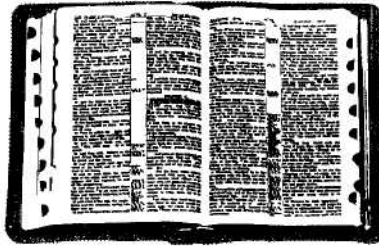


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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

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THINK ON
THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

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THE LAW AND GRACE

There are many who cannot conceive of grace existing where law is. The two are not compatible in their view of scripture. However, when one understands the meaning of grace and law in the word of God, the two cease to be incompatible and become essentially related to each other. God's grace and God's law are given to the same person, and both are for his salvation.

God Requires Obedience Always

It would be incredible for any man who claims to honor and respect the Bible at all to say that God will bless and save one who disobeys Him. Passages are too numerous and plain to argue that point. God will take vengeance on all those who do not know Him and who "obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:8). This has to do with everlasting punishment from the presence of the Lord (v. 9). Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were driven from the presence of the Lord because they sinned: they did not obey the word of God. 1 Samuel 15 contains a good lesson on what constitutes genuine obedience to God. King Saul was told explicitly what to do with the Amalekites and their cattle. He decided to save the king alive and some of the best cattle. When Samuel heard the bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen, he knew that Saul had not obeyed the voice of the Lord.

Saul claimed to have obeyed the command, but God said he had rejected the voice of the Lord, and for that he was rejected as king of Israel. He did not obey the voice of the Lord because he did what he wanted to do instead. Saul finally confessed, "I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord. . . Disobedience is sin!

All obedience requires law. Call it what you will, it is law when one who has the authority to command, does so and requires obedience. The dispensing of any favor that rests upon obeying any condition that God gives, amounts to a condition to that grace. That condition **MUST** be obeyed or the grace will not be received. The conditions which are to be obeyed equal to nothing less than **LAW**.

The Law Of Christ

The word of Christ is called his law. Isaiah 2:1-3 is a prophecy of the kingdom of Christ, and it says that all people shall flow into his kingdom which will be established in the top of the mountains, "for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The law of the Lord began in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost when the apostles were endued with power from on high—they were baptized with the Holy Spirit—and began to speak the truth as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4). This was the promise of Christ fulfilled to them (John 14:23; 16:13). It is the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).

The law of Christ is fulfilled when one obeys what Christ tells him to do (Galatians 6:1, 2). Paul explains that he desired to gain some who were "without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law" (1 Corinthians 9:21). The law of the Lord, the law of Christ, and the law to Christ, all refer to the same things. They refer to the gospel of Christ, which is the word of God.

If we deny that we are under law now, we deny that we sin, and that puts us in a dilemma with 1 John 1:8-10. The scriptures define "sin" as: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). "Because the law worketh

wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression" (Romans 4:15). It is not difficult to see that law is necessary to identify sin. If then we say we have no law, we must conclude that we cannot sin, because where no law is, there is no transgression.

James teaches us that whosoever looks into the perfect law of liberty, not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, he is the one who is blessed in his deeds (James 1:22-25). This perfect law of liberty is the law of Christ, the gospel of our salvation.

The Word of Grace is The Law We Must Obey

"The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11, 12). The grace of God that saves TEACHES. It teaches how to live so as to receive that blessed hope. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

It has already been observed that the word of God is the law of the Lord. The word of his grace is the law of the Lord. It has also been observed that without law there is no sin (1 John 3:4; Romans 4:15). "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us... If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:8, 10). If we say there is no law to which we must submit, we say we have no sin and do not sin; but as we say that, we deceive ourselves, the truth is not in us, we make Christ a liar, and his word is not in us. Which horn of that dilemma do you want to take?

The gospel is the law of the Lord. If one does not obey the law, he is a transgressor: a sinner. If he obeys the law, he is blessed of God. This law contains in part the conditions for the forgiveness of sins. Without submitting to the conditions, or obeying that law, God's grace of forgiveness of sins will never be granted to man. This is why some people will be lost and some will be saved. God loved the world and gave His Son to die for every man, but every man will not receive the grace of God whereby he can be saved, because he will not accept the conditions of the word of His grace (Acts 20:32), which is the law of the Lord.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the men of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).

"Iniquity" means without law. "Workers of iniquity" would be those who work without law. I suppose those who insist that grace and law are totally incompatible in God's plan would contend that we receive salvation by grace without any kind of work. That would have to include faith because faith is a work (John 6:28). It is the work of God that we believe (John 6:29). The people asked Jesus what they must DO that they might WORK the WORKS OF GOD. "Jesus answered and

(Continued on page 4)

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Editorial

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READY TO PREACH THE GOSPEL

When Paul wrote the church at Rome that he was "ready to preach the gospel" to them, I am sure he meant that he was eager to fulfill his "debt" and anxious to have part with them in the work of Christ (Rom. 1:14-15). In this article, I am concerned about readiness to preach from a different standpoint.

Faithful and Able

Paul said to Timothy "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). Faithful and able—these are the two basic qualifications for preachers. All who are able are not faithful. Those who preach ought to be "examples of the believers" (1 Tim. 4:12). But it also needs to be said that all men who are faithful to the Lord are not able to publicly proclaim the gospel effectively. There are some who earnestly want to do the work of public preaching who are not really ready to do it.

Prerequisites to Preaching

Before one can successfully preach, he must genuinely love souls. Paul said his heart's "desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1). Paul also said he would have given his life for the Thessalonians "because ye (they) were dear unto us" (1 Thes. 2:8). John said he had no greater joy than to know that his children walked in truth (3 Jno. 4). One must see the need to recover souls out of the "snare of the devil" (2 Tim. 2:26). He must see preaching, not as a means of elevating himself, but as a means of enabling others to "walk worthy of God" (1 Thes. 2:12) and he must see these as his "hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing" (1 Thes. 2:19).

To preach, a man must know the truth. It is impossible to preach what one does not know. The age of inspiration is over. Any man who claims that he has direct revelation from God stands in direct conflict with what the word of God teaches. The faith has been "Once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3) and admits of no appendages. It is full and final. Our charge is to preach only that which is included in "the faith once delivered." This body of truth is to be studied day and night. It is praiseworthy to see a man gather a respectable library and to use these tools to better equip himself for the work of the gospel. But it must never be forgotten that reading what men have said about the Bible is no sub-

stitute for reading the Bible itself. It is one thing to recognize our need for help from scholars who have devoted lifetimes of research, and quite another for us to let them do our thinking for us. Many errors have been taught with consequent divisions because of inordinate respect for the works of uninspired men. I may be a little old-fashioned (some think I am a LOT that way), but it is my firm conviction that there is great value in committing as much of the Bible to memory as possible. Learn precisely what the text says without addition or subtraction. Study the context. Study other passages which treat the same thought, or where similar expressions are used, but only after you have a clear understanding of the context of the passage first under study. Let God speak through his word, and you just listen. Then, when you get up to speak, "speak as the oracles of God." As much as possible say what you want to say in the language of inspiration itself.

If you would be a good preacher, know yourself. What are your real strengths? Capitalize on them. What are your weaknesses as a speaker? Work on them. Do not be arrogant and full of pompous esteem for yourself. On the other hand, do not belittle yourself. You are made in the image of God. He made you with the power to think, to decide and to act. If you are deficient in some areas, then resolve to improve.

It is at this point that I feel compelled to say some things which I hope will be taken in the spirit in which they are intended. It appears to me that there is a tendency these days to be almost anti-education when it comes to preachers. Some are short-changing themselves in preparation to preach. You do not have to have a degree from a college or university in order to preach the gospel and brethren are mistaken in demanding such. On the other hand, there are far too many brethren trying to preach who have not learned the most basic things about communication. Preaching is communication of ideas from one mind to another. I see preachers with little or no eye contact with an audience. Brother, if you want the audience to give you their attention, then would you please give them your attention? Look at them. Don't pick out a spot on the wall, or glance at only two or three spots in the house. Look the people right in their eyes and they will come nearer giving you their attention.

