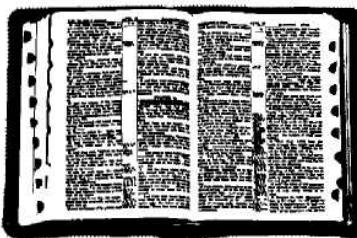


# SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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 XXVI

AUGUST, 1985

Number 8

## Things Most Certainly Believed

*Julian R. Snell*  
4724 E. Manslick Road  
Louisville, Kentucky 40219



## CERTAINTIES OF OUR SALVATION "We Know—We Know"

Confusion and doubt in so many areas of life seem to lend, at least with some, even to the relationship in Christ. With what, for me, is, increasing frequency I am hearing members of the church speak with uncertainty about their faith, whether saved or not, faithful or not, and the like. A great deal of writing has been done on the grace of God and some are still perplexed and with them the bottom line is, "Can we be certain of God's grace"? Careful study of the First Epistle of John reveals a positive note which seems especially timely.

The basic theme and purpose of the First Epistle of John is expressed within, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (1 Jn. 5: 13). In face of the heresy afflicting churches of Asia Minor near the close of the first century this statement has special impact.

Gnosticism, a combination of religion and philosophy, projected the idea that only spirit is good and that flesh and material things are altogether evil. The Gnostic believed one must free himself from the material and be occupied solely with the spirit. His means of solving the problem was in the exaltation of superior knowledge, or human wisdom. "Gnosis" is the Greek term meaning "to know". The Gnostics thought they knew all the mysteries of the universe and having solved

these, freedom was theirs. This concept of superior knowledge occupied the place of faith and actually outmoded faith. To the superior mind thus enmeshed in this fallacy the great question was not "What must I do to be saved? but "What is the origin of evil?" and "How are we to restore the primitive order?" Having by superior wisdom resolved this they saw themselves as dwelling on a totally spiritual plane in this material realm. John summarizes the basic thrust of the epistle toward correcting the uncertainty and doubt generated by these errors. The details under-girding this are challenging.

The repeated use of the expression "we know" in this epistle encourages confidence and certainty. Our conclusion is that there is a certainty attending our relationship to the Lord which does not lend itself to doubt. Faith and the hope it produces is not uncertain and doubtful in any respect. However, these initial observations are not to be seen as a slighting of conditions or in any way overriding those conditions. Quite to the contrary, it is the meeting of the conditions that gives the assurance and confidence.

"And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn. 2: 3). This is a clear cut statement of criteria whereby we may know if we are God's children. The word "keep" is present subjunctive, thus conveys the meaning "keep on keeping". The sense of the statement at this point clearly impresses an attitude of submission that produces the fruit of obedience. To conclude a one time obedience would be ridiculous. It is continuity that is here impressed. Those thus described "know" God. Mere acquaintance with his nature does not satisfy the point. Rather an intimacy akin to Father-children involving His spirit and character which sees a taking on and a reflection of them. The "know" of the Gnostic is in contrast with the knowledge of faith, the latter based upon believing and obeying the commandments of God.

Which commandments are we to obey? A frivolous question when we recognize that the commandments of God are as one. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all" (Jas. 2: 10). Similar to breaking a pitcher by a small

puncture hole, it no longer serves its purpose. One commandment broken nullifies the purpose of God and identifies the violator as reverencing his own will over and above the will of God even in making choice of the commandment he breaks. The negative consideration of verse 4 furnishes a conclusion on the foregoing premise. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him?" By such the nature and character of the true father, the devil, is demonstrated. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do" (Jn. 8: 44).

**"Hereby we know that we are in him"** (1 Jn. 2: 5) further identifies with the keeping of His word. "In him verily hath the love of God been perfected" makes us aware that our standing as complete and mature revolves around obedience as such gives expression to our love of God. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 Jn. 5: 3). Obedience has ever been the acid test of love and only in those who are passing the test is there the intimacy of relationship which embraces all the blessings flowing from God. Truly, the kind of fruit produced as result of our love for God indexes our union with Him. One's life is the reflection of the pattern by which it is shaped and molded. For the second time, we take note of the certainty and confidence repeatedly expressed by this Apostle as he makes us aware of the certainty of our salvation.

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# Searching The Scriptures

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# Editorial

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## DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORIZE CONGREGATIONAL SINGING?

Since the recent unity meetings in Joplin, Missouri and Tulsa, Oklahoma between various Christian Church preachers and some from churches of Christ, a new argument has been advanced by those who favor the use of instrumental music in public worship. Through the years the public debates and controversies in the periodicals over this issue have produced a variety of arguments to justify the use of instrumental music in worship. It has been contended that since they were used in Old Testament worship, they must surely be acceptable now. Others have argued that the Greek PSALLO or PSALLEIN included the instrument, perhaps or PSALMOS.

All of these arguments had one thing in common: they were attempts to prove that instrumental music in worship today is AUTHORIZED by the scriptures. Now, comes a new approach. It is now being contended that not even congregational singing is authorized. This approach would concede that instrumental music is not authorized BUT NEITHER IS CONGREGATIONAL SINGING. Don DeWelt advanced this in a letter sent out to a number of people (I received one). Also, a recent issue of the CHRISTIAN STANDARD contains an article by Ben Killion entitled "A New Look At An Old Controversy," in which he makes essentially the same point as Don DeWelt.

Here is what Ben Killion said:

"What conclusion can be drawn from all this? Is congregational singing commanded? It seems obvious to me that it is not and that one cannot even make a case for it from the New Testament.

"Is congregational singing anti-Scriptural?" No! Singing is one way to praise God, to instruct, edify, and encourage one another. Singing with the instrument is a worthy way to praise God. Singing without the instrument is also a worthy way to praise God, but congregational singing has neither command nor precedent in the New Testament."

These are amazing statements. They reflect serious flaws in understanding the nature and expression of divine authority, not to mention a cavalier attitude as to our right to act in absence of divine authority. It is bad enough to admit that instrumental music does not have divine sanction and that it is used in the absence of it. But now to argue that congregational singing is not

divinely stated (either by command or precedent) and then in the next breath say we may do it anyhow is to compound the problem. According to this, we now have two things being done without New Testament authority. If neither playing nor singing has divine command or precedent to support them, then we are double sinners for doing these things anyhow.

This leaves a considerable amount of egg on the faces of those men, who, through the years, have engaged in public debate and tried to prove that playing along with singing was included in the verb "to make melody" or in the noun "psalms." They strove to prove that singing was not only authorized, but that instrumental music along with it was also included in the command. That leaves Briney, Boswell, Hunt, Dunning and a number of others high and dry. Down goes every argument along this line, if DeWelt and Killion are to be believed.

We have been saying for a long time that the basic issue with the folks in the Christian Churches over music was divine authority, how it is established and our respect for it. This new argument says, in essence, God did not authorize congregational singing in the first place, so the question of instrumental accompaniment is a moot question. But it insists we can have both the singing and the playing IN THE ABSENCE OF A SINGLE PASSAGE AUTHORIZING IT. How would we know that singing is one way to "instruct, edify, and encourage one another" unless there is scripture which says so?

These gentlemen have taken every passage used to establish congregational singing and argued that they do not mean that at all. They are going to have a harder time dismissing passages such as Eph. 5: 19 and Col. 3: 16 than they think. The instruction in these verses is aimed with equal force at every Christian. "Teaching and admonishing one another" comprehends the need to be together when this is done. It is in that context that we are to "sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord." That is exactly what is done in congregational worship.

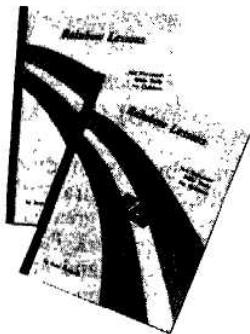
These brethren from the liberal camp who have been reveling in the new found rapport with folks who are just as digressive as they have ever been, need to ponder all of this very seriously. Why do people with such loose notions about Bible authority want to "dialogue" with some of the brethren from the liberal churches? Is it not because they can see that these folks have crossed their Rubicon by engaging in practices that are just as unauthorized as instrumental music, and that misery loves company? What is the basis of such communion except the mistaken notion that "we do many things for which we have no authority." After all, if we can do one thing without authority, why not another?

