the commercials of the soap manufacturers.)

Likewise, there are two conceivable ways that man can be clean from the defilement of sin. One would be to live a life of complete freedom from the practice of sin. But since that has proved to be impossible for man, his only hope is to be washed and made clean. That washing is accomplished by the blood of Christ which cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:7). When thus washed man is as clean as if he had never committed

sin.

### Made Righteous.

To the Romans Paul wrote, "For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). Thus, in being saved, we are made righteous.

Righteousness is defined by W. E. Vine as, The character or quality of being right or just. Paul defined righteousness in Romans 4:6-8 where he said, "Even as David also pronounceth blessing upon the man unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin." Thus Paul used the words of David to teach that the righteous man is the man whose sins are forgiven.

There are two conceivable ways of being counted righteous in the sight of God. One would be through our own works of righteousness. But since our righteousness is in the sight of God as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6), such righteousness would be impossible for man to attain. His only hope is thus through an imputed righteousness. This is a righteousness that is revealed in the gospel (Romans 1:17). It is imputed to all that believe in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:21,22, 4:22-24). Being of faith it is thus bestowed by God's grace, and thus leaves man with no right to boast (Rom. 4:16, Eph. 2:8,9).

Well, can the Christian who has experienced salvation, sing "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found; was blind but now I see."

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### WHEN TWO WORLDS COLLIDE

It is indeed amazing to see the reaction of great men when there is a collision between their SCHOLARSHIP and THEOLOGY. Like the Catholic Priest I talked with years ago in Ft. Smith, Arkansas, they usually stick with their theology. I asked this priest if he should find a contradiction between the Catholic church and the Bible which would he take? He paused about three seconds and replied, "I would have to stick with the church." This is about par for course. It is appalling to see the reaction of great scholars like A.T. Robertson when a collision takes place between SCHOLARSHIP and THEOLOGY. I respect A. T. Robertson as a scholar and love to use his expertise as an aid in study of the Bible; however, Robertson was a staunch Baptist and this put him on a direct course of conflict with certain passages on baptism. Certainly, there must be a great struggle within a man when he comments on such passages. This can be readily detected in their writings. In commenting on Acts 2:38 which says, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, he says, "One will decide the use here according as he believes that baptism is essential to the remission of sins or not. My view is decidedly against the idea that Peter, Paul or anyone in the New Testament taught baptism as essential to the remission of sins."

You will notice the hesitancy and somewhat reluctance in his comments. He uses such expressions as "one will have to decide" and "My view is" then he goes on to say "So I understand." Kind friend, these are not the words of A. T. Robertson when he is SURE of a text! The problem is two worlds have collided and he is caught in the middle. It bleeds my heart to see such a great scholar caught in this predicament. When Ananias told Saul to "arise and be baptized and wash away his sins" (Acts 22:16), please note his comment, "It is possible, as in Acts 2:38, to take these words as teaching baptismal remission or salvation by means of baptism, but to do so in my opinion is a complete subversion of Paul's vivid and picturesque language." He admits much more here than he did earlier. It seems that Acts 2:38 was still haunting him so he admits that in both cases REMISSION COULD BE BY BAPTISM. BUT he says, "It is my opinion" that this is not the meaning. Robertson's opinion was really

his THEOLOGY.

Many Baptists do not know this but Robertson actually said, "It was possible for baptism to be essential to salvation." He goes on to say that it is his opinion that such isn't the case, but this was preceded by the possibility. Of course, Robertson's opinion is no better than mine or yours. He knew very well what the GREEK meant but there was that collision between his two worlds. A. T. Robertson doesn't use the words such as "it is my opinion", "I understand" one will have to decide" or "my view is" when he is SURE what the text means. He comes in LOUD and CLEAR. Kind friend, isn't it sad that great men can become so enamored by their THEOLOGY that it will prevent a firm stand for the old Jerusalem gospel? Well, sometimes WORLDS do collide and we must make a choice! Ref. (Word Pictures of the New Testament PP 36 and 391).