Don't be afraid or ashamed to **preach**. Preaching is a proclamation. Lift up your voice. Look with suspicion upon any speech book or teacher who tries to tell you that preaching is a "conversation." It is not. It some-times is a cry. Sometimes it must plead. It must ex-plain. It must confide. It must challenge. It must re-prove and rebuke. It must demand. But please don't develop an artificial tone so that you sound like you have a mouth full of either marbles or mush. Why should you say the word "God" any differently in the pulpit than you do out of the pulpit? Be genuine, be impassioned. Let your hearers know that they are lis-tening to a man who really cares about their lives, their burdens, their eternal destiny. Who wants to listen to a 45 minute lecture in a monotone which requires nothing more than sheer endurance? Let your preaching give

much, but also let it ask much in return. Don't leave it so people can take it or leave it. If you do, then I can tell you they are going to leave it!

Brethren, it is not impossible to learn to speak and/or write grammatically. Put the "g" on the end of words which end with that letter. The common people will still understand you. It is just as easy to say "get" as it is to say "git." Double negatives in reality have you saying the very opposite of what you mean to say. Verb forms are important in language. It is just as easy to say "when he had gone" as to say "when he had went." The first is correct and the second is otherwise. It compounds the problem for men to tell us about the Greek when they have not bothered to learn the most basic elements of our own language.

It helps, too, if one is going to refer to historical matters, the world of science, medicine, or some other branch of learning, to have the facts. Those in your audience who know about these matters will tend to discount what you say on other things when you have not done your homework in the area they know best.

It would also help to use common sense. Every preacher cannot hold an audience for an hour every time he speaks. If all the excess baggage were eliminated, repetitions avoided, and over-kill ruled out, many sermons would not only be shorter, but much more effective. "As the peerless and beloved Apostle Paul said in his first letter to the great church at Corinth, in chapter one and down about verse 10" could just as well be shortened to "Paul said in 1 Cor. 1:10." Does that not say as much? In preaching and writing, it helps to choose the most effective words to say a thing, rather than framing four different sentences to say the same thing using different synonyms.

Brother, if you want to preach the gospel and bring lost souls to the Lord, it would be time well spent for you to grasp the basic elements of communication in our own language. If you want to be "ready to preach the gospel" then don't short-change yourself (or your hearers) by failing to make the best preparation possible. Good books are available on grammar and composition and many community colleges offer adult classes in these fields. The gospel is the most important message in the world. It deserves the best presentation we can give it. Are you ready?

(Continued from page 2)

said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:28). Belief is something that man does with his heart (Romans 10:17). Jesus said they would die in their sins if they did not believe he was the Son of God (John 8:24). That is a condition of salvation that cannot be denied. In verse 21 Jesus said, "... whither I go, ye cannot go."

Repentance is a command. God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30, 31). A command must be obeyed. A promise is received; a fact is believed, but a command is obeyed. Jesus said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). God is not willing that any should perish, "but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Unless one believes and repents, he is not working the works of God: not obeying the law of the Lord. That means he would be working without law so far as God is concerned. Jesus spoke plainly to this point: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthews 7:21-23).

Men must do something to be accepted by God, contrary to some popular concepts. To be blessed of God we must be doers of the word, and not hearers only. He must look into the perfect law of liberty, and continue therein to be blessed in his deed. (James 1:22-25). Man's eternal judgment and destiny will be based upon his deeds and works according to the law of the Lord. Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29). They that have DONE good versus they that have DONE evil. The good and evil is determined by what the word of God says. Revelation 20:11, 12 says the dead were judged out of the things written in the books (Bible) according to their WORKS. The same is taught in 2 Corinthians 5:10.

In view of all of this, how can one conclude that man has no obligation to law of any kind in order to receive the remission of sins? If we do not obey this law, we are WORKERS of INIQUITY. Workers of iniquity cannot be saved by grace, and I pity the man who undertakes to prove that proposition from the Bible.

The charge of Legalism has no merit against the things presented in this article. Legalism is salvation by works ONLY—**works of merit!** Legalism is a system that earns salvation by a perfect keeping of the law, so that there is no infraction or transgression of the law at all. After the law has been violated, a system of grace and mercy must provide forgiveness or the just penalty of the law will come upon the transgressor. That system of grace and mercy has conditions, which must be obeyed if the grace is to be obtained. As soon as the law is once transgressed, legalism is no longer possible.

Every man who is saved by Grace, is saved by grace through faith. And every man who is saved by faith is saved by repentance and response to the will of God to receive His salvation. That is what grace means!

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In no uncertain terms the Great Commander has issued the Christian his marching orders. They are clear, concise and militarily to the point. We are to *stand firm* in the Cause; we are to *hold fast* our conviction; we are to be *steadfast* and *unmoveable*, bravely and with determinant courage, holding the line against all forces that oppose.

And why? Because the Christian is a soldier, but not just *any* soldier—he is a soldier of the King. As a result, we must press on in battle. We must contend. We must fight. We dare not retreat. We dare not go on furlough or become battle fatigued. We can't afford to give in to sin ... we can't afford to lay down for the devil... We can't afford to raise the white flag of compromise and join ranks with the very one who stands opposed to all that is good and godly. We have no choice but to proudly raise up the ensign fair and march under the banner of the Cross till such a time as our faith produces victory. We must not fail.

Yes, the Christian is a soldier and as a soldier he has been commissioned not only to fight but to RECRUIT. Hear Paul in 2 Timothy 2:3— "*Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.*" And what does a good soldier do? Note the previous verse in the passage: *And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also* (2 Tim. 2:2). Brethren, God's army is shrinking in number and the reason is that we have become "*so entangled in the affairs of everyday life*" (2 Tim. 2:4) that we have failed to fulfill our commission. God's army has no compulsory draft. He asks for volunteers.—*And anyone willing to yield allegiance to Christ as King can join!* We must get back to "basic training" as soldiers of the Cross. We've got to begin again to preach the salvation story. And we must now, more than ever, renew our recruiting zeal and point people to Jesus.

In 1 Timothy 3:15 Paul affirmed the church to be the "*pillar and support of the truth.*" Question: Is he saying that the church is the support of the inspiration and authenticity of the truth? Obviously not, for irrespective of what the church does the truth will still be inspired and remain authentic.

How, then, is the church the pillar and support of the truth? The church supports and upholds the truth as far as the **proclamation** of the truth is concerned. AND IF

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST DO NOT PROCLAIM THE TRUTH—THE TRUTH WILL NOT BE PROCLAIMED!

All over our land there are congregations which are NOT marching for the Master, are not living for the lost and are not recruiting and telling the Good News to anyone. They do nothing but keep house for the Lord, glory in their illustrious past, and sing so proudly—"I Shall Not Be . . . I Shall Not Be Moved . . ."—and tragically, they mean every word.

Folks, it's time to stop arguing for hours over how much water to keep in the baptistery or what kind of nails to use on the new paneling in the church basement and time to start doing what the church is in business to do and for which purpose the Savior died—TO SAVE THE SOULS OF LOST MEN AND WOMEN! We so desperately need to stop counting all we've gained in the past and start seeing how many are left in the world! Let's put "GO" back in GOSPEL and adopt the attitude of the apostle who said, "*Woe is me if I preach not the gospel*" (1 Cor. 9:16). And let's view again those first century saints who went out and "*turned the world upside down*" for Jesus. And it didn't happen by accident. Acts 8:4 tells the "how"—"*They went everywhere preaching the word.*"

Here were Christians who had received their marching orders to "GO"—and, praise God, they went! Now, then, what's stopping us from doing the same?

*Onward, then ye people, Join our happy throng;
Blend with ours your voices In the triumph song;
Glory, laud and honor Unto Christ the King,
This thro' countless ages Men and angels sing.
Onward Christian Soldiers! Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.*

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THE BAPTISM OF 1 COR. 12:13

QUESTION: *Would you comment on 1 Cor. 12:13. Denominational preachers and some commentaries interpret this passage to teach Holy Spirit baptism. It does appear, at least on the surface, that this Scripture could so be understood*

ANSWER: The verse states, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." This text is an elucidation upon the immediate context. The same Spirit who endowed the Corinthians with different gifts (vv. 4, 7-11), has also brought together diversities of people—people of different religions (Jews and Gentiles), and people of different social standing (bond and free), and made them into one body. In the spiritual body, the church, they drink of one Spirit. Let's analyze the passage and make some observations.