In the past we have been in agreement that singing was authorized by God. Now we are told that it has "neither command nor precedent in the New Testament" and yet it is argued that it is all right to sing. Well, not if there is neither command nor precedent for it. We are right back to the issue of whether or not the silence of God is permissive or prohibitive. That is the crux of the matter and always has been. Heb. 7: 14 still

speaks to the point. Our Lord could not be a priest on earth because he was of the tribe of Judah "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." Question: Was the silence of the Lord permissive or prohibitive? The passage argues that Jesus was prohibited from being a priest on earth because God was silent on priests from the tribe of Judah. One writer in the CHRISTIAN STANDARD recently made light of our contention that the silence of the scripture is prohibitive, but the force of this passage cannot be denied.

I am not much into "dialogue" with folks who have such light regard for the scriptures. But I'll tell them what I will do. I will meet any representative man among them on the polemic platform in Cincinnati or anywhere else they have a following and in honorable Controversy will affirm that congregational singing is authorized in the New Testament. In the past, this has never been challenged. Now it is. If congregational singing is not authorized in the New Testament then it is sinful to practice it. It would be unique in all the annals of religious controversy to have one of these gentlemen attempt to prove publicly that hymn singing in public worship "has neither command nor precedent in the New Testament." We are ready to be tested on the issue. What about Don DeWelt and/or Ben Killion?

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### **PROSPECTIVE GAIN COUNTED LOSS FOR CHRIST**

The apostle Paul, referring to his heritable advantages, training, and zealous activities in a popular cause, said "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ" (Phil. 3: 7).

Such sacrifice and conviction has been in the past, and still is, demonstrated today. One such case involves a young couple who were "Missionaries" in Scotland.

Last year, Regina Green (daughter of Ken Green) and Phillip McGahey fell in love and were married. This marriage was viewed with apprehension by both families and others. Phillip had been brought up under strong "liberal" influences and was educated to evangelize in a foreign field, under the sponsoring church system. His father is an elder in a large liberal church in Tennessee which was the "sponsoring church" for Phillip as he preached in Scotland. Regina, on the other hand, was the daughter of a popular, effective, sound preacher who has successfully exposed the unscripturalness of liberalism, and, therefore, greatly influenced by "Anti-ism", as liberals view it.

Despite these differing backgrounds, Phillip and Regina married and went to Scotland. Soon, things done by the brethren there, and endorsed by their sponsoring church, caused doubts in Phillip's mind, resulting in his making a thorough study of "the Issues". The result was a change of convictions, a complete break with his sponsoring church, and a return to the States. After making this break, even if the sponsoring church had been willing to fly them back to the States, Phillip had already informed them he could no longer accept support from the "sponsoring church" system. Knowing the deepness of conviction and sacrifice made, the Jordan Park church here in Huntsville is flying Phillip and Regina back to the States, where we believe they can be of great worth to the cause of truth. In a letter to the Jordan Park church, Phillip tells of his changed convictions and actions.

March 3, 1985

"To the elders and brethren at Jordan Park,

Regina and I want to just express our thanks to you all for helping us out in this time of need. There are no words that can express our gratitude for what you are doing for us.

This decision we have made is probably the hardest thing that we have ever done, but it was the only right thing to do. Jesus said in Luke 14: 25ff that if your family is more important than Jesus then you cannot be His disciple, if you are not willing to bear the burden of the cross then you cannot be his disciple, and finally Jesus said if the pleasures of this world mean more to you than He does that you cannot be His disciple. We wanted to be His disciples so we gave it all up for Him.

I would like to take some space to tell you brethren about my decision and how it came about. About seven months ago Regina and I came to Scotland to do mission work. Before we came there were several weeks that I studied the issues that have divided the church not really knowing what the issues were. I read some one-sided material on the subject and was convinced that what I believed was right. There was even one Sunday when I stood up and preached against what I now believe to be right. I had no doubts about it until I sat down over lunch one day to talk about this with Robert Jackson and Ken Green. We did not talk very long. I would not listen to them because my mind was already prejudiced against what they had to say, but they did show me how the sponsoring church arrangement was not found in the Bible.

I went away thinking that I needed to just study my view a bit more. A few weeks later, in Franklin, Tennessee, I heard a sermon on Bible authority preached by brother Ward Hogland. That was the first time in my life that I had ever heard a sermon preached on Bible authority and it frightened me. It frightened me because brother Ward showed why the churches of Christ are divided. They are divided because of Bible authority. That sermon really had me thinking. Later I again talked with brother Green and also Ed Harrell.

By the time we left for Scotland, I had pushed all of my fears and thoughts to the back of my mind hoping they would go away. I was actually afraid to study both sides of these issues. Months went by as Regina and I settled in, here in Scotland, and on several occasions we would talk about it.

It was during the month of December that I once again started to think on these issues. The brethren here had a church sponsored Christmas party I openly objected to it at the business meeting and questions were asked to me that I did not want to answer. My objection was that we could not find where the church ever celebrated Christmas or paid for a party and bought gifts for children. They immediately put me on the spot so I just asked them where it was in the Bible. They did not answer but asked if I objected to expedients and other things that were not in the Bible.

I was so disturbed that I began to study more and more to see why I had objected. It was because there was no Bible authority. I studied more and found there was also no authority for sponsoring churches and human institutions. I found out the Bible tells me that the church is all sufficient to accomplish the work that God gave it to do on the local level.

I was shocked at what I had learned, so I began to talk to Ken Green and ask him if that is what he be-

lieved and he said yes. I called him on several occasions.

Then when I was convinced I was right I had to do the hard part. Tell my parents, sponsoring church, and supporting churches about what I now believe. It was so hard to do, but I had to ask myself if I wanted to be a disciple of Jesus or not.

If it were not for you brethren I would not be able to come back to the States. My sponsoring church is still sending me money even though I have told them not to. I will not take it, but send it back to them.

We now realize that the situation we have been in is sinful. Please pray for us and forgive us for living in this unscriptural situation of a sponsoring church. We want to come home and do what is right in the eyes of the Lord.

We are selling our house, furniture, and car. Please pray for us that it will sell quickly. We are going to come home the last week in March even if our house hasn't sold because we do not want to be a burden to the church.

We love you all much.

In the love of the Lord  
Phillip and Regina"

Phillip is scheduled to preach at both services at Jordan Park, Sunday, March 31. I believe brethren who are interested in Scripturality and soundness will want to encourage this young couple, who have sacrificed so much, in every way they can. Churches in need of a preacher or who can use the services of Phillip in any way, may get in touch with him through Ken Green (4605 Dyshel Dr. S. W., Huntsville, AL 35805. Phone 834-1943).

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### CARDINALS GO TO COLLEGE

The new media of this nation and the world devoted much time and space to the recent appointment of 28 prelates to the college of cardinals, part of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. These included two Americans, Archbishops John C. O'Connor of New York and Bernard Law of Boston.

Since the Catholic Church claims to be the publisher of the Bible, one would think that it must authorize the college of cardinals, but the word is not in the Bible! Neither is the office or the idea. We might stress a point by suggesting that one may find authority for a cardinal in the verse following the one which authorizes the office of the pope. Don't spend too much time looking for either verse.

Here is part of the newspaper account of the ceremony:

"John Paul, wearing a gold-embroidered red cape over white vestments, took his seat as the Sistine Chapel choir sang in Latin the 131st Psalm 'your priests put on justice and your faithful people sing with joy.'

"The cardinals sat in single rows, flanking the pope seated in front of the center door of St. Peter's Basilica.

"After the pope spoke, the new cardinals knelt before him and received a red skullcap and a biretta—the three-cornered pillbox cardinal's hat. The pope then blessed and embraced each one."

The Associated Press in Vatican City gave a special report on the two American Cardinals under the heading, "Two Experience Anxiety, Awe at St. Peter's." We quote from the article:

"New York Archbishop John J. O'Connor worried Saturday that he would trip on his cassock as he climbed the steps of St. Peter to receive the crimson hat of cardinal from Pope John Paul II. Boston Archbishop Bernard Law felt awestruck as he waited his turn to kneel before the pontiff."