"WOE"

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The word "woe," in the Greek New Testament, is made up of two diphthongs (a combination of two vowels in a single syllable)—ouai. It is defined: "Interjection of grief or of denunciation," *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*, pg. 461. "Interjection denoting pain or displeasure," *A Greek-English Lexicon Of The New Testament*, Arndt and Gingrich, pg. 595. Hence, the word, as it occurs in the verses we shall observe, has to do with denunciation. "Woe" is a solemn denunciation of punishment; it implies that great calamities of the most awful and severe nature are impending over the guilty. "Woe," then, strongly suggests and expresses the wrath and displeasure of God.

**WOE UNTO CHORAZIN AND BETHSAIDA.** Chorazin and Bethsaida were small towns on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum (not much is known of Chorazin). Bethsaida was the town of Philip, Andrew, and Peter, (Jn. 1:44). These were cities in which Jesus had been present and had performed miracles. "Woe unto thee Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida!" Jesus pronounces, "for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes," (Matt. 11:21). Chorazin and Bethsaida had more opportunity to believe in Jesus than Tyre and Sidon. Therefore, the consequences of their rejection of Jesus shall be "greater," (vs. 22).

How about America! Americans enjoy the greatest

religious freedoms and opportunities of, I suppose, anybody on earth. Notwithstanding, America has done more to demoralize and spiritually abase the people ("heathen") of other nations than any country or people! If Jesus issued a scathing denunciation upon Chorazin and Bethsaida for their wasted opportunities and advantages, how about America?

**WOE UNTO THEM THAT CAUSE OFFENCE.** "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" (Matt. 18:7). "Offend" means to spiritually hinder or cause to sin, *Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words*, Vol. 3, pg. 129. One who causes one of God's children to sin or fall away, upon him the heaviest condemnations of God are pronounced (see vss. 2-6).

We need to, therefore, concernedly examine the ways we influence others (teaching and example) and make sure we are not leading others astray (cf. I Cor. 8, 10, Rom. 14).

**WOE UNTO YOU, YE BLIND GUIDES.** It was in the "chapter of denunciation" that Jesus enunciated, "Woe, unto you, ye blind guides" (Matt. 23:16). Jesus is addressing the spiritual leaders of the Jews, the scribes and Pharisees (vs. 15). Similarly, He addressed the lawyers, "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge. . ." (Lk. 11:52). We have many blind guides today who are misleading people. They are like those of whom Paul wrote, "Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" (I Tim. 1:7). Thus, to spiritually mislead people is to incur the severest wrath of God (cf. Jas. 3:1).

**WOE UNTO THE RICH.** "But woe unto you that are rich!" Jesus exclaims, "for ye have received your consolation" (Lk. 6:24). The word "but" indicates to us that Jesus is presenting a contrast. In verse twenty-three he instructs those persecuted for the Son of man's sake to rejoice. In verse twenty-five Jesus describes the satisfied and those free of seriousness who are engaging in frivolity. Hence, when Jesus pronounced this woe on the rich he is referring to those who trust in their riches and experience the love of money (cf. I Tim. 6:17, 6-11). In our affluent age we have not a few who are looking to their riches (also too many members of the church). This is what Jesus meant when he said, ". . .How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God" (Lk. 18:24, cf. 25).

**WOE UNTO THOSE WHO LOVE THE UPPERMOST SEATS.** Inevitably, when you have people, you are going to have competitiveness and self-elevation. To such a condition Jesus addressed himself: "Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets" (Lk. 11:43). Jesus, therefore, expresses his disdain and strong displeasure for the spirit of ascendancy.

There are other occurrences of "woe" that make for profitable study and application. For example, those

who falsely swear are denounced and men about whom all speak well are the objects of God's severe wrath (Matt. 23:16; Lk. 6:26). Let us decidedly shun all sinful situations which encounter God's wrath and endeavor to obey his every command that we may incur his pleasure and approval and experience his rich blessings.