"For by one Spirit." The Holy Spirit is the agent by which we are led to be baptized into the one body. We could say, "For under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, we were all baptized into one body," and the meaning would be reflected, precisely. The preposition "by" is from the Greek preposition "en." It could be translated either "by" or "in," or even "with" in the passage under study, depending on whether the translator feels Paul is referring to instrumentality, sphere or the element of the Spirit. The KJV, RSV and NIV, and other versions, selected "by" in their translations. The ASV chose "in." Many commentaries have decided with the ASV.

But let's look at the context of 1 Cor. 12:13 and notice how "en" is used. Verse 3 states, "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by (en) the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed." Verse 9 reads, "to another faith by (en) the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by (en) the same Spirit." In both passages "en" can be rendered "by" or "in." But in these verses we can readily see that the influence and power of the Spirit is indicated and not the element of the Spirit. The Spirit is working through means—inspiration and gifts.

Turning to Mk. 12:36 we observe, "For David himself said by (en) the Holy Ghost---- " Here, the Holy Spirit is the guide, operating through David, as the agent who enabled David to speak by inspiration. Hence, we are of the persuasion that the Holy Spirit is acting as agency or means in 1 Cor. 12:13, and "by one Spirit" is preferable over "in one Spirit."

"all baptized into one body." Through the leading of the Spirit, i.e., the teaching of the Spirit through the inspired Scriptures, are we all baptized in water into the one body. Many denominationalists perceive this as Holy Spirit baptism by making, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized," to mean, "For with the element of the Spirit are we all baptized." The reasons that this cannot be Holy Spirit baptism are as follows:

(1) There is only one baptism (Eph. 4:5). This means there is only one baptism that saves and puts us into Christ. The "one baptism" of Eph. 4:5 is the same baptism of Eph. 5:26, and that is water baptism. Through water baptism we are saved (Mk. 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21), have our sins remitted (Acts 2:38) have our sins washed away (Acts 22:16), get into Christ (Gal. 3:27) and in which we reach the blood of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4). This one baptism was in effect on Pentecost and it will continue until the end of the world (Mt. 28:19-20). The baptism of 1 Cor. 12:13 puts us into the body of Christ, hence it is the same baptism as in Acts 2:38, viz., water baptism. Those who were baptized on Pentecost were added to the church, the one body (Acts 2:47).

(2) Holy Spirit baptism was special and not general. There are only two cases of Holy Spirit baptism in the Bible—the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4), and the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44; 11:15-17). Holy Spirit baptism was a promise and not a command. There are no instructions in the Bible how we are to receive Spirit baptism. Since we do not know how to receive it, then we must conclude that we are not to be recipients of it.

(3) If 1 Cor. 12:13 is Holy Spirit baptism, then only alien sinners receive the baptism because the baptism of this text is what puts one into the spiritual body. A person is baptized before he gets into the body, therefore, he is baptized while an alien. Baptist preachers are going to have to concede that Cornelius was an alien sinner when the Spirit fell on him and not a saved man before water baptism. They cannot have Holy Spirit baptism in 1 Cor. 12:13 putting us into the body, and Holy Spirit baptism on Cornelius as a manifestation or result that he was already in the body, and therefore, saved before water baptism. But Holy Spirit baptism did not put Cornelius into the one body, but obedience to what Peter preached through the Spirit did (cf. Acts 11:14, 15; 10:47, 48). Hence, 1 Cor. 12:13 is not Holy Spirit baptism.

(4) 1 Cor. 12:13 cannot be Holy Spirit baptism because speaking in tongues accompanied Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 2:4; 10:46), but all the Corinthians, who had been baptized "by the Spirit into the one body," could not speak in tongues. Paul asked a rhetorical question, "do all speak in tongues" (1 Cor. 12:30)? Of course, they did not! Therefore, 1 Cor. 12:13 is not Holy Spirit baptism, or else, all the Corinthian Christians could have spoken in tongues.

(5) 1 Cor. 12:13 is not Holy Spirit baptism for after they were baptized, then they would drink into one Spirit. But Spirit baptism is a filling of the Spirit (Acts 2:4). Hence, it would have been impossible for them to have drunk of the Spirit when they were already full.

But someone says, "Why did not Paul say, 'water baptism,' if he meant 'water baptism?'" The answer is that Paul did not say "baptism by water" in 1 Cor. 12:13 for the same reason he did not say it in other places. It was understood. Kittel said, "Naturally water is needed when baptism is administered. This is so self-evident that Paul does not even mention water explicitly in R. 6:3f; 1 C. 1:13ff; 12:13; 15:29; Gal. 3:27" (*Theological Diet of the N.T.*, Vol. 6, p. 619). You will notice that Kittel classifies 1 Cor. 12:13 as water baptism. E. Y. Mullins in the I.S.B.E. says on 1 Cor. 12:13, "But here the inference is not to the baptism of the Spirit, but rather to a baptism into the church which is the body of Christ" (Vol. 1, p. 401).

When we read Luke's inspired record of the conversion of the Corinthians, he says nothing in Acts about their being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Surely such an important event would not have been overlooked. Luke simply says, "and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). Here is 1 Cor. 12:13 exemplified. Paul preached by the Spirit and the Corinthians being brought to conviction through preaching, they were baptized into the one body. They were born anew of "water and of the Spirit" (Jn. 3:5).

"drink into one Spirit." This is a figurative expression perhaps referring to the bestowal of the Spirit under the figure of the living water used by Jesus (Jn. 7:37). This involves all the provisions of the Spirit for man who comes in humble obedience. He drinks of the cup of the Spirit, i.e., the cup of miraculous endowments in the first century church, and the cup of blessings revealed by the Spirit in the Word of God for then and now.

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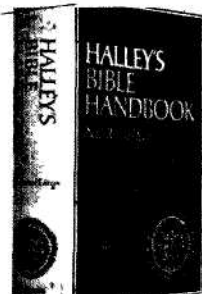
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"I MARRIED A CATHOLIC"

(This letter was written by a Christian in California. Her identity is not revealed for obvious reasons. It is a letter of advice to a girl contemplating marriage to a Roman Catholic. It was first published by the *20th Century Christian* and later reprinted in the **Voice of Freedom**. We sincerely hope that it will be profitable for our readers in **Searching the Scriptures**. E. B.)

Some friends of yours have asked me to write you concerning your approaching marriage to a Catholic. I, myself, married a Catholic, so I can tell you firsthand what it involves.

I was "raised" in the church of Christ. We accepted the fact without question that on Sundays we attended Bible classes and church twice a day. We also were present each night throughout meetings, sometimes driving many miles. Many of the best-known preachers have I heard. Bible discussions have always been freely held in my parents' home. Christian papers were in abundance.

It was therefore quite a shock to my parents to learn I was dating a Catholic boy. At that time I lived away from home. Acting on their wishes I quit my job and returned home. They told me their feelings about marriage out of the church. Then, as it was my decision, they left it up to me to work out my answer.

Advice was sorely needed, for I was deeply mixed up. I desired the minister there to talk with me, for his sister was married to a Catholic. But being quite reticent I couldn't approach him with questions. In search of answers I read many library books but none contained the knowledge that was needed. Then I obtained a job in the same city as this boy in order to be near him, hoping this situation could be worked out.

Face The Facts

There was never any question that we deeply loved each other, then or now. We had a wonderful courtship. We enjoyed with few exceptions the same things; hours were spent in conversation on endless subjects—except religion. Neither of us faced the facts. This boy had been raised by Catholic parents, attended all Catholic schools, knew why and what he believed, and lived up to the Catholic ideal of life.

We had already started the necessary procedures in order to be married by a priest when I made an attempt to talk with a minister. Inside I was sick with wanting this person so much. I wanted to be his wife, have his

children. But was I doing what was right before God? Then it seemed if only we could get married all would be well. (Instead marriage has only intensified the feelings of conflict I had then.)