May we suggest that the gentlemen had better be worried about the lack of authority from God for the office, and think how awestruck they will be as they stand before the Lord at the judgment having practiced such blasphemy.

"After the pageant-filled ceremony, Law said he was overwhelmed by two strong feelings as he approached John Paul for the elevation.

"The first was a very personal feeling when I saw my

mother being wheeled in, in a wheelchair. I was so happy.

"The second was standing at the foot of the steps, looking up at the Holy Father."

Do you suppose the man has never read the Bible? If so, did he find the statement from Christ, "And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is Your Father, which is in heaven"? It is found in Matthew 23: 9, and says the same in the Catholic Bible. Did the Lord mean what He said? Do they believe and respect His will? They do not!

Law was quoted as saying, "I realized I was being called by the collaborator of Peter, the first pope. It was an awesome moment."

Dear reader, there is not one verse in the Bible which says or teaches that Peter was a pope. Such an office, proposing to honor the apostle Peter, is the greatest hoax ever perpetrated on the world!

Jesus Christ is the one and only head of His church (Eph. 1: 22, 23). He is the foundation upon which the church was built (Matt. 16: 18; I Cor. 3: 11).

The apostle Peter understood that Christ, not himself, was that foundation of which the prophet spoke. Hear him, "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe HE is precious (emphasis mine, EB): but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner" (I Peter 2: 6, 7).

Back to the newspaper article for a moment. It tells about O'Connor standing for 90 minutes in the courtyard of the Pontifical North American College, greeting hundreds of people in a receiving line. He said, "I'm still numb from what happened this morning. It's something I never anticipated in my life. It will take me a while to sort it out."

We don't mean to be unkind, and we doubt that it was a typographical error, but concerning a knowledge of the scriptures, the word "numb" should have begun with a "d". The man doesn't know what the Bible teaches!

While he is trying to "sort it out," he would do well to search the scriptures for any mention of popes, archbishops and cardinals.

The simple, efficient and sufficient organization of the Lord's church is described in Philippians 1: 1— bishops (elders), deacons and saints. And all the saints (Christians) were priests in the royal priesthood (I Peter 2: 5, 9). Why can't it be so today?"

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"... I have overcome the world" (John 16: 33). "... and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5: 4).

Numerous were the times during the earthly ministry of Jesus when he called attention to outstanding faith in the lives of specific individuals. It is also true that he focused on cases of little faith, even among his closest disciples.

**How important is faith?** Well, we cannot please God without it. (Heb. 11: 6). It is predicated upon the word of God (Rom. 10: 17). The just shall "walk by faith" (2 Cor. 5: 7). This is to say that in order to please God we must trust Him and do His will. This is faith in action. This is Bible faith.

Although Christians know all of this, still we are plagued in Christ's church in that we are lacking in proper faith. We either have a lack of faith, our faith is small, or our faith is weak. Why is this so? It may be that the flesh is weak while the spirit is willing. It may be that we do not understand what it means to really turn ourselves over to God and truly trust Him. It may be we allow fears and anxieties to overrule the scene. It may mean that we need to study more in the Scriptures. Perhaps it means that we have not exercised our faith. It could mean any or all of this. Just what is our own problem on this score?

**Why are ye fearful?** Jesus asked his disciples this question on one occasion and then accused them of having "little faith" (Matt. 8: 26). The word "fearful" as it is used at this place means "cowardly" or "timid". It is not so much that we often tremble, as did they, but what we allow the fear and trembling to do to us. It is what we do in spite of the fear that makes the difference.

Jesus, in anticipation of his impending suffering on the cross, was in agony of spirit and sweated profusely as he thought about it. However, he resigned himself to what must be and prayed more fervently (Luke 22: 44). In spite of his sorrow, his heaviness of spirit, his agony of soul, Jesus overcame. He left it in the hands of the Father. "Thy will be done", he said.

We need to let our faith be stronger than our fears. Jesus did that. Surely, this should serve as an example to us. It demonstrates the power of faith. Preachers and elders and all of us are sometimes faced with weighty matters, decisions and problems. The making of these decisions and the solving of these problems in favor of God's truth could bring down the wrath of evil men

upon us. It could arouse opposition from false brethren. The very thought of it all might make us quake all over, that is, if we just dwell on it and brood. We might need, as Jesus, to pray all night. The more intense the agony, the more intense and fervent the prayers must be. As Jesus emerged from the garden, his all night prayer vigil had calmed his spirit. Christ had put it into the hands of the Father. Now he was ready for whatever would happen.

Likewise, as we agonize with fears, anxieties, problems, nameless dreads, persecuting powers (both in and out of the church), sickness, grief, and many other matters that trouble us we need to pray the more fervently and that very often. We, too, can emerge from our closest of prayer with a calm spirit, resigned to whatever is to take place, fortified with that inner strength which can only come from really trusting in God and turning our problems over to Him. Jesus did this. It sustained our Saviour during one of the most trying moments of history.

Dear brother and sister in Christ, it will sustain you, too!

Using the

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## FINANCIAL COMPENSATION FOR MEETINGS AND DEBATES

Bro. Foy Wallace, Jr. wrote in his preface to "Present Truth" of the famous Neal-Wallace Discussion in Kentucky and the Norris-Wallace debate in Fort Worth and like debates in other place. These debates were conducted in the days of the Great Depression. Bro. Wallace, like many others went broke in those days. In his words, "... the good brethren who were vocal in commendation and praise were not conscious of the stringent circumstances and did not provide the monetary means for the end..."

Regarding these great debates, he said: "... again the financial remuneration in every instance, including the Fort Worth debate, was below the costs of preparation; and the expenses of travel and accommodations, not to mention sustenance for my family and the means to meet pecuniary obligations."

He was not complaining. He wrote farther, "In retrospect, at the call of duty I would again travel the same rugged road. History bears witness that signal achievements have been accomplished amidst suffering and sorrow, and even grief..."

It continues to be an issue of ambiguity as to what factors brethren consider when they decide upon financial compensation for a man who has left his family to live and work in their midst for a week's time. For my part, if I were doing it for money, they couldn't pay me enough. But it's always been my custom to accept without comment whatever is given. I intend to continue that practice. I have received, on occasion, less than \$100 after air fare from a church that had over \$60, 000 in the bank and a fine commodious building. I have conducted meetings where remuneration fell short of the air travel cost or other expenses. In areas where disciples are few and finances are tight, I do not mind that kind of sacrifice. But often, one can't help but notice that he's the only one in the situation who is expected to sacrifice. Several brethren there may be doing quite well.

Then too, there are a few occasions where brethren, are not only "vocal in commendation and praise", but very liberally "provide the monetary means for the end. .." When that happens, I usually make exception to my "no comment" vow of silence, and express appreciation for their consciousness "of stringent circumstances, " or at least for their understanding of the normal needs of any family of six with teenagers, children in college, weddings, and other expenses.

It's been my experience and observation that brethren give very little thought to the expenses and preparation that goes into a debate. Any financial reward is usually less than one may expect to receive for a week's gospel meeting; yet there is no comparison in terms of the additional time and work involved. In most of the debates I've been involved in, either as disputant or moderator, no consideration has been given to this matter. Some churches have thankfully been more thoughtful.

I moderated for Gene Frost for four nights as he debated in a mid-western city. We were away from our homes and our respective local works to teach and defend the gospel among brethren of ample means. The trip necessitated several hundred miles of travel for each of us. Bro. Frost's expenses for materials, visual aids, etc. were far greater than most brethren would think. And all that was given in a material way was a sack of fresh corn apiece! I thought he should have at least gotten two sacks!

When I debated Jesse Pratt at the Von Braun Civic Center here in Huntsville, AL in 1981, I did not expect any financial remuneration. The Jordan Park Church spent quite a sum, in their part of the rental of facilities. Their financial support for the local work had been thoughtful and adequate. But the presentation of a \$1, 000 check in lieu of my regular salary that week was highly appreciated. It really came in handy in the "sustenance of my family and the mans to meet pecuniary obligations."

Paul said it even better than Foy Wallace: "*For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward*" (1 Tim. 5: 18).

