

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 XXIX

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

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Lutz, FL 33549



WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO DO?

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied to the house of Israel these words: "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. For among my people are found wicked men; they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men." "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" (Jer. 5: 25, 26, 30, 31).

God's evaluation of His own people was by no means commendable. They had turned to evil among themselves instead of obeying the will of their God. They had no fear of God in their hearts. They had lost sight of their course in life and were seeking goals that were contrary to the purpose of God. They had turned back from God and were setting snares to entrap even their own countrymen for profit to themselves. The graphic picture of scheming with deceit to trap others duplicates the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees as they tried to entrap Jesus when he was upon earth. The prophets prophesied falsely, the priests ruled with their own means, and the people loved it! Such bold and despicable behavior has been duplicated again and again among those who claim to call upon the Lord. The same problem exists today among many of the people of God. It is time for us to review our reasons for being what we are and where we think we are going.

Why do we meet regularly on the Lord's day? Is there any point to it? Why do we preach and teach the gospel? Do we get anything out of this effort? Do we have any salt in ourselves? Are we really the light of the world? Perhaps to step back and take a good long look at ourselves would help us to see the need to change attitudes and conduct toward God and His word. It would help us to answer these questions.

It appears that some people come to the assembly on Lord's day to pay their weekly debt to God, to see and be seen, and to have occasion to find fault and complain. Some come to sell their merchandise of one kind or another. Some no doubt come to socialize and mate-match, and some to rest and sleep. It seems that some preaching and teaching is designed to please men, make members of a local church and to entertain them, rather than to worship God and teach and edify one another.

Why is there no real healthy growth in number and conversion to Christ today? Every preacher who remembers 40 or 50 years ago will tell you that in both local and meeting work the response to preaching the gospel is only a dribble now of what it was then. Most agree that lack of conviction, apathy and watered down preaching is responsible for this condition.

There are some reasons for this. One is too much love for the world, and not enough for God. Men are responsible for the object of their love. We are taught to love the brethren, and we can do so if we try (John 13:34, 35; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:14-17; 4:20, 21). Jesus told his disciples that by loving one another all men will know that you are my disciples. One problem with this is that many do not know what this love is. They think it is a soft, sentimental acceptance of one in sin with no rebuke and reproof. Actually the love required by the Holy Spirit is described as not being puffed up, not behaving unseemly, not selfish, or easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth (1 Cor. 13:4-6). We are to love our enemies who mistreat us with all manner of evil, and to do good to them and pray for them (Matt. 5:43,44). We are not to love the world (1 John 2:15). This shows that one can love or not love as he wills. We must direct our love to the right person or thing and not love what is wrong.

Satan is the ruler of this world. He is "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2); he is the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4). He appeals to humanity through the "lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life..." (1 John 2:16). The majority of the population of this earth is under his control and he is gaining every day. Our only defense against him is obedience to the gospel of Christ and resisting him every time he approaches with one of his lures and snares (John 8:32; Rom. 1:16; James 4:7).

The wisdom of this world is a scheme of Satan to substitute the doctrines and commandments of men for the gospel of Christ. God has made foolish the wisdom of this world (1 Cor. 1:19-29), but the worldly wisdom has taken the lead in religious teaching and in the formulating of theological dogmas. This kind of teaching has come into the pulpits of the Lord's church all over this land. The preparation of new and modern translations of the Bible continue to be a tool to produce ignorance and division. The compromise with worldly standards is the cause of apathy and doctrinal error that hinders the progress of the gospel.

What are we trying to do? If we are trying to impress the world with our excellence, wealth and power, we are not making much impression, but we are making a miserable failure with the gospel. We are simply showing the world that we are as worldly and vulnerable to the truth as they are. If we try to save the lost by holding forth the word of truth, the gospel of Christ, we will succeed in saving those who have an honest and good heart. We will also save ourselves as we teach others the truth. May God help us to adhere to this commission.

Searching The Scriptures

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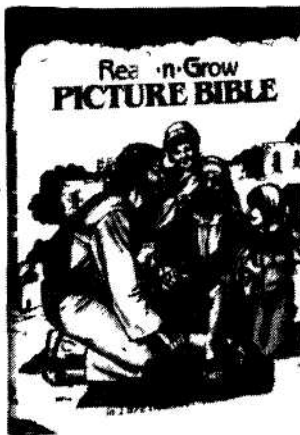
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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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EDITORIAL STEW

It is nearly winter time in Kentucky as I write this. Time to rake leaves, gather firewood, stock up on sorghum, and relax an evening or two in front of the fireplace. For me, this means the nine months of meeting work is nearly over (at this writing there are still two more before Thanksgiving), and winter classes every other day for the next three months are about to begin. It is the right time to cook a pot of stew, let it simmer and, along with some corn bread, enjoy. It is also time for an editor's concoction which we plainly call "editorial stew."