Ante-Nuptial Agreement

I know you must be very much in love to consider marrying a boy of the Catholic religion, but would you like to know how my marriage has worked out? At first we attended our own church, sometimes accompanying the other. Before I continue this letter I'd like to quote the ante-nuptial agreement:

"I, the undersigned, not a member of the Catholic Church, propose to do so with the understanding that the marriage bond thus contracted is indissoluble, except by death. I promise on my word of honor that I will not in any way hinder or obstruct the said John Doe in the exercise of his religion, and that all the children of either sex, born of our marriage shall be baptized and educated in the Catholic faith and according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, even though the said John Doe should be taken by death. I further promise I will marry John Doe only according to the marriage rites of the Catholic Church and that I will not, either before or after the Catholic ceremony, present myself before a Civil Magistrate or Minister of the Gospel."

The Catholic attitude toward this is that inasmuch as the Catholic is convinced that his religion alone is the true one, while the average non-Catholic usually believes in the principle that one religion is as good as another, the non-Catholic does not sacrifice a religious principle. The fact that non-Catholics sign these promises so readily proves that their faith is not very strong.

Infant Baptism

What a wonderful, glorious experience to have a baby! But my joy was short-lived. Do you know what is said and done in "christening"? In infant baptism, after questioning the sponsors, the priest breathes upon the baby's face, saying "Depart from him, thou unclean spirit and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete." Then he makes the sign of the cross upon the baby's head and breast. Blessed salt is put into the child's mouth. The priest again bids the unclean spirit come out of the child, repeating the sign of the cross. Continuing, he lays hand upon the child's head and holding hand extended prays again. The Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer are repeated. Again the priest bids the unclean spirit be gone. Then taking a little saliva on his thumb, he touches ears and nostrils of the baby. The baby is questioned, with sponsors answering the questions. The child is anointed with oil on breast and shoulders. Then with sponsors again answering questions, the priest pours water three times on the baby's head saying, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The baby is anointed on the head, the sponsors give a candle, and then dismissal. By that time, the baby is half undressed, and either crying from the salt put in his mouth, or water poured on his head. I've witnessed this scene several times. The agony inside me was almost unbearable. I've wanted to snatch my baby and run out of there—their

saying my baby is "unclean," and what a mockery of baptism!

Slowly things started to change between my husband and myself. Without realizing it, we started a vicious circle—he, drinking and I, nagging. By this time, we had three small children. Where was the love that was going to work out all things? We both wanted the children to attend church with us. There is no room for love if one is filled with hate, for as misery increases, happiness decreases. Fortunately, we both realized what we were doing to ourselves and our children, but unfortunately not before doing much emotional harm to our children (the results of which are still obvious).

Catholic Schools

My husband before marriage promised me our children would attend public school. They attend parochial schools! Catholic teaching is included in all subjects. Church attendance at a specified Mass is required on Sundays. They are told what to wear, what to do, and what to think. Now my eldest is preparing for his first holy communion. (Sometimes I feel as if I cannot possibly stand to see him do it.) This is copied from his paper which he has to memorize. "Form of Confession. Sign of the Cross, Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. I am seven years old. These are my sins (name and number of sins). For these and all my sins I beg pardon of God and penance and absolution from you, Father (the priest). (Listen to what Father will say and to the penance he gives. After Father speaks say act of contrition.) Before leaving say, 'Thank you,' Father."

Recently while helping the children with their lessons, one lesson included these words, "Honor thy Father and thy Mother." For the first time it struck me that I had not honored my parents with respect to their wishes. I knew then and now all they wanted was my happiness.

Religion Colors Everything

With the exception of our religious difference, which colors everything (even what you serve for dinner), I could ask for nothing more in a husband. He is kind, considerate, helpful with the children, happiest when with the children and me. He has taken care of me when I was sick. He has done whatever was necessary, sometimes having to do all the work in the home including care of the children. He has quite a happy disposition, and we have lots of good times together. But when Sundays come and I sit alone in church, and see children a little older than my own being baptized as the Scriptures teach, well? Do you know what my children want to be when they grow up? The girl, a sister (nun) and the boys, priests!

Yes, we have each other, but I can never give my husband all I'd like to be able to give. A man needs a wife who can back him up in all things important to him. He would like me by his side at church, kneeling together, saying the same prayers. We disagree about money given to church. Why should I like our money donated to build Catholic churches, convents and schools? How do you think my husband would feel

about me contributing to help our missionaries in Germany, Japan and especially Italy?

Another Case

A neighbor lady who married a Catholic thought she would remedy the situation by joining the Catholic Church, but she is of all people most miserable. Although she did not have the good church training that you and I have had, she at least knows enough about the Bible to know that much of their teaching is wrong and not according to Scripture, and she lives in constant conflict.

So many conflicts come between my husband and me day by day that we've had little inclinations for friends. I've grown quite sensitive to what other people may say to my husband or myself. My husband would not enjoy the same things my Christian friends do, and my friends are unsure of their welcome in my home. No, we didn't intend it to be that way, it just happened—but it is a nightmare from which I never awaken.

This has been an extremely hard letter for me to write for I've had to face again many things. It would be comforting if I could blame someone else for having permitted me to make a marriage with so many obstacles to happiness, but I know it was my own willful doing. I failed to meet the responsibility that is irrevocably attached to the formation and maintenance of a Christian home. How can I properly train up my children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Make The Right Decision

Yours is one of the hardest decisions any girl could make. I know. May God in his divine wisdom guide you to make the right one. One may marry for love, but marriage is composed of everyday living together, which love can enrich but cannot overcome insurmountable obstacles.

Not long ago I almost lost my little boy. He spent hours in an oxygen tent fighting for his very existence. He is up playing now, but time after time in the night I've gone in to see if he is covered. Can't you see that if his physical well-being means that much to me, how much more his spiritual welfare means to me? It is breaking my heart what is happening to my children.

And so, if possibly your parents' idea seem contrary to your own, remember it is because they love you so very, very much. They have reared you, fed you, clothed you, taken care of you when you were sick, and tried to teach you what is right since you were born. Isn't it natural they are deeply concerned now?

What Does God Think?

Actually what has troubled me more than anything else is, what does God think? God is a jealous God. I have read in the Old Testament what happened to those who intermarried with the other faiths. Are you aware that many of the objects in the Catholic Church, and their "Ember Days," are derived from pagan customs? I've heard lots of things in Catholic Churches—laughter of the whole congregation because some people today still believe in immersion as the only form of baptism, glorying that each mass is again an unbloody crucifix-

ion of Jesus Christ; the priest who said quite vehemently that he could spit on people who don't believe on Mary as the Mother of God.

Dear friend, it is a high price to pay for love. I urge you to stop and count the cost. Don't sell your children's birthright as I did.

I trust that in some measure this letter is helpful to you in determining what your own duty to God and yourself is. It has not been my intention to tell you what to do, only show you what it is like. And it is not only what you do to yourself, but what you do to the one you love, that makes it doubly tragic!

PRECEPTS AND PERCEPTIONS

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MAY CHURCHES OF CHRIST SUPPORT HUMAN INSTITUTIONS?—IV

It is unscriptural and wrong for a church to donate funds to human institutions because the very nature of human service institutions is commercial, whether or not technically and legally classified as profit or non-profit businesses. Each of these self-created bodies of men is a purely private business enterprise. The fact that the institution is a non-profit organization (members of the legal governing board do not draw salaries or profits from the operation) does not change the non-church nature of the operation. Employees of these "Christian" enterprises make their livelihood out of them and each enterprise is constantly enlarging and expanding. Unlike the poor saint and the gospel preacher who are both God-appointed recipients of church funds and who eventually pass from the scene, these human institutions are composed of self-appointed boards which continue indefinitely. The Bible nowhere authorizes church subsidies for non-church enterprises, profit or non-profit.

It is unscriptural and wrong for a church to make donations to human institutions because the claim that these institutions are merely "methods" by which a congregation obeys God is false and misleading. The term "method" has to do with action. In fact, "method" is a form of action, a form of performance. It is defined as "a way or order of doing anything."