#### ASSUMED OR ASSIGNED

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Let us look at some definitions: **Assume:** "To seize; usurp. To take on or to take upon oneself. To be pretentious or presumptuous."

**Presume:** "To take upon oneself without permission or authority. To take liberties. Making suppositions."

**Assign:** "To set or fix for a specific purpose; to designate. To appoint. To give out as a task."

If God has not **assigned** the church to help certain ones and exclude others, who is to determine who the church will help and who may be excluded from church help?

If God has made assignment in the matter of whom the church is to help, may the church disregard the assignment and help others?

If the church helps people whom God has not assigned them to help, isn't that church acting presumptuously?

Hasn't God fixed or designated or appointed the church to assist certain people?

Isn't the church that goes beyond God's assignment and "assumes" or "presumes" to do other work being pretentious?

God has fixed or specified or designated or appointed or given as a task to the church the obligation to help saints, or brethren, or widows indeed. (Acts 2: 44-45; 4: 34-35; 6: 1-6; 11: 27-39; Rom. 15: 25-31; 1 Cor. 16: 1-2; 2 Cor. 8: 4; 2 Cor. 9: 1-13; 1 Tim. 5: 16).

Who else has God fixed or specified or designated or appointed the church to help? The answer is NOBODY:

When the church helps others it **ASSUMES** a work that God did not intend for it to have. It has taken upon itself without permission or authority a work and it is therefore presumptuous. God will deal with churches who thus take liberties with his word.

Churches have no more right than individuals to act presumptuously or take liberties with God's word. To go onward and abide not in the word of the Lord is to have not God (2 John 9). To add unto the word of God is to have the plagues in the word added to such a church or individual. It is high time churches looked around and started backing up and backing off and living by the Word of God!

**READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY**

## Restoration Footnotes

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### EVANGELIZING THROUGH REVIVALS

Revival meetings, as a means of evangelizing, were undoubtedly the most successful method the pioneer Restorers used in making converts. It was in the revivalism that swept frontier America in the early nine-teenth century that the Restoration movement associated with Barton W. Stone arose. It is not surprising, therefore, that revivals played a dominate role in the preaching of these Kentucky reformers from the beginning. The word "revival" in the religious sense generally refers to a stirring up of religious faith among those who have been indifferent. Revivalism is characterized by fervid preaching in public meetings.

But "revival" is also an Americanism that means "a series of (evangelistic) meetings, characterized by confession of sins, professions of renewed faith, etc. " (*New World Dictionary*) While churches of Christ today generally do not use the term, preferring "gospel meeting" or some other designation, a revival in pioneer America was similar to a gospel meeting, especially as conducted earlier in the present century. However, the revivals of Stone and his associates, at least in the beginning, were hardly distinguishable in form from those of their religious neighbors.

Reference was made in a previous article to Alexander Campbell's lack of enthusiasm prior to his debate with John Walker in 1820. Before this, in his own words, he had been content to have "a single congregation" striving to practice New Testament Christianity. "I had not the remotest idea", he later wrote, "of being able to do more than this". (*The Christian Baptist*, July 5, 1830.) If the debate with Walter and other influences had not entered Campbell's life, his efforts may never have developed to any great extent.

Revivals were such a part of evangelism in the Stone branch of the movement that after Stone began *The Christian Messenger*, he featured news of revivals and for several years used "Revivals" as the title of a news column. Before 1826, revivals among these reformers were highly emotional. Remnants of revivalism remained in some of their reports for several years. In 1829, D. Long, writing from Milligan's Cove, Pennsylvania, spoke of "a number of weeping mourners on my circuit inquiring what they must do to be saved".

But by 1826, Stone accepted baptism as for the remission of sins, and about that time Walter Scott began his great efforts on the Western Reserve of Ohio. These

forces merged together to mold the Restorers revivals into protracted meetings that were more nearly like those of the present century.

Most of the revivals of pre-Civil War days were spontaneous affairs, held by traveling evangelists, without prior announcement or preparation. They usually continued as long as interest and circumstances permitted. B. F. Hall, an evangelist who left tracks over much of the Southland before the war, practiced dentistry to support himself as he traveled widely to preach the ancient gospel. He established the first congregation associated with the Campbell movement in North Carolina and the first such church in Arkansas. He was very likely the first preacher to teach baptism for the remission of sins in Alabama and is credited with beginning the practice of inviting sinners to obey the gospel at the close of a sermon (at Florence in about 1826).

A congregation of one hundred and twenty members was established at Russellville, Alabama, by Tolbert Fanning in 1842 in a revival that started "accidentally" and that continued for several weeks. The number of converts exceeded the population of the town. Fanning and his wife were on a journey for their health when they passed through the town and events occurred which led to the revival and the origin of the church there. While this is of interest because of the man involved, it is not a unique situation. Most congregations in those days came into being through efforts that appear circumstantial. The writer's interest in the Fanning meeting is special because his paternal great-great grandfather was converted in that meeting.

It was not unusual for preachers who had been in the field for many years to number their converts by thousands. One revival might see the conversion of fifty, a hundred, or more in a short time. Whole denominational churches were sometimes won over to the New Testament order in such effort. The success of the early Restoration revivals was remarkable in that day, but they seem marvelous almost beyond belief compared to gospel meetings today.

But while revivals resulted in much good, they also had some harmful effects. The churches established by the traveling evangelists often were left to shift for themselves with little or no adequate leadership and much of the gain was lost. Fanning seemed truly surprised when he returned to Russellville some years after he planted the church there to find that its membership had dwindled greatly. But viewing the matter from the perspective of history, he should not have been surprised. However, many of the early converts remained faithful, often through their own efforts with little or no encouragement from able teachers.

Revivals have long been an effective tool of evangelism, and while we prefer to call meetings by terms that seem more accurate, such meetings remain an important means of evangelism. In this day when many question the need of gospel meetings, and some seem to conduct them more from a sense of duty than from any expectation of converting the wayward, it might be good for us to reconsider the history of revivals. It

would be utter folly to discard the "gospel meeting" as an outmoded concept. However, this is only one means of preaching the gospel and meetings alone are not sufficient. But the success "revivals" have had during the last two centuries has been due to one thing above all others: the Word of God without addition, subtraction, or creedal interpretation has been preached.

## Using Great Plainness of Speech

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### "IF THE UNBELIEVING DEPART"

Many good and conscientious brethren believe that the desertion of a believer by an unbelieving mate gives the believing mate the right to remarry without committing sin. It is sometimes called the Pauline privilege. "Let's look at the passage that supposedly authorizes such action. "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace" (1 Cor. 7: 15).

### Context and Remarriage

First of all you will notice that there is nothing said in the text or the context about remarriage. The thought that is being expressed in the context involves the departure of a mate generally, and the text itself seems to answer the question (though the question is not stated) "Well, then, what about a believer who is married to an unbeliever? Should they continue living together? If so, what if the unbeliever decides to leave the believer?"

### Is Paul Quoting Jesus on Matthew 19: 9?

It has been suggested that in 1 Cor. 7: 10-11 Paul is simply quoting the Lord (from Matthew 19: 9), and since Paul said he, not the Lord, is giving instructions regarding the believer and the unbeliever, then what Jesus taught in Matthew 19 only involved believers and not unbelievers. In other words, Jesus' teaching in Matthew 19 is not applicable to aliens.

Again I say, there is nothing in the text or context of 1 Cor. 7: 10-15 that would suggest such a thing. The fact of the matter is, Paul is not discussing remarriage at all. If one is to know *anything* about God's law on the subject of remarriage, he will have to go to another passage.

### What Does 1 Cor. 7: 15 Teach?

First of all, there are two different Greek words that are translated "bondage" and "bound" used in the New

Testament. (The word "bound" is from the Greek word *deo*). The word "bondage" is taken from the Greek word *dedoulotai*, and is 3rd person singular, perfect, passive, indicative of *douloo*, which is from the Greek word *doulos*. *Doulos*, or a form of the word, is found 133 times in the New Testament (Smith's Greek-English Concordance, Page 93). The word means, according to Bagster's Analytical Greek Lexicon, Page 107, "To reduce to servitude, enslave, to oppress by retaining to servitude, Acts 7: 6; II Pet. 2: 19; met. to render servitude, 1 Cor. 9: 19; pass, to be under restraint, 1 Cor. 7: 15, to be under bondage, held by constraint of law or necessity, in some matter" (Thayer, Page 158). Originally the lowest term in the scale of servitude, came also to mean one who gives himself up to the will of another" (W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, Volume 1, Page 139). In no reference does *douloo* ever refer to the *Marriage Bond* (unless it can be proved that it is so used in 1 Cor. 7: 15, which cannot be done).