## Using Great Plainness of Speech

*J. T. Smith*

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Miami, FL 33168



In our last article, we encouraged people to "Ask Your Preacher" about Scriptural authority (book, chapter, and verse) for things that are being taught in the religious world.

Were there different denominations in the days when the New Testament was written? What denomination was Paul, Peter, John, and the rest of the apostles members of? I read in Mr. Edward T. Hiscox's Standard Manual for Baptist Churches on page 22, "It is most likely that in the apostolic age when there was but 'one Lord, one faith and one baptism' and **no differing denominations existed**, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, 'baptism was the door into the church'. **Now it is different.**" (Bold letters mine for emphasis JTS). I still believe everything that is in the above paragraph **except the last statement. I do not** believe it is different. I still believe in the one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. I also still believe something else that is said in the above quotations from the Scriptures in Ephesians 4:3-4. There is not only "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism," but there is also "one body" and that the "one body" is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23). God has not changed His Word, **man has.**

There are a number of warnings in the Bible about man changing God's Word. It began in the Old Testament when God said, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2). Also in the New Testament we read, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 1:9).

It is obvious from Mr. Hiscox's statement that he and others have not heeded God's warning **but have changed His Word. WOE UNTO THEM!**



# 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, VA 24012*

## NEW CONGREGATIONS

**ORANGE CITY, FL**—A new congregation has been started in Orange City. Ron McRay is preaching for this new work. The church meets at 105 Dogwood Avenue in Orange City. Interested parties may contact Tom Lester at (904) 775-7845 for further information. Also contact us by mail at P.O. Box 1052, Orange City, FL 32763. If you know anyone living in the towns of Orange City, Lake Helen, Deltona, Enterprise, or DeBary who is interested in the Lord's church please contact us with their names so we may get in touch with them.

**BOWLING GREEN, FL**—In August, 1980 three families started a new congregation in Bowling Green, FL and Vernon Love began working with them part time. In March, 1981 he was able to obtain the necessary support and is now working full time. This is the first time the Lord's church has ever been in Bowling Green. We are meeting at 514 N. Oak St. (Hwy. 17 N.): phone (813) 533-5718. If in the area, worship with us.

**MARKED TREE, AR**—A new congregation began in Marked Tree last April by several members in the area. They are meeting at 13 Elm St., Marked Tree, AR 72365. For further information you may call 358-2542, or 358-2715.

**GREENWOOD, SC**—We have started a new sound congregation of the Lord's church in Greenwood, SC located at 1018 East 72 Bypass. We started in November, 1980 with only five faithful Christians. We have had four restored and one baptism. We have around 16 in attendance. Everett Ward, formerly of Weston, WV, is doing the preaching. Greenwood is located in the western part of South Carolina and is growing very fast. If anyone knows of members moving near Greenwood, please contact Bro. Ward at 904 Coleman Dr., Greenwood, SC 29646. Or phone (803) 223-8232.

## NEW LOCATION

**ELIZABETHTOWN, KY**—The College View church of Christ is now meeting at its new location at 611-A College St. and is directly across from the Community College here in Elizabethtown. For further information call Terry Green at 737-5736 or Benny Dukes at 765-5019.

**IRVEN LEE**—For the last few years I have spent my full time preaching work in gospel meetings, going into several states each year. The work has brought many blessings to me and to my wife, who has traveled with me. Beginning October 18, 1981, I am to settle down again to do local work near Athens, AL with the Jennings Chapel church. I have known this community for about forty years, and I expect to have a very pleasant association with the people there. I hope to have time to do more writing, and I shall plan to be in about six meetings a year. My new address, effective November 1st, will be Rt.2, Box 362-A, Toney, AL 35773. We will be on the Athens, AL telephone exchange.

**STEVE GOFF**—After three years at Kaysville, UT, I began preaching for the Matthew St. church in Bay City, TX at the first of October. Our new address is P.O. Box 1522, Bay City, TX 77414.