LIGHTS ALONG THE EASTERN SHORE

During a September meeting at East Orange, New Jersey, we had dinner one evening with a family which had five sons (three of whom are still at home). Also living in that house were both grandmothers. Additionally, there was a 98 year old man who was related to none of them but who was there because "he had nowhere else to go." We all sat at the same large table. It was a beautiful gathering. With dignity and no fanfare these Christians were requiting their parents (1 Tim. 5:4) and showing hospitality to an aged man with no relatives left in the world and nowhere to go, and to us. No trumpets blaring, just everyday Christianity at work.

REACTIONS

We have been astonished at the amount of encouragement received from the September editorial "And Wash Away Thy Wives." Some of it came from sources we surely did not expect. A few (a very few, I might add), took exception, some in good spirit and some otherwise. I had a very nice note from James D. Bales which was much appreciated, though he surely did not agree with what I said. His tone was kind and conciliatory, which is what I would have expected from this gracious man. He told me his debate with Roy Deaver on whether the alien is under law to Christ will soon be in print. It will be 500 pages in hardback and may be ordered from brother Bales in Searcy, Arkansas.

One brother "wrote me up" in his bulletin and charged me with trying to impose a brotherhood censorship on those who take a different view from my own. If so, then I am too late, for those of the contrary persuasion have been saying **what** they wanted to say, **when** they wanted to say it, for a long time and many of us who do not agree with them have been screened out of preaching in a number of places for a long time. Another suggested that I was seeking to impose a "quarantine"

similar to that proposed by the Gospel Advocate in their December 9, 1954 issue with regard to the institutional issue. If there is any "quarantine," it has been in effect for sometime in areas where those who believe and preach what I do on this subject have not been welcomed and where we have been viewed as curiosities when we have ventured into areas where there were a few brethren who did not go along with the prevailing view on the subject. There is a possibility of a coming discussion on this subject in another paper, or possibly an oral debate or two. Should that materialize, we will inform the readers.

For those interested in more study on the subject, Maurice Barnett has just published an excellent booklet entitled ALIEN SINNERS AND THE LAW OF CHRIST. This is free but you should enclose \$1 for postage and handling. Write to: Maurice Barnett, Westside Church of Christ, 3736 W. Monte Cristo, Phoenix, AZ 85023.

DISMISSING THE ASSEMBLY

I don't know if more training classes are needed, or what, but it is apparent that many brethren, including not a few preachers, do not know how to "dismiss" a congregation. In service after service, at place after place, for night after night, there are those who pray five to ten minutes when the audience has stood through the invitation song, closing announcements, a closing song and now through a long "retention" rather than dismissal. Babies and small children are weary (not to mention the mothers), often crying or whimpering, and yet we hold on, and on and on. There are times for longer prayers. There are times for giving thanks (as at the Lord's table). And there is a time to dismiss an assembly with an earnest appeal for the Almighty to go with us where we go, abide with us where we stay and grant us another opportunity to assemble again, if not on earth, then in heaven. As much as possible, our preaching, singing and praying should be appropriate to the occasion. When our gatherings become endurance contests, somehow, the edge is taken off of edification.

SERMON STARTER

The first time I heard it was from Robert Jackson and I don't know where he got it: Sin **takes** you **farther** than you meant to **go**, **keeps** you **longer** than you meant to **stay**, and **costs** much **more** than you intended to **pay**. The Bible is brim full of illustrations and applications of each of these three points.

SERMON REALLY LATHERED

It was in M'Lang, Cotabato on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines in 1971 where J.T. Smith and I had gone to debate Eusebio Lacauta. We stayed in a small hotel which had one shower stall for the whole place. They caught rain water in a barrel on top of the house. The "shower" consisted of a half inch pipe up the wall which was bent at the top. There was no nozzle or spray and the "shower" was whatever water trickled from that pipe. I got the bright idea to beat everyone else one morning before the water ran out. I had just lathered myself from head to toe with Palm olive soap when the water ran out. There was nothing to do but take a towel and dry off the best I could. But I was left with a thin, sticky film of soap for all day. I managed fairly well

preaching that morning. But by afternoon services, with the tropical sun bearing down on a tin roof, and no cooling system except the breeze from the coconut grove, the sweat rolled down as I preached. I had a small towel to soak up some of it, but the more I wiped the perspiration, the more it lathered and foamed. Some of the Filipino brethren scarcely contained their amusement. After it was over, they teased me. One said "Brother Adams, that sermon really lathered." Well, yes, it did!