According to their own testimony in 1909 five men "created" themselves "a body politic by the name and style of the Tennessee Orphan Home." We ask: if these five men or their successors by the same "name and style" be a "method," whose "method" are they? They

were not a "method" of any local church when they appointed and named themselves because no local congregation on earth had anything to do with their creation. These five men said, "We are the Tennessee Orphan Home!" It was not any local church's "method" of caring for the needy then; it is none now. This body of men—this benevolence society—was no more a "method" of local church activity than a local church itself is a "method" of that benevolence society's activity. Just as each local church uses "methods," so does this self-created, self-governed, independent "body politic by the name and style of The Tennessee Orphan Home" use its own "methods" in caring for fatherless children. For a church to make a donation to a group of men who have appointed themselves guardians of children is no more "visiting" the fatherless in their affliction than if Noah had made a donation to Ark-builders, Inc., and claimed that he was obeying God's command, "Make thee an ark of gopher wood."

The same is true of teaching. When a church makes a donation to David Lipscomb College the school does not thereby become that congregation's "method" of teaching the gospel or of training its elders. Nothing can be a "method" of any individual group (church or otherwise) unless it "methodizes" some action performed by that individual group.

Neither a school nor a benevolence society can "methodize" a church's teaching or benevolence because neither institution is any **form of any performance**—any action—God commanded of any local church. Whether the term "relieve" or the term "visit" be used, each of these words sets forth an action—a **general action**. "Feed," "clothe," "shelter," and "nurse." are all **specifics** of the generic action "relieve" or "visit" but the term "Tennessee Orphan Home" is no more a specific action than the term "John Doe" is a specific action. These latter terms are nouns—the name of some person or thing—**not verbs**—expressions of action! It is a perversion of scripture, logic and grammar to claim that human institutions are congregational "methods" of doing anything God told a local church to do!

Walking and riding are "methods" of **going** or **traveling** but no individual or congregation will ever "travel" or "go" anywhere merely by making a donation to Grey-hound Bus Company or American Airlines. These business enterprises are not "methods" by which anybody does anything. **Writing** and **speaking** the gospel are "methods" of **teaching** or **declaring** the gospel but no individual or congregation will ever "teach" or "declare" the word of God by merely making a donation to Alabama Christian University, Christian Missionary Society or Gospel Press. These institutions are not "methods" of teaching. Each has its own "methods" of teaching. Institutions are never "methods" of any action God commanded any individual or local church to perform! **Feeding, clothing and making donations to widows indeed** are "methods" of **relieving** widows indeed (1 Tim. 5:16) but no individual will ever "relieve" his own widowed mother and no congregation will ever "relieve" its widow indeed or any fatherless child for whom it is responsible merely by making a donation to

Lakeshore Estates or Childhaven. Those who think they can are simply not thinking straight.

An elder of a church who thinks he can please God by committing church funds to these benevolence societies and thereby lead the church in the doing of its duty should at least practice the same principles toward his own wife, children and widowed mother. He should send all of them to one of these societies or to some hospital and discharge his duty to his own loved ones by making a donation to the human institution receiving them. Why should he try to justify the church practice by the Bible and not follow the same Bible authority for his own practice? Human institutions are not "methods" by which any local church can obey any command of God.

Commending you to

THE WORD OF HIS GRACE

Marshall E. Patton

1024 Coronado Dr., S. E.
Huntsville, Alabama 35802



AUTHORITY FOR CONGREGATIONAL SINGING (NO. 1)

The subject of this article has received much attention of late in the Unity Forums involving some of the Christian Church and some of the church of Christ. There have been three such forums to date: Joplin, Missouri, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Malibu, California with still another planned for the last of April in Milligan, Tennessee. A number of religious papers have also given attention to this issue of late: One Body, Joplin Missouri with Don DeWalt as publisher, **Christian Standard** of Cincinnati, Ohio, **Gospel Advocate** of Nashville, Tennessee, **Searching The Scriptures**, et. al. All of this demands that further honest, objective study be made of this matter.

Perhaps the issue is most clearly set forth by Don DeWalt in these words: "There is no command, apostolic example or necessary inference in the New Testament for congregational singing with or without an instrument" (**One Body**, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 4). If this proposition be true, then it follows that neither congregational singing nor instrumental music with congregational singing is authorized! This, according to DeWalt, puts us in the same boat with him and others of the Christian Church.

Evidently he makes a distinction between that which is authorized and that which is permitted. Christian Church preachers have made this distinction throughout the years. Here is how they reason. They put a peculiar twist on the word "silence" in the Restoration motto "We speak where the Scriptures speak and we are

silent where the Scriptures are silent." They argue that he who speaks out to condemn a practice on which the Scriptures are silent violates the motto by speaking where the Scriptures are silent. Thus, they insist that silence gives permission for these things which in their judgment are aids. On this basis DeWelt claims divine right for the instrumental music in question and accuses us of inconsistency by condemning his practice while accepting our practice (congregational singing) on the same basis—the silence of the Scriptures. Of course, we deny that instrumental music in worship and congregational singing are in the same class. Neither is justified by the silence of the Scriptures. If we cannot find authority for congregational singing on the basis of the voice of the Scriptures, then it follows that both are wrong.

Obviously, the issue is one of authority. A failure to understand how to establish authority, the different kinds of authority, and the nature of each accounts for much of the extremism, division and all of its attendant evils among us today. It is, therefore, imperative that we understand these matters, if we are to understand each other, come to a knowledge of truth, and attain unto that unity for which Jesus prayed (Jno. 17:20, 21).

Fundamentals Of Authority

Before giving attention to the issue of "Congregational Singing," let us look first at some fundamentals with respect to authority. Since DeWelt's statement (already quoted) shows agreement between us on the three ways by which authority is established, I shall not labor that point in this article.

The Silence Of The Scriptures

In the first place we must learn that the cliché "Silence gives consent" is not so in determining one's acceptability with God. We must have authority for all that we do whether at work or at play, at home or anywhere else. 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). While, contextually, this verse applies in particular to singing praise unto God, Paul makes it general in its application when he by the Holy Spirit used the word "whatsoever." This covers the whole of one's life. Everything one does must be "from the heart" and "as to the Lord... whether he be bond or free" (Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:23). However, let no one think that "All of life is an expression of worship," as DeWelt affirms (One Body, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 6). However close worship and service may be related, there is a difference! There are two Greek words in the original text that make clear this distinction, namely, "proskuneo," which involves an act of homage, and "latreuo," which involves the idea of service. While both are sometimes translated "worship" in our versions, there is a difference. A failure to distinguish between the two leads to "vain worship"—offering as an act of homage unto God that which is unauthorized.

That the silence of the Scriptures does not give permission or make anything a matter of choice is evident

from the following: "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Lev. 10:1, 2). Authorities agree that the expression "which he commanded them not" means that they offered fire not commanded in the law. They did not have commandment or authority for it. God's voice was silent concerning the fire they offered. Thus, we see clearly God's attitude toward those who presume upon the silence of His word.

Again, "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood" (Heb. 7:14). The argument here is Jesus could not be a priest on earth because He was of the tribe of Juda, and there was no authority—no voice from the Scriptures—for one of this tribe to be a priest. If this verse teaches anything at all, it means that the silence of the Scripture is prohibitive!

Look again, in the letter from the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15), we find that certain brethren had gone from Jerusalem to Antioch and were "subverting souls" by teaching that circumcision was necessary to salvation. Their teaching was a perversion of truth not because they were commanded not to teach it, but rather because they had no commandment (authority) for it—"to whom we gave no such commandment" (v. 24).

The Restoration motto, "We speak where the Scriptures speak and we are silent where the Scriptures are silent" is justified, if justified at all, by the statement in 1 Pet. 4:11 which says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." One cannot go beyond the oracles of God and still speak as the oracles of God. One cannot come short of the oracles of God and still speak as the oracles of God. This divine truth demands respect for both the voice and the silence of the Scriptures. The former authorizes and the latter prohibits.