**OSBY WEAVER**—After over a year with the brethren in Las Vegas, NV, I began work on October 1st with the church at West Columbia, TX.

**DON R. HASTINGS**, 111 S. 19th Ct., Dade City, FL 33525. Connie W. Adams preached in a meeting for us in August. He preached faithfully and fervently from the Bible. While he was with us he

asked that I write a field report to inform others of the successful work that is going on here. He said that such a report would be an encouragement to others, particularly to those laboring in difficult places. I very reluctantly agreed to do so for fear that some would misjudge my motives for writing such a report. I know that God has given the increase and that it is the power of His word that convicts, and converts the sinner. We are only fallible messengers of the gospel.

In a little over four years that I have worked with the Lord's church in Dade City, more than eighty souls have put on Christ in baptism. It has been a thrilling experience to hear and see so many confess their faith in Christ! God's word will produce fruit if people will only take the time to understand it. Most of those who have been converted were taught in home Bible studies. These studies were set up by the brethren here. If the Lord's church is to grow, her members MUST seek opportunities to teach others. Many of the Christians meeting in Dade City have asked friends, relatives, neighbors, fellow—employees, etc. If they would study the Bible with them. In a surprising number of cases the answer was "yes."

In most of the home studies, the "Visualized Bible Study Series" by Jule Miller was used. This series of film strips is easy to use and is effective. People enjoy watching, and hearing, God's plan of redemption unfolded. They are encouraged to ask questions, and usually do, while the film is being shown. If I am going with a member to visit someone who has not already agreed to see the film strips, I make the first visit a social one. It is important for people to get to know me, and for me to get to know them. I've heard it said, "A person does not care how much you know until they know how much you care." As we are coming to an end of the visit, I ask them if they would like to view the "Visualized Bible Study Series" and assure them that they will not be pressured into anything. If their answer is "yes" then a definite time for coming back is set up.

After the film strip is shown, I hand them a booklet which has the pictures shown in the film strip and the words on the record. They are encouraged to answer the questions in the back of the booklet. I tear out the answer sheet in the booklet and grade their answers myself. Generally, one film strip is shown each week for five weeks. This gives them a week to read the booklet and answer the questions. By the time one has seen the five film strips, read the booklets, and answered the questions, he or she has a fairly good knowledge of the Bible.

The Dade City church continues to have a very promising future. We are located about 30 minutes north of Tampa just off Hwy. 301 in the heart of Dade City. We extend a cordial and warm welcome to any who may visit with us.

**MICK ROGACS**, P.O. Box 204, Republic, MO 65738. As a gospel preacher and former Catholic it is my desire to offer my preaching abilities to brethren who would like to hold gospel meetings specifically on the subject of Catholicism. Sermon topics covered are: Why I Left The Catholic Church? Catholic Tradition; Bible Authority verses Catholic Authority; Development of Catholic Apostasy; Infallibility; Purgatory; Apostolic Succession; and others. These lessons were specifically designed for the instruction of the Catholic prospect in recognizing Catholic error and the truth of the scriptures. They are also of value to Christians who wish to learn more about Catholic error and its consequences. For information contact me at the above address, or call (417) 883-1338.

## PREACHERS NEEDED

**LOGANSPOUT, LA**—The Stanley church of Christ in Logansport, LA is looking for a full time gospel preacher to work with us. The house and full support are available. Anyone interested can call Jerry Gannon or Gene Arbuckle at (318) 697-5119.

**ROANOKE, VA**—The church which meets at 1015 Georgia Avenue in Roanoke will be in need of a full time preacher after the first of the year. Wilson Adams has labored here for over three years but will be leaving us soon. Attendance runs around 50 with a contribution of \$350 to \$400 per week. Some outside support would have to be obtained. Roanoke is a good size city with a metropolitan population of 250,000 and is located in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. If interested you may contact Lewis Sturm at (703) 362-5225, or Larry Powell at (804) 237-3445.

**IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH**

<b>BAPTISMS</b>	154
<b>RESTORATIONS</b>	92

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

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