The literal rendering of the Greek words *ou dedoulotai* is "has not been enslaved" (Nestle's Greek-English Interlinear, page 673). This expression does not carry with it the idea of something that is to take place in the future, ("if the unbelieving depart"), for as we have already noted it is in the perfect, passive, tense. "The Greek perfect tense denotes the present state resultant upon a past action. There is no English tense corresponding to the Greek perfect" (Machen's Greek Grammar, page 187, Article 451, 452). For an example, Mr. Machen used the following illustration. "It is written—which mean, it stands written." That is, it has been written in the past and remains written at this present time. Thus the force of the statement in 1 Cor. 7: 15 is that she is not under bondage NOW because she HAS NEVER BEEN under whatever bondage Paul has under consideration.

The kind of bondage that a person cannot become involved in, as it relates to another person, is found in 1 Cor. 7: 23. "Ye are bought with a price; be ye not the servants of men." We are not to forfeit our obligation to Christ for any service to any man, thus becoming enslaved to him. In doing that, one would, of necessity, have to forsake Christ which is what the person would have to do in order to remain with his name, as per 1 Cor. 7: 15. The unbelieving mate is leaving because of Christianity, and his spouse's allegiance is to Christ. Thus she is not her husband's servant (slave) to the neglect of Christ because *she never has been*.

So we can see beyond any shadow of doubt from this aspect also, that Paul is not speaking of the marriage bond; because she has been (and still is) *bound* to her husband in the sight of God as far as the *marriage bond* is concerned. Thus, she is neither "held by constraint of law or necessity" (Thayer, Page 158); her allegiance is to Christ.

Besides this, if one may remarry simply because his spouse, who is an unbeliever, deserts him, then the consequence of this doctrine would be, that it would be better to marry an unbeliever instead of a believer, (which is nonsense) because there is no passage that

says one is not "under bondage if a *believer* deserts him. Get it now, if he married an unbeliever, and the unbeliever deserted he *COULD* remarry. If he married a believer, and the believer deserted he *COULD NOT* remarry. That is *ridiculously absurd!* The Bible does not teach it!

## SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

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### THE SMYRNAS AND PHILADELPHIAS

Much has been said recently in papers and bulletins about the relationship between preachers and congregations. Something needed to be said. I haven't read all the articles, but what I have read is good, so what I have to say isn't an "answer" to someone's literary offering. I hope that the air has been cleared, and conditions will improve for the furtherance of the gospel.

It seems appropriate to say something on behalf of those good congregations who for years have been quietly treating a preacher like he should be treated, and those who have improved in this department. I have said my share about those brethren who seem to think they have received a divine mandate to make the preacher's work as difficult as possible, so allow me to command those of "Smyrna" and "Philadelphia" who may be suffering verbal or typographical fall-out from sister congregations.

In the first place, an innate sense of fairness demands that we not lump all preachers or congregations into one group, and in the second place, I'm naturally inclined to defend the underdog. I don't need to pay some psychiatrist an healthy fee to tell me that this latter inclination reverts back to my childhood when I seemed to be the recipient of my share of verbal abuse due to my poverty level among my peers. If there had been any psychiatrists in those days, I could have told them right then that I would make atonement for my mistreatment every time I got the chance.

There is another reason I feel compelled to say something on behalf of those good congregations and elderships among us. As a rule, they have no one to speak or write on their behalf, whereas every preacher has a typewriter (or two), and generally has access to the pages of some journal or bulletin. Even if these good congregations had a spokesman for their cause, they would understandably be reluctant to speak out. After all, good preachers are already hard to come by, so why run the risk of offending another one or two? They may feel like an old brother in a congregation where I used to

worship—he said in the Bible class that he didn't believe in ghosts, but on the other hand he didn't believe in aggravating them either!

Some preachers receive year-round support from the home congregation and still conduct ten, twelve, or fifteen meetings for good-paying congregations during a year's time. If that was the agreement, fine. It is difficult to make inflexible rules, for sometimes teaching opportunities arise which need to be taken advantage of by both the preacher and the congregation. Otherwise, a preacher needs to remember his primary obligation to do the work of an evangelist with the congregation which supports him.

Some congregations have paid the preacher's moving expenses, supplied him with every need, and met his every request (or demand), only to have the preacher leave them "holding the bag" because his "wandering of the desire" exceed his "sight of the eyes" (Eccl. 6: 9). May God give us patience and charity "as workers together with him" (2 Cor. 6: 1).

Then, there is the congregation which, through no fault of its own (or at the most, faulty judgment), finds itself stuck with the support of a preacher and his family after the preacher has rendered himself ineffective in the pulpit, either due to doctrinal or moral impurity.

A congregation can be deceived, just the same as preachers. True, there are congregations which don't deserve a preacher, but then there are preachers who should never have begun to preach, or having begun, should have quit before becoming a reproach to the cause of truth. Or, at least, should quit after the first offense, unless they intend to repent and bring forth attendant fruits.

My first located work was with a congregation whose former preacher was arrested by the police for drunken driving, and the elders had to bail him out of jail. Maybe that's why I got the job—they were desperate! The congregation was sympathetic enough toward the offending preacher's wife and children to allow them to continue living in the preacher's house for awhile (along with the sorry preacher). There are other congregations which practically have to pay blackmail money in order to get rid of some bad eggs which just won't seem to hatch into productive laborers in the Lord's vineyard.

There are congregations which have fellowship with us in the gospel, bear with us in our infirmities and adversities, give us a going away party and bid us God speed when we leave. May their tribe increase, and may God bless them "in that day."

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## Building Better Families

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### FIRMNESS WITH KINDNESS

Somewhere along the way between birth and adolescence a father and mother need to convey to the child that just as it must respect its parents so they *as parents* must respect God's orders to "nurture" their children "in the chastening and admonition of the Lord". Successful disciplinarians reflect their love for God by teaching the child that their requirements of him grow out of God's requirements of them. The child, of course, must be disciplined before it can understand anything about the meaning of parental accountability to God. The fact remains, however, that as soon as the child begins to understand that it is somehow accountable to its parents for its positive and negative responses to their will, so the child must understand that its parents are answerable to God. Somehow a child learns the meaning of "Yes" and "No, no" before it understands *why* some actions bring it physical pain accompanied by parental vocalizing of "No, no" and "Don't" as well as tender caressing and pleasant vocal sounds which reflect parental approval years before it learns the meaning of the word *approve*.

### Correcting Words and Deeds

By the time a child learns its own name it is possible that it has understanding of words descriptive of acceptable or unacceptable behavior. An incident regarding my own older daughter Connie will illustrate this point.

My wife and I determined not to put out of our little girl's reach things which she could mar or break when she was mature enough to touch them on shelves or low tables in our small apartment. We watched her very carefully and as she would reach for an "untouchable" object we would spank her hand and at the same time say, "No, no. Connie don't!"

Evidently our system worked quite effectively, judging by what Georgia Dean heard her say to a man who appeared at the door when Connie was mature enough to know and call herself "Tonnie" when asked her name. The weather was warm, the solid door was open but the screen door locked. Connie's mother was busy in a back room when the man knocked at the door. While awaiting a response he saw Connie through the screen playing with her toys. My wife heard the man ask, "What is your name little girl?". Immediately the child responded, "Tonnie Don't!".

I often tell this incident to underscore the point that a child can be conditioned to match proper and improper action with approving and disapproving words from its parents. In time the child can learn that its parents have their God-given "No, no's" as well as their God-given "Yeses" and that they are answerable to God for the discipline of their children who are God's "gifts" to them.