TYPHOONS STRIKE PHILIPPINES

The woes which our brethren in the Philippines are made to endure seem not to let up for very long. In addition to political turmoil, economic disaster, threats to peace and safety in some areas, that island nation has been hit by 18 typhoons in 1988, the worst of which was in October when the worst storm since 1970 roared across central Luzon with the eye passing a few miles north of Manila with winds of up to 140 miles per hour and flooding a wide area with over 9 inches of rain. There was heavy damage to property and the rice crops and many lives were lost. We have had no direct word from any of the brethren, but please keep them in your prayers and be prepared to help if necessary. It is my understanding that Dr. Harold Byers, one of the elders of the Expressway church in Louisville, is going to Manila in December for an international medical conference and he plans to spend some time teaching classes and preaching while there as he has done the past two years. He should be able to get a more accurate picture of the situation by that time.

VOLUME 30 TO BEGIN

The January issue will mark the beginning of our thirtieth year. H. E. Phillips edited the paper for 13 and 1/2 years and I have now served in that capacity for 15 and 1/2 years. They have been good years, in many ways, and yet demanding in others. We have enjoyed the faithful support of a large number of good brethren over these years. Many brethren have contributed time, talent and effort to provide copy month after month. A few men have given of themselves far beyond the call of duty, in this regard. While many have helped greatly, none have done more than H. E. Phillips, the lamented James P. Miller, and Marshall E. Patton. While many others have helped both early and late in our history, these men bore the brunt of the writing load during most critical times. Brother Miller has crossed to the other side to await the judgment. But H. E. Phillips and Marshall Patton are yet active in preaching and teaching. It would be a fine thing for some of our readers to take time to write these men a note of thanks for what they have contributed to our study of the word of God. Tell them now, while they can hear it.

THANKS TO RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER

This book store in Louisville continues to be our only advertising client, except for the church ads. As we have explained many times, the paper and the book store are two separate businesses. But our relationship has been most pleasant from the first day until now. I am glad to personally tell people about their ample stock of books and supplies and their fast and friendly service. With their 800 number, an order goes out the same day you

call. The voices of Marie, Wimpy and Phyllis are known from coast to coast and customers from many parts of the country ask me about them and their families, even though they have never met. David Key, the manager, is expanding the facilities again. If your travel takes you through, or even near Louisville, please stop and meet these folks and browse. You'll likely find many things you need, and you will leave feeling as though you have visited with close kin.

RATES INCREASE

As we announced in the October issue, we are forced to raise our rates as of January 1, 1989. Single subscriptions will be \$11. The club rate will be \$9 per year for four or more. Bundles to one address and group subscriptions will be 12 for \$7.50 per month or 24 for \$15.00 per month. Foreign subscriptions will be \$14.00 annually. We need some friends who will provide and pay for a list of subscriptions. You will not only help us, but will greatly benefit those who are the objects of your kindness. Could you help with that?

TO OUR FAMILY OF READERS

Those of us who make *SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES* possible month after month wish for all readers a prosperous 1989. May you "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as they soul prospereth" (3 Jno. 2).

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(Jer. 20:9)

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"A BURNING FIRE" — ABOUT THIS COLUMN

John is a good man having been a child of God for many years. He is much like a lot of you who are reading this article in that most of his life has been lived amidst some of God's greatest blessings. But there have been troubled times also. Times when he has been under such a bombardment of temptation and trial that he was tempted to lay the sword aside and leave the battle for right to others. This temptation was especially strong when he came under personal ridicule while trying his best to help others live faithfully. John has asked the same questions that you have on occasion, "What more can I do," and "Why not just sit back and rest for awhile and let someone else lead the fight?"