Generic And Specific

Authority may be either generic or specific. Webster defines "generic" to mean "1. Pertaining to, or having the rank of, a genus; as, a generic name. 2. General, adj." Webster defines "genus" to mean "1. **Logic**, a class of objects divided into several subordinate species." Webster also defines the word "general" to mean "2. Pertaining to, affecting, or applicable to, each and all of a class, kind, or order; as, a general law."

In the light of these definitions we learn that generic authority includes all of the subordinate species of a genus—it includes "all of a class, kind, or order." Generic authority, therefore, authorize some things, though they may not be specified. They are within the **genus** that is authorized.

The church building, seats, lights, rest rooms, water fountain, etc., are all authorized generically by **place** which is necessarily implied in Heb. 10:25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Saints cannot

assemble without a **place!** The kind of place, whether a tent, the shade of a tree, a building (owned, rented, leased, etc.) together with facilities to accommodate the physical needs of people assembled for **divinely autho-rized purposes**, is a matter of judgment or choice—All are within the genus "place" which is authorized by necessary inference.

The same thing is true of song books. The command to sing necessarily infers that in obeying the command one will sing from memory or from a song book or its equivalent. There is no other way. Which of the two becomes a matter of choice—both are authorized by the genus "sing." Hence, both are authorized though not specified.

Specific authority on the other hand excludes everything except that which is precisely stated or revealed. Note Webster's definition of the word "specific". "Precisely formulated or restricted; specifying; explicit; as, a specific statement." There is a fundamental difference in the **nature** of generic and specific authority. The former is **inclusive** and the latter is **exclusive**. That specific authority is exclusive is evident from the fact that its nature cannot be described without the use of some negative term. Try it! Specific authority negates everything except that identified, or, which is the same, it authorizes only that which is named.

All of this harmonizes with Paul's teaching on expediency: "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not" (1 Cor. 10:23). A careful exegesis of this verse and its context shows that all things lawful (within an authorized genus) may not be expedient. However, one thing is certain: All expediencies are first lawful—they are within an authorized genus.

A Fundamental Difference

There is a fundamental difference between DeWalt and us on the issue of instrumental music in worship. He has neither generic nor specific authority for instrumental music in worship. In the statement quoted earlier from his pen, he has admitted that there is no authority for such with congregational singing. We, however, are able to show generic authority for congregational singing. This I propose to do in article No. 2 on this subject.

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ISAIAH SAW IN THE TEMPLE WHO HE WAS WHEN HE SAW WHO GOD WAS

In Isaiah 6, Isaiah's trusted king, Uzziah, had died and the Lord has demonstrated two fundamental truths to him: (1) He saw in whom to place his trust, and (2) that the Lord is in control no matter what the circumstances appear to be.

Now Isaiah must learn who he really is and to do that he must first learn who God really is. There is a fundamental premise at stake here. It is that, as men, we will never know who we are until we learn who God is! Our own identity is not residing within ourselves, but is bound up completely with the nature of our God.

God will reveal His character to Isaiah so that Isaiah might see his own personal need. Isaiah listens to the Seraphim calling to each other, "Holy, Holy, Holy." Notice that they repeat it 3 times: the perfect number, the number of Divinity: Then they add "the earth is full of His Glory." Where can one go to escape His glory? "If descended into the pit, He is there." Jonah found Him in the belly of the great fish. Moses found Him in a bush that was burning in the isolated desert of Midian. Even "the foundations of the earth trembled." How can human words, finite minds, visualize what Isaiah saw?

Notice his reaction, "Woe is me, for I AM ruined." The majesty of the greatness of God makes man totally aware of his sinfulness. Remember what happens to Uzziah, who as a sinful man, went into the presence of God, in the Temple, to offer incense? He was stricken with leprosy! Did this flash through Isaiah's mind? Did he remember what struck the king and did he suppose the same fate was now to befall him? At least it is a reasonable assumption that this could have gone through his mind and now he too would be stricken for his contact with Divinity. "I AM RUINED." Peter's reaction was exactly the same in Luke 5:8 when they pulled in at his command a catch of fish so large that the boats were beginning to sink. "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" Peter knew there was a vast eternity of difference between his own sinful condition and the Divinity of the Son of God.

Yes, for all of us there are times when we feel so unclean and "ruined" before the presence of God. "I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among people of unclean lips." With these words Isaiah was confessing what God had known, but what had not been burned into the heart of Isaiah was his utter worthlessness!

"Me? Yes, me! I am the one who is totally unclean." 1 John 1:9: "If we say we don't sin we make Him a liar." Still, too often we get to feeling rather righteous. We devise our own creed of righteousness. Like the fellow who says he didn't sin because he partook of the Lord's Supper on Sunday and sung without an organ. Of course those things are right, but who gives us the right to determine that is the ONLY deciding factor? What's the problem? We are comparing ourselves to the wrong standard. The right standard is the infinite Holiness of the Eternal, Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent God! When we fix our eyes on that as the standard, we DO NOT walk away, we DO NOT crawl away, we simply slither away in shame.

Thankfully, the account doesn't end there. Verse 6: "One of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand . . . and he touched my mouth with it and he said . . . your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven." What does God want from us? One basic factor. The humility to admit that at our best "we are ruined." Also, that we must come to Him on His terms and not on our own. A popular religious song several years ago spoke it so clearly: "Shackled by a heavenly burden neath a load of guilt and shame. Then the hand of Jesus touched me, and I am no longer the same." God, by the power of Jesus' blood in baptism can still burn away the uncleanness of our lips, our hearts, our feet. All He asks us to do is to admit the NEED in our lives for His cleansing plan.

After Isaiah is cleansed he is now ready to be used. Verse 8: "Whom shall I send? is the question from the throne. When Isaiah trusted in his righteousness, in his heritage which had placed him in the palace, the answer was, "no one." No one could go, but now that he is cleansed, the answer is: "Here am I send me!" God's plan is to take people and break them that He might make them. His plan is far greater than our limited scope or vision. By comparison, we have only little ant hills built and planned. Our own world is so small and our goals are so limited until God steps in and shows us who HE is and what we are. Only then are we ready to go. Why? Because we need to see that we are not launching out on our own strength or power, but solely on that power which comes from His throne.

There are three words implanted in our minds in Isaiah 6: **CLEANSING, CALLING and COMMIT-MENT!** Now, isn't that the correct order? First, Isaiah needed to be cleansed, then He was called by God, and finally it resulted in a commitment. This commitment was so deep that he would wait until the enemy destroyed the nation and none would hear and none would obey! To really be cleansed we must see our total need, our sin, which sin we committed ourselves and was not some sin committed by Adam such as the Calvinists have chosen to teach. Then we need to hear the call of the Lord in Matt. 11:28. "Come unto me." Also the calling through the gospel in II Thess. 2:14, and not some mystical calling such as the Pentecostals proclaim to produce a commitment. The commitment is to go to the lost of the human race. A commitment to go to

every creature and not the kind of commitment that Crossroads asks for, but a commitment to deny self and carry His cross.

SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

P. J. Casebolt

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PREACHING: PART-TIME/FULL-TIME

We have all heard or used the above terms with reference to preachers and preaching. I'm satisfied that sometimes these terms described a certain situation fairly and fully. I'm just as convinced that there are times when these catch-all phrases not only fail to portray the situations properly, but may even do damage to the preacher or congregation involved in particular, and to the cause of Christ in general.

If our sole intent is to convey the idea that a certain preacher is being either partially or fully supported by the church, there would be no problem. However, I think there are times when more than just the matter of support is involved. I have known preachers whose hearts and energies were fully devoted to "the work of an evangelist," and yet were consigned to the realm of "part-time preachers." I have also seen those who were regarded by many to be "full-time" preachers, placing the work of an evangelist on the back burner while devoting their time and energies to purely personal or secular pursuits.'

I'm afraid that we sometimes display a different set of standards for what constitutes part or full-time preaching, and that standard is influenced by who the preacher happens to be, and what he happens to be doing. I doubt that the apostle Paul would be classified by some standards as a full-time preacher, primarily because the profession which he chose on occasion to help support himself is not in the "blue or white-collar" class. Others would expel him from the ranks of full-time preachers simply because he did obtain part of his support from manual labor.