### Responsibility is a Two-Way Street

If a child can be taught to love and care for the dolls *given* to it by its parents it can be taught that it is God's "gift" to its own parents who love and care for it. If not, why not? This realization becomes increasingly meaningful to the child as it matures and as parents explain to the child their responsibility to God for its moral and spiritual training.

In this connection we should distinguish between parental *firmness* and parental *hardness* because there is a difference. To say that parents are "hard" on their children is to convey the idea of impenetrability or severity, even harshness, or offensiveness to a sense of justice. When parents treat children as dumb animals which respond only to painful stimuli there is something sorely lacking in parental understanding of child motivation. This is not to say that children should not be punished for wrongdoing but it is to distinguish between hatred of wrongdoing and the wrongdoer even as God distinguishes between sin and the sinner by hating sin while loving the sinner.

It is not always easy for parents to govern their emotions with reason but it is always right. Self-control by the parents will produce desired results in a child's respect for the parent. The parent who learns the difference between firmness and hardness is apt to know the difference between harshness and kindness. The "Golden Rule" of Matt. 7: 12 can help both parents and children in dealing with each other in every phase of life.

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**Law of Authority**

There are two sources of authority. One is right and the other is wrong. One is from heaven; the other is of men. Jesus gave only two alternatives when he asked concerning the authority of John's baptism (Matt. 21: 23-27). It was either of heaven or of men.

We must have divine authority for all that we do in religion. We are to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5: 7). Paul said, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3: 17). We must continue to abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 Jno. 9).

It is important to understand that when God authorizes a thing there isn't a need for God to make a list of all the things that are not authorized. He expects us to have enough common sense to understand. And yet, there are many who want to justify a practice on the basis that God didn't say not to. Let us illustrate how authority works. The Commonwealth of Kentucky authorizes me to put a tag number on my car (ex. BR-549). There isn't any need (in fact it would be silly) for them to give me a list of tag numbers and say "don't put these on your car because they are not authorized." In every public building there is a rest-room door that says "Men" and one that says "Women". We understand that to authorize "men only" and "women only" to enter these doors. There isn't a need to put below "Men" another sign saying "No Women are authorized to enter." The same principle is true when you order a pair of shoes. When you fill out an order blank you check the color "brown". That authorizes the company to send you a brown pair and a brown pair only. Obviously there isn't a need to write a note and say "I do not want a black, tan, white, gray or red pair of shoes." If by chance the company did send you six pairs of different colored shoes, you would immediately contact them and point out that you never asked for anything but a brown pair.

Surely you see the point. We must do the things God has authorized and leave the unauthorized things alone. Nadab and Abihu learn the hard way (Lev. 10: 1-2). It is evil to do things that God has not authorized (Jer. 7: 30-31).

Denominationalism is sinful because it is not authorized. The Bible speaks of one body (Eph. 4: 4), but others cannot be justified. God has promised to uproot every plant that he has not planted (Matt. 15: 13).

**Law Of Inclusion**

God does not approve of all that man calls unity, neither does he condemn all division. Sometimes God demands division (2 Jno. 9-11; Tit. 3: 10-11; 1 Cor. 5: 1-13; 11: 19). This means that all are not included in the circle of fellowship. The question then is what is the point at which men attain fellowship with God and his people? Is it when one believes even though he hasn't repented or confessed? Not in light of Acts 17: 30-31 and Rom. 10: 9-10. It is when one has not only believed, repented and confessed, but has also been baptized

It is very obvious that there are some problems and questions that relate to unity. Some brethren would picture it this way: either follow love and have unity or follow law and be a legalist. However, love and law (truth) do not oppose each other. The truth is spoken in love (Eph. 4: 15). While the Bible does teach us to love our brethren and religious friends (Heb. 13: 1; Matt. 22: 39), we are also instructed to contend for the faith (Jude 3). An obligation to do one of these does not entail an obligation to compromise the other.

The cry today is "We are Christians only, but not the only Christians." But, my plea is that "We are Christians only and the only Christians." Now, let's clarify what I mean when I say that. I am not saying that we know everything. Neither am I saying that we are the only sincere people. I am not saying that we do not love those in denominationalism. Nor am I saying that all those in the church of Christ are perfect or will be saved. However, I am making a few basic affirmations. I am saying that one must obey the gospel in order to be saved (1 Pet. 1: 22). I am affirming that there is one body (Eph. 4: 4; Col. 1: 18) and that the saved are in that body (Eph. 5: 23). I am also saying that faithfulness is essential (1 John 1: 7).

We are told today that if we love our neighbors we will refrain from rebuke and condemnation. Rather, we will give them a pat on the back and wish them well. We are living in a time when we have become too tolerant with sin and false teaching. We are not the aggressive and fighting people we used to be. Error and ungodliness used to be opposed with all our might. But brethren, I'm afraid that we have mellowed and softened and become thin-skinned. Sometime ago I talked with a couple who had left the institutional element who said they were impressed with us because "you people fight for what you believe." May I say that if what I see among some brethren is that fighting and aggressive spirit, then deliver me from the day that we are not.

Jesus told men the truth because he loved them. Sometimes that truth involved strong rebuke (Matt. 23: 7: 13-23). I point out error and sin in the lives of individuals because I care about their souls. Paul asked, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth" (Gal. 4: 16)?

There are four basic laws that relate to unity that we want to consider. Those who have problems with unity, fellowship and who is a Christian need to be reminded of these basic laws. To give credit where it is due, the gist

(Mark 16: 16; Gal. 3: 26-27). That baptism must be scriptural. It must have the scriptural mode (immersion—Rom. 6: 3-4), element (water—Acts 8: 26-40), and purpose (for the remission of sins—Acts 2: 38).

The law of inclusion indicates that some are included and some are not. Those who are accountable and have not obeyed the gospel are alien sinners and thus not included (Eph. 2: 1-3). Those who merely think or are convinced that they are God's children are not included. One is only included when he obeys the gospel (Matt. 7: 21; 25: 11; Luke 6: 46).

### Law Of Faithfulness

Fellowship with God and the people of God is contingent upon faithfulness. We cannot receive the spiritual blessings provided in Christ unless we are faithful. If we truly love God, we will keep his commandments (1 John 5: 3). Paul wrote, "for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap... let us not grow weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" (Gal. 6: 7-9). The Hebrew writer said that we are God's house "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3: 6). John wrote saying that we must be "faithful unto death" to receive the crown of life (Rev. 2: 10).

God's curses are also contingent. Paul said, "if we live after the flesh, ye shall die" (Rom. 8: 13). A branch that doesn't abide in Christ is "withered... and cast... into the fire... and... burned" (John 15: 6). If we sin willfully, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Heb. 10: 26).

### Law Of Exclusion

Obviously some must be excluded from fellowship. There is some unity that is condemned (Rev. 2: 15-20). There is some division that is upheld (Luke 12: 50-51; Eph. 5: 11; Rom. 16: 17-18).

Fellowship must be excluded to any who do not believe. The same is true concerning any who have not obeyed the Lord in baptism.

If a child of God becomes unfaithful he is to be excluded from fellowship (1 Cor. 5: 1-13; 2 Thess. 3: 6-15). If one goes beyond the doctrine of Christ he has not God and we are not to have fellowship with him (2 John 9-11). Consider the other passages dealing with the law of exclusions (Matt. 18: 15-17; Rom. 16: 17-18; Tit. 3: 10-11; Eph. 5: 11-12).

When we get a grasp on these four basic truths, unity and fellowship shouldn't be a great problem for us.

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"Having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2: 12).

In this study, we are interested in determining, if we can, just what is meant by "the day of visitation"? The word visitation is translated from the Greek word *episkeope*. It is also found in Luke 19: 44:

"For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation" (Luke 19: 43-44). So Jesus spoke about the city of Jerusalem, as He wept over it.

The "Day of visitation" can be used in reference to inspection and judgment; and the rendering of punishment. It is also used in reference to a "Day of mercy", *i. e.*, any time that the heathen, the sinner, thus the servant of Satan, may come to believe the gospel of Christ, turn from his sins, and through faithful obedience, receive the tender mercies of God. Hence, a day of visiting God's mercy upon those who believe and obey Christ.