There was a prophet by the name of Jeremiah. He lived in a time in which Israel had forsaken the Lord and had turned to idolatry, even offering their children as burnt offerings in sacrifice to Baal. Jeremiah was commissioned to preach, "... thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Behold I am about to bring a calamity upon this place, at which the ears of everyone that hears of it will tingle'" (Jer. 19:3). This message was not well received. Pashur the priest, upon hearing these words, had Jeremiah publicly beaten and put in stocks to face the ridicule and derision of an ungodly society. This faithless priest released Jeremiah no doubt hoping that the prophet had been sufficiently intimidated that he would no longer preach his message of destruction. The sacred record reveals Jeremiah's response, "For each time I speak, I cry aloud; I proclaim violence and destruction, because for me the word of the Lord has resulted in reproach and derision all day long. But if I say, 'I will not remember Him or speak anymore in His name,' then in my heart it becomes like A BURNING FIRE shut up in my bones; and I am weary of holding it in, and I cannot endure it" (Jer. 20:8, 9).

The WORD OF THE LORD in the heart of the faithful is like A BURNING FIRE deep within that would not allow Jeremiah nor will it allow John and those of us like him to cease our work in the service of God.

I deeply appreciate brother Adams for allowing me the opportunity to contribute regularly to SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES under the column heading, "A BURNING FIRE." I also appreciate the confidence that he shows in me, however undeserved, by so asking. Writing is a privilege and a responsibility that I do not take lightly. Once something is on the printed page it

tends to have a life of its own and no one can ultimately know where it will go and by whom it will be read. Written words have the power to affect generations yet unborn and thus anyone who would use such a medium to air untested and untried ideas acts irresponsibly.

I hope and pray that the word of God will produce in each of us the same effect that it had upon Jeremiah. To place A BURNING FIRE or a burning desire deep within our hearts first to believe, then to do, then to teach the message of the Lord. It apparently had this effect upon two disciples to whom the Lord appeared on the way to Emmaus for they said, "Were not OUR HEARTS BURNING WITHIN US while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us" (Lk. 24:32). With hearts filled with the word of God which produced a deep burning zeal these disciples and others like them carried the message of the risen Savior, Jesus Christ, to every corner of the world. And this they did in spite of the forces of Satan that intimidated, imprisoned, and put to death those who served in the Lord's Cause. They were not to be silenced.

It is hoped that this column can do even a little to present the Scriptures in such a light that this same effect might be felt within the hearts of more of you, our dear readers. To accomplish this certain things will be necessary. ...

SOME THINGS WILL HAVE TO BE SAID WHICH ARE NEGATIVE IN NATURE. The fact must be faced that sin is negative. It will separate man from his God and endanger one's soul of being lost eternally. We dare not ignore it and to whitewash it by calling it a disease or an alternate life style is but to deceive. Jeremiah's burning heart did not lead him to an all positive and no negative message. It led him to speak the truth revealed from Jehovah. But the truth can be presented in love (Eph. 4:15) and to teach with compassion should be the goal of every sower. One is not to be gladdened that souls are lost and any condemnation of sin should be offered with tears in the eyes rather than self-righteous hypocrisy.

SOME THINGS WILL BE SAID THAT ARE POSITIVE. This column will strive for balance. The kind of balance that is needed in any presentation of the gospel. There are a lot of good things going on in local churches around the country. Many are not dying on the vine but are active and growing. Just as the church at Thessalonica became an example to others. (1 Thess. 1:6-10) so also the success stories of these churches need to be told. First, because they are encouraging. And second, because we may be able to use their methods in our efforts to spread the gospel. The goal that should be constantly before us all is to reach as many people as possible with the soul saving message of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

When you have A BURNING FIRE within your heart, you will speak when there are others that would rather you keep quiet. The Jewish leaders commanded Peter and John "not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus" (Acts 4:18). But their reply was, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). They had


A BURNING FIRE within that compelled them to share their faith in Christ with others. I'm sure they became discouraged at times, for this is the disposition of every man, but their faith moved them to carry on even in the face of determined opposition. There are often people in the work place or in the community that do not want to hear the truth. The gospel is a life-changing message and they are indifferently satisfied with the way they live and, as a result, they don't want to hear a message that demands a change on their part. But preach it we must because the gospel compels us.

Sometimes the opposition we face comes from our brethren and perhaps this is the most difficult opposition of all. It brings us great pain to differ with those whom we love most, especially when those differences are significant enough to endanger the soul. No one likes to be alienated from his brethren. But when we have A BURNING FIRE in our hearts produced by the touch of the gospel upon our lives we dare not compromise a single principle of truth even for the sake of a friendship (Matt. 10:37, 38).

I solicit your prayers as I begin what I believe will be a labor of love. The views contained under this heading will be my own and should you find need to question it's contents I encourage your