If the reader will permit, I think I can use a personal example without prejudice or pomp. When I made the decision to devote my life to the work of an evangelist, I kept my hand on the plow without looking back. In order to preach where and when I thought it was needed, I have been fully supported by the church at times, and I have also helped to support myself. This method has enabled me to work with large congregations, small congregations, engage in meeting work at home and abroad, and write for such publications as the old **Apostolic Times**, **Searching the Scriptures**, and sev-

eral in between. To paraphrase Mark Twain, I have been amused at times to hear of my demise as a "full-time" preacher.

There are countless other preachers who have chosen to direct their energies toward working with small congregations, or establishing new ones. Sometimes this means salvaging a work which has been left to flounder by some "full-time" preacher who has moved on to greener fields and plusher offices. Granted, the ideal situation is for evangelists to go where they are needed while being fully supported by the church, but if we spent all of our time trying to convince brethren of this fact, the gospel would not get preached anywhere. My eternal thanks to those faithful men, from the first century until now, who continue to preach the gospel under adverse conditions. May the crown be yours (2 Tim. 4:5-8).

No one should expect a preacher to spend twenty-four hours a day preaching or studying. The mind and body need rest, and nourishment. Jesus realized this (Mk. 6:31), and encouraged his disciples to keep themselves fit to preach another day. Some preachers have compromised their effectiveness by not taking care of their bodies. On the other hand, some preachers take advantage of the church by not giving themselves "wholly to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:13-16). The ramifications are endless, but in keeping with this column's penchant for simplicity, we rest the matter.

I just talked with an old preacher yesterday who must sit quietly in the assembly, and neither sing nor preach, because his heart is too weak. I'm sure his Bible heart, the mind (Rom. 10:10), is in both. I'm persuaded more and more that full or part-time preaching is indeed more a condition of the heart than of outward appearances.

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—Foreword—James R. Cope, Tampa, Florida.

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POLITICS AND RELIGION: CAUTION!

**Warren E. Berkley
8511 Thompson Rd.
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I know that Christians are alarmed over the sins of our generation; and, that concern is warranted and legitimate. The legalization of abortion; the spread of humanism; the doctrines, movements and influences which have threatened the home—we agonize over these conditions, worry about our children and grandchildren, and seize opportunities to preach against these iniquities. This is good and right! We must abhor what is evil, reprove the unfruitful works of darkness and earnestly contend for the faith (Rom. 12:9; Eph. 5:11 and Jude 3).

Concerned over the moral degeneration we have observed, we are naturally appreciative when somebody, ANYBODY, takes a public stand for what is right. It may be a political candidate; a "man on the street" interviewed on the evening news; OR, a television preacher. Yes, even though we may disagree with the crusader, if he or she is holding up the banner of Bible morality, we appreciate it and applaud it. But sometimes, in our zeal to fight national sin, we do not exercise the objectivity and care that ought to characterize every aspect of our lives. Hence, these words of caution.

Hasty Political Entanglements

Good intentions and pure motives do not justify hasty entanglements and ill-conceived methods. And, this is more than just "good sense," THIS IS A BIBLE PRINCIPLE. "It is not good for a soul to be without knowledge, and he sins who hastens with his feet," (Prov. 19:2, see also—Prov. 21:5; 25:8; Rom. 3:8 and Eph. 5:15). So, regardless of how urgent and just the cause, there is never a time when we can "throw caution to the wind," and let the end justify the means.

So, STOP, THINK AND INVESTIGATE before you send in a contribution to a "political ministry." Before you join organizations, send in contributions or otherwise involve yourself in the various "ministries" and methods of men, BE CAUTIOUS. You can abhor what is evil; you can speak out against sin and make a difference WITHOUT JUMPING ON ONE OF THE POLITICAL BANDWAGONS.

In urging this caution, something else needs to be said. Most of the popular personalities identified with these political/religious issues ARE ACTIVE FALSE TEACHERS, who stand on a theological platform of CALVINISM, PENTECOSTALISM and PREMILLENIALISM. I mean, they are not just against abor-

tion, **THEY ARE FOR SALVATION BY FAITH ALONE.** They are not just preachers against humanism, **THEY ARE PREACHERS FOR PREMILLENIALISM.** Some of them claim to have "the gift of healing" and "the word of wisdom." Let us beware of hasty political entanglements.

Subtle Binding & Judging

Whether hasty or carefully, some Christians have become involved in various political action groups. Some of them use every opportunity to promote and talk about their involvements. And, the impression is sometimes communicated: "If you are not engaged in these battles like I am; if you are not on the 'right' bandwagon, you are weak, uninformed and **NOT DOING YOUR PART!**" In the minds of some, if you are not fighting school officials over text book selection (like Mel and Norma Gabler) . . . If you are not a subscriber to **EAGLE FORUM** (Phyllis Schlafly) . . . you are just not what you "ought" to be, as a Christian. Movements, methods that get a lot of attention and crusade personalities are being held up as creeds, or right-wing conservative shibboleths. My point is—you can be against text book propaganda **WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING WHO THE GABLERS ARE.** You can be against abortion without absorbing everything that's written in **THE EAGLE FORUM.**

Lest anyone misunderstand, I am opposed to the tenets of humanism on biblical grounds. On the same grounds, I object to homosexuality, sexually explicit music, abortion and anything else "contrary to the doctrine." But in our zeal to reprove and expose—let us not dictate to others the methods they "must" use. We simply have no right to tell others which methods, which bandwagons and which organizations they ought to partake in. In methods and matters of personal choice, I am pleading for the kind of cordial forbearance that shines through, in Romans 14; in 1 Corinthians 8, 9 and 10.

If we start judging one another on the basis of bandwagons and political methods; if we harbor suspicions about one another due to differing personal preferences, we will launch ourselves into endless and deadly turmoil (Gal. 5:15).

Having entered my warnings, I pray we will not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh; but "through love," we will serve one another under the reign of our King (Gal. 5:13; Jas. 4:12).

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THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME

Anyone who has found himself in a place where he had rather not be can appreciate the story F.B. Srygley told about Sam Crutcher, "one of the good preachers in Kentucky in his day." Crutcher loved horses and loved to watch them race, but he rarely attended races because of the gambling and other things of "the baser sort" that went on there. On one occasion he was in Louisville the day before races were to begin and noticed in the papers that there would be a try-out with some of the horses on that day. Supposing that only a few people, mostly owners and riders, would be there, he thought he would go out and have a look.

But when he reached the track, he was greeted by several thousand people. "Brother Crutcher began to feel uncomfortable, but he decided to walk around a little and see what was going on; whereupon he met a man from his neighborhood so drunk that he could hardly walk. The drunken man looked at Brother Crutcher in great surprise and started to walk away the best he could. He got only a few yards when he staggered back toward Brother Crutcher and said, with a drunken drawl: 'Oh, Brother Crutcher, have you quit the church?' Brother Crutcher replied: 'No, not exactly; but I am going to quit this place as quickly as possible.'

"Seeing Brother Crutcher there, no doubt, was some comfort to the wayward man," Srygley observed. This may be true. Being in a place where evil is going on, even though we are not there to participate in it, can encourage those who are weak to the temptations afforded. When one finds himself in such a place, he should follow Crutcher's example and "quit" the place as quickly as possible.

It has been said, "You might find a perfectly good biscuit in a garbage can, but no one would want to eat it after he had fished it out of such a place."

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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ELMER MOORE, 302 Spring Branch, Lufkin, Texas 75901—On the nights of September 30 thru October 4, 1985 and March 3, 4, 6, 7, of 1986, I was privileged to moderate for J. T. Smith in his debates with Charles A. Holt. The propositions of these debates involved the "local church" and the "eldership." The first debate was held in Lake Jackson, Texas and the second in Chattanooga, Tennessee. I do not intend to present a review of the debate as such, but simply state my personal appraisal of it.

First, let me assure everyone that I have no ill will toward brother Holt; neither do I have a personal ax to grind with him. I firmly believe that he espoused false positions in the debates, and failed miserably as a debater.