This Greek word, *episkeope*, means to inspect, look upon, oversee, judge, or evaluate. In the Septuagint, it is found in Exodus 3: 16:

"Go then and gather the elders of the children of Israel, and thou shalt say to them, The Lord God of our fathers has appeared to me, the God of Abraham, and God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, saying, I have surely *looked upon* you, and upon all the things which have happened to you in Egypt'. And he said, 'I will bring you up out of the affliction of the Egyptians.... to a land flowing with milk and honey." Note how this "day of visitation" was to be one of mercy!

The New King James Version uses the expression: "I have surely *visited* you and *seen* what is done to you in Egypt" (Exod. 3: 16).

Another example of "visitation" is found in Isaiah 10: 3:

"And what will they do in the day of visitation?  
For affliction shall come to you from afar; and to whom will ye flee for help?"

The New King James Version renders this: "What will you do in the day of *punishment*!..." Therefore, in this

example, it is a visiting of punishment upon the people. For yet another example of "visitation" or "over-sight", we go to Job 10: 12:

"And thou didst bestow upon me life and mercy, and thy oversight has preserved my spirit." The New King James Version gives the above as: "You have granted me life and favor, And your care has preserved my spirit."

As a final example of the Septuagint's use of "visitation", we refer to Jeremiah 10: 15:

"They are vain works, wrought in mockery; in the time of their visitation they shall perish." The New King James Version renders it: "They are futile, a work of errors: In the time of their punishment they shall perish."

### **1 Peter 2: 12—Is This 'Visitation' Mercy? Punishment? Judgment?**

There is no question but what God's over-sight, observance, or inspection is involved in any use of the word 'visitation', *episkepe*. God is aware of our thoughts, our deeds, our speech. Angels rejoice in heaven over the one sinner who repents and obeys, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons who are not then in need of repentance.

Although most translators apply 1 Peter 2: 12 in the category of punishment and judgment, NOT ALL DO SO! I give brief excerpts of the following:

".... in the day of His *overseeing care*."—Wuest's New Testament.

".... in a day of *inspection*."—Young's Literal Translation.

".... they will praise God for you, when his time comes to have mercy on them."—R. A. Knox Translation. In a footnote, he refers to Luke 1: 68, which reads' "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; He has visited

His people, and wrought their redemption."

".... when He grants them the *grace of conversion*."  
—Kleist-Lilly Version.

".... they may through observing you by reason of your good works glorify God in the day of visitation."—Confraternity Version. A footnote reads: "*The day of visitation*" this may refer to the last judgment, or, more probably, to the time when the call of grace shall be given to the pagan. Hence the exhortation to good example. 'Let your light so shine before men...' (Matt. 5: 16).

### **Conclusion**

Although the majority of translators write in terms of punishment or judgment, I choose to consider the word as dealing with God's watch-care over his creatures, not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* might come to repentance and ultimately obedience to salvation.

### **A GIFT FOR ALL SEASONS**

**SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES** makes a fine gift at any season of the year. If you have been personally helped by reading it, then think of your children who have left home for college, military service, or marriage and jobs away from home. You would do them a favor to start them on wholesome reading material from faithful servants of God. How about it? Would that be worth \$9 a year to you? Write Us: P. O. Box 69  
Brooks, KY 40109

## **THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS**

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

*Send all News Items to: Connie W. Adams, P. O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109*

### **HAUNTING REALITIES FROM THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

**ROYCE CHANDLER**, 3891 Bunnell Rd., Lebanon, OH 45036—This Spanish work is really marvelous, all things considered. New doors are opening constantly, and everywhere the people are the same: poor, humble, loving, hospitable and hungry to learn the Word. During our visit to the Dominican Republic (May 1-10), Ross Conley and I worked among some of the Lord's *good* people. We preached among five congregations in and around Santo Domingo, the capital, and met with other brethren who came from outlying parts of the island to be with us. We met several young men who give as much time as possible to preaching and teaching: intelligent, capable, dedicated young men—most of whom have to get by on very little in order to have time to study and teach.

Two major concerns face those brethren. One, the harsh reality of what true centralization efforts are all about; i. e. one church (and its preacher) trying hard to control all the local churches in the country,

as that one church is itself controlled by an institutional church in Tennessee. Two, the question of the spiritual condition of over 90% of the country's married population, who never obtained a legal marriage certificate. As a great majority of the Christians are in this situation the question is whether they are living in adultery if they did not obtain the legal certificate. Obviously, the one issue is an imported one; the other, purely culturally inspired.

We met Santiago del Villar and Pacio Blanco, the primary leaders and teachers among the brethren. Both are well versed in the Word and are fearless and tireless in trying to help others learn. Both are self-supporting, Santiago by a pension and Pacio by his little pharmacy business. Other young men are following suit, and we were quite taken with the depth of conviction and understanding of these men. One thing is truly worthy of note: in all the conversations we had, from breakfast to bedtime, a good 95% of all that was said was spiritual talk. That was true whether Ross and I were around or whether we were in a room studying for the night's lessons and listening to the

brethren in the next room as they continued their discussions. Little or no frivolity or triviality surfaced in their conversation. Their preoccupation is with "redeeming the time", and Ross and I felt like we had almost entered a time machine and gone back when saints searched the Scriptures daily in order to learn and grow. It was an experience I had not had in such concentrated form before—and one that I have never had in my own country, among my own brethren here.

Perhaps it is the hard reality of poverty and a government in severe economic trouble that leads these brethren to such sustained spiritual concentration. Many of them are jobless and live in shells or in a small lean-to made of tree leaves. The hospitals are closed. They have a saying, "If you get sick, just take your bed to the cemetery." Every day is one of poverty, of concern for children and for sick and needy brethren, of a threat of national economic disaster. There is no thought of going to McDonalds or "out on the town"; no vacation, no new clothes... new car... new home. But there is constant prayer and a smiling confidence that God will provide and sustain, and a daily concentration upon the Word of the Lord.

Ross and I went to study with them, but—without a doubt—we were the ones helped. If those brethren are in "need" of visits from us, may we ever be so needy! It occurred to me that perhaps many of our own USA brethren might start reviving if some of those Latin world brethren would make trips to teach us how to love, and trust and give of ourselves to the Lord and to each other. Lord willing, Wayne Chappell and I will visit brethren in Columbia and Venezuela, July 6-23. Please pray for us and for the brethren we hope to encourage.

**CARLOS CAPELLI**, Casilla #83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina—Recently, two were baptized and three restored in the Jose C. Paz congregation. Also, I spoke in a gospel meeting at Boulogne and one was baptized there. On May 31 a big tempest came to Buenos Aires. One of the zones most affected was Boulogne and the homes of many brethren were badly damaged. Water came up 4 feet in many homes with loss of beds, mattresses, clothes and other things. Now there is contamination in the water and there is much illness among the children. Some extra help for beddings and clothes or boxes of used clothing would be helpful and can be received here without problem.

**KEITH STORMENT**, 808 Bond Ave., Barnesville, OH 43713—On June 30, 1985 I will conclude just over two years of work with the West Main church in Barnesville. The Lord has blessed our efforts here. Seven have been baptized, fourteen restored, and one couple has placed membership. Also, a serious internal problem has been resolved. I would recommend this work to any mature, faithful gospel preacher. On July 1 we will begin work with the church in Gibson City, Illinois where there are two good men working as elders and where there is an active program of work, including a radio program. We invite all who might be in that area to stop and worship with us. The building is located on highway 47 south in Gibson City next to Pizza Hut. Our new address will be 125 W. Walnut, Gibson City, IL 60936.

**WILSON ADAMS**, 891 Autumn Valley Lane, Gambrills, MD 21054—We are now into our fourth year with the Wildercroft church in suburban Washington, D. C. (Riverdale, MD). The work continues to be encouraging and we especially enjoy our pleasant relationship with the good brethren here. Wildercroft is ably overseen by Vernon Klemm, Jim Vaughan, and Rufus Barfield—godly men who love the Lord and who are definite in their stand for the truth. We recently lost one of our elders, Sid Miller, who in June retired and moved back to the Tallahassee, Florida area. The Millers will be a great help wherever they go. We presently assist in support of four other preachers including James Baker who is doing excellent work in Philadelphia. He is still in need of more support and is worthy of it. He is a hard worker in a much needed area. Please consider him.