It was a disappointment to me that brother Holt DID NOT DEBATE THE ISSUE AT ALL. Fact of the matter is, he did not DEBATE—period. I know that he understands what a debate is supposed to be. He knows that arguments of the opposition are to be examined with fairness and candor; yet he completely ignored the major portion of brother Smith's arguments, choosing rather to devote most of his time in A TIRADE AGAINST HIS BRETHREN. I don't recall ever hearing a more bitter, vindictive, castigation of the church of the Lord in terms as severe, in my life. My judgment is that I listened to nine nights of a man who has become so bitter against his brethren that he seeks opportunity to brow-beat them. Nine times in his last speech in Chattanooga, he compared the church of Christ to the Roman Catholic church. Brother Holt stated in the debate that he had no intention of answering brother Smith's arguments (referring to them as "quibbles"); but intended to teach the people. Yet brother Holt advertised the affair in his paper. The EXAMINER, as a debate.

My judgment is that brethren OUGHT NOT TO PROVIDE HIM ANY FURTHER AUDIENCE where he can further his tirade against God's people.

The church of the Lord is indebted to brother J. T. Smith for bringing these matters into the open. Many felt that brother Holt had abandoned the views he held in the 60's. The debates have certainly been eye-openers.

Also it is well to note that in January of 1985 the charter for Holt Ministry, Inc. was filed for record. This was done for the express purpose of making possible the advocacy of brother Holt's position, either through his paper, or a number of other ways that were mentioned in the charter. This was almost a year before the debate in Lake Jackson. The debate was well timed. Surely NOW all know that the only change that brother Holt has made regarding his position on the church and the eldership has been from BAD TO WORSE.

I believe that brother J. T. Smith not only did a thorough job in defense of the truth, but was kind and courteous toward brother Holt throughout.

WAYNE S. WALKER, 5170 Chippewa Rd., Medina, OH 44256—Things continue to go well at Medina. Attendance dropped somewhat during the winter but has now picked up again. We hope to begin construction of our new building in late spring or early summer this

year. I will be in meetings this year at Wheelersburg, Cambridge and Alliance (all in Ohio), a summer vacation Bible school in Ft. Wayne, Indiana and a fall meeting in Covina, California. When you are in the Akron-Cleveland area, please stop and worship with us at 120 N. Elmwood St. in Medina. On Sundays we have Bible study at 9:30 A.M., and worship at 10:30 A.M. and 6:30 P.M.

RAY GOFF, 124 Boone Drive, Summerville, SC 29483—A new congregation has been started in Summerville, SC which meets presently in the Gazebo School at 1264 Bacon Bridge Rd. John Evertt from Columbia preached for us the first Sunday. The Carolinas are crying for the gospel. It is over 100 miles in different directions to reach other sound congregations. Write me if you know of other faithful Christians in this area, or others we might contact. My phone is (803) 875-3842.

MICHAEL GARRISON, P.O. Box 1281, Franklin, NC 28734—After more than 7 years with the church in Andalusia, AL, I have moved to work with the brethren in Franklin, NC. We meet at 156 Old Murphy Road which is old 64 west. This is a beautiful, resort area. Visitors to our mountainous area are invited to worship with us. We are about 30 miles south of Cherokee, NC in the foothills of the Great Smokey Mountains. Call us for information at (704) 369-5186 or (704) 369-8216).

NEW PUBLICATION

BETTY HAYNES, P.O. Box 2503, Columbus, MS 39704—In late spring, a new publication called "Bible Talk Times" will appear. It will have a small newspaper format and will be printed quarterly. It is designed for home Bible study with children. Each issue will contain lessons from the Bible with high interest activities to reinforce desired learning for children from kindergarten through sixth grade. Although the major thrust will be home teaching, it could be used in a class setting. Teaching tips for parents and teachers will be included and a special column will be open for readers to share ideas they have found successful in their own teaching. In addition, regular features will emphasize the Biblical model of family relationships, seasonal interests designed to contrast creation with evolutionary theory, and appreciation of our bodies to anticipate later peer pressure to use harmful substances. Carla Miller, Jane Britnell, Shirley Holt, Shirley Mohon, Flora Tant, Crystal Hunter, Kathy White and Janie Hollis have agreed to make contributions from time to time and others will be contacted to help. Subscriptions are \$6 a year and may be sent to Betty Haynes at the above address.

RICHARD C. SIMS, P.O. Box 539, Gatesville, TX 76528—We have made a start in this central Texas town. Attendance now averages 15, we often have visitors. We have a weekly radio program and a monthly bulletin. I could get much more done if I could quit my secular job and work full-time. With the support I have now plus what is promised when I can work full-time, I am still short \$1050 to provide what is needed for my family of five. Every year, thousands of National Guard

Troops from across the country come to North Ft. Hood for summer camp. Some of these men are members of the church. We are only four miles from the camp and would be glad to furnish transportation to services. Guardsmen may call me at (817) 865-6965 or call Paul Stringer at (817) 865-2330.

CARLOS CAPELLI of Buenos Aires, Argentina reports on an extended preaching trip into Panama, El Salvador, Venezuela, Chile and Argentina. Three were baptized in Panama. In El Salvador one congregation (Santa Ana) numbers 50-65 and Col Libertad 90-110. Four were baptized and two restored. At Barinas, Venezuela five were baptized and one restored. He reports four baptisms in Argentina at three different locations.

EFRAIN PEREZ of Valparaiso, Chile reports a new congregation in San Roque, Valparaiso. Two have been baptized there since the beginning of that work. 28 were present recently. Glenn Rogers and wife have been there for a month of work. Brother Rogers, of McAllen, Texas has devoted many years to Spanish speaking work.

ROYCE CHANDLER and **RANDY REYNOLDS** of Lebanon, Ohio have just returned from a successful preaching trip to Columbia in South America. They preached in Cali, Manizales and Bogota. Progress is reported in all these places and native preachers are commended for their continuing faithful efforts.

* * * * *

PREACHERS NEEDED

ANTIGO, WISCONSIN—This town of 10,000 needs a full time preacher. There are 60 members with 99% regular attendance. Those interested may call Gary Monnot at (715) 627-4278, or write N697 Hwy D, Antigo, Wisconsin 54409.

SMYRNA, TENNESSEE—The Southside church at 1167 S. Lowery St. is looking for a full time preacher. We have about 45 members and should be able to provide full support. Smyrna is a growing community about 20 miles southeast of Nashville. Please write the church c/o Louis E. Mullen, 104 Hankins Dr., Smyrna, TN 37167, or call (615) 355-0381 or 459-8171.

MARION, INDIANA—A small congregation needs an enthusiastic full time preacher. At present we can supply \$200 a week plus housing. Would consider a young man starting to preach or a semi-retired man.

Send resume to Ed Lyons, 3675 N.W. Shadeland Rd., Marion, IN 46902 or call evenings (317) 662-7426 or 662-3768.

* * * * *

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

EVOLUTION AT ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Many of our liberal brethren are understandably up in arms over the teaching of theistic evolution being taught at ACU. Two professors have evidently been teaching it as fact for some time. Past efforts to do something about it have been stone-walled by the administration. Now, the cat is out of the bag and the furor is huge. A new book has been published entitled IS GENESIS MYTH. It exposes the whole mess. You may have a copy free by writing to:

Apologetics Press, Inc.
230 Landmark Dr.
Montgomery, AL 36117

At last report, the administration and board are supporting the teachers in question. I have had occasion to examine some of the materials involved and it looks pretty convincing to me that there is substance to the charges. How many of the liberals will accept theistic evolution along with everything else they have gagged and swallowed?

* * * * *

PURELY PERSONAL

On March 3, at a small family gathering, with ceremony said by my son, Wilson Adams, the editor was married to the former Bobby Hughes of Louisville, Kentucky. Both of us lost our first companions to cancer. Her first husband, Thomas Hughes, was a long time personal friend and for awhile wrote a column in this paper called "Able To Teach Others." I spoke at his funeral in December, 1983. Bobby will handle the business work for the paper except when she is traveling with me in gospel meetings, which we hope will be often. Joan Rader will continue to help with the office work as she is able. Many friends have called or written to express their good wishes and we appreciate all such expressions.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	271
RESTORATIONS	109
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	