Over the past two years we have put heavy emphasis on teacher training and preparation and it is beginning to pay off. Our classrooms are bright and cheery with attractive carpet, two bulletin boards per room and teachers who are using their imagination in creating visuals to make Bible stories live in the minds of the students. Nothing could be more important. Our recent Vacation Bible School was the most successful ever averaging 105 for the five sessions. We look forward to having Sewell Hall with us in the fall and Colly Caldwell next spring in meetings.

The church recently sold the preacher's residence thus allowing us to

purchase our own home. Our new address is given above and is located near Annapolis. If you are coming to the nation's capital please make plans to worship with us. We are conveniently located just minutes from Capitol Hill and the National Mall area via the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. The New Carrollton subway station is just two miles away and the University of Maryland at College Park is only three miles from the building. We are also close to Andrews Air Force Base as well as Boiling Air Force Base and Fort George Meade. From the Capital Beltway (I-95/495) take exit 22 (B. W. Parkway) south to Riverdale Road. Go left 1/2 mile to Auburn Ave. We are on the corner. Call 301-621-8473 or 249-1706 for more information or directions.

**KEN DART**, 11775 S. W. 5th St., Beaverton, OR 97005—I have been working with the church in Beaverton since February 1st. There is much to do. We are trying to get a new building and are presently in process of getting city approval and hope to begin construction about August 1, 1985. Since our new facility will have new pews, we want to dispose of the old ones which are still functional. There are 24 which are 8 ft. long and 11 which are 9 ft. long. They are of plywood construction. We would like to see them used by some of the brethren if they need them. Contact us at this address.

#### TERRELL BUNTING TO NORWAY

**TERRELL BUNTING**, Rt. 4, Box 4129, Manchester, TN 37355—Karen and I would like it known that our tentative plans are to go and help in the work in Norway. We hope to depart January 1, 1986 depending on final approval of our visa and gaining of sufficient funds. Tom and Shirley Bunting are in their second round of work in Norway. The work is making progress with much to be encouraged about recently. We are in need of monthly support and travel funds as well as moving expenses. A new generation is on the scene since the work first began in 1957. Please help us if you can.

#### ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

**LESLIE DIESTELKAMP**, 1730 W. Galena Blvd., #102 W. Aurora, IL 60506—Rochester, Minnesota is the home of the Mayo Clinic and is visited annually by many brethren. Faithful brethren meet there on Sunday only at 10 A. M. in the Midway Motor Lodge, Room 160, located near the intersection of Highways 14 and 52. Phone Alden Sagden, 507-545-2554.

#### FRY ROAD LECTURES

**HAROLD FITE**, 2510 Fry Road, Houston, Texas—On August 11-14, 1985, the Fry Road church will host a lectureship with Bob Owen of Temple Terrace, Florida and James Ward of San Antonio, Texas speaking. The morning theme will be "God's Precious Promises" and the evening theme will be "Respect" (for Self, God, Life, Marriage, Parents, the Elderly, and the Truth). If you need a place to stay, phone 713/578-1897.

#### ALLAN TURNER FAMILY TO SOUTH AFRICA

**ALLAN TURNER**, 3028 Eleanor Ave., Louisville, KY 40205—After much prayer and family discussion, we have decided to accept the challenge presented by Paul Williams to move to Johannesburg, South Africa to work with the church there and in surrounding areas. I have been interested in gospel preaching in foreign fields for some time now. I must be candid though; I tried to get others to go but that did not work out. So, we are going, with God's help and the support of our brethren. We plan to stay at least five years. My wife, Anita, and children (Matt, 15 and Holly, 13) are all anxious and willing to go and help me. Moving expenses are high so we will be selling practically everything and will purchase what we need there. The Briston congregation will furnish a house. Except for the house, I am responsible for raising all my support (\$2,500 a month). If you wish to know more about me and my work, feel free to contact the elders of the Nebraska Avenue church in Tampa, Florida or the elders of the Wendell Avenue church in Louisville, where we have labored the last few years. You may also contact John Humphries, Connie W. Adams, Gene Frost, Dee Bowman, Bob Buchanon, Robert Turner, Paul Earnhart, Harry Pickup, Sr., Charles Goodall, Bob Owen or Melvin Curry. All of these men know me and my work. We hope to leave for South Africa in January, 1986 and would be glad to hear from any who might wish to help us.

(Editor's note: Allan Turner is a most able preacher. He is diligent in his work and study habits. His work at Wendell Avenue in Louisville

has been outstanding. It has been my privilege to observe his work at close range. He is a mature man blessed with great ability, a godly wife and faithful children who are a credit to their parents. His information letter is accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the elders at Wendell Avenue. Here are excerpts from what the five elders there said:

"He has an unusual fervor to preach the gospel. While working with us he has preached on television, on radio, on a telephone (Dial-A-Bible-Moment) program, in the prison system here in Kentucky, in England, in India (two trips), as well as gospel meetings in this area and other parts of the country. Allan stands ready to preach and teach the gospel as many times a day as there may be opportunity.

"He is bold to declare the whole counsel of God—seemingly unafraid to address any subject.

"His subjects are chosen not just to have something to say, but rather carefully selected to apply Bible truth in order that the church may grow and mature spiritually.

"He has the ability to glean from the Scriptures their true meaning, and then to teach those truths in a way than can be easily understood and appreciated by the average listener."

In addition to these excerpts from the elders, I lift the following from a letter written by Allan's wife, Anita:

"On Tuesday, April 2, I attended the funeral of sister Bobbie Adams here in Louisville, Kentucky. . . . Brother Weldon Warnock spent several minutes reading from an article from *SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES* that sister Adams had written several years ago... She wrote about her life as the wife of a gospel preacher and the joys and rewards she had experienced. In one particular segment she wrote about living overseas in Norway, where brother Adams had decided to go preach the gospel. She acknowledged some of the difficulties of that period, but her attitude about the 'why' of going to Norway impressed

me very much.—As I heard brother Warnock read the words sister Adams had chosen years before, I realized how much we both thought alike. I have no doubts or fears about accompanying Allan to the Republic of South Africa. He is my husband, my protector and provider, and I know that in all things he does only that which he thinks is best for me. I am looking forward to my new life in South Africa as an exciting challenge, and as an opportunity to serve my Lord and my Saviour, Jesus Christ."

Brethren, this man should have the help he needs. He will be a blessing to the work in South Africa. CWA)

#### **PREACHER NEEDED**

**JULIAN SNELL**, 632 Montclair Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601—It has been reported in some circles that I would be moving to LARGO, FLORIDA to do the work of an evangelist there. After making a decision to move to Largo it became necessary to reverse that decision due to personal considerations. Lest my action reflect upon the good church in Largo, let it be known by all that such decision was in no way due to any failure or shortcoming on the part of the church which in every way was gracious and considerate in the extending of their invitation as well as in the acceptance of my reversal of decision. From my observation, this is a commendable church and offers a good work to a faithful man.

**TIGRETT, TENNESSEE**—The Tigrett congregation, located in west Tennessee near Dyersburg, needs a preacher who can partially support himself. We have about 40. We have a house to supply and can provide \$150 a week. A retired or semi-retired person might consider us. Contact Bill Irvin, Rt. 2, Box 176, Friendship, TN 38034, You may call me collect at night (901-677-2589).

**NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA**—The church here is seeking a full-time preacher. Average attendance is 20-25 and partial support is available. If interested, please contact us at: Newport News Church of Christ, 315 Harpersville Rd., Newport News, VA 23601.

**PISCATAWAY, NEW JERSEY**—The church here has been in need of a full-time preacher for nearly two years. New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation and there are few congregations to work among all these people. During these two years local brethren have done well in presenting edifying lessons to us. But we all see the need for one to devote full-time to the work of preaching and teaching. Those interested many contact: JERRY FALK, 421 Graham St., Highland Park, NJ 08094 (phone 201-572-2094); or RICHARD PFLAUM, 3 Yorktown Rd. (Millstone, NJ 08876 (phone: 201-359-1928).

#### **IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH**

BAPTISMS	432
RESTORATIONS	187
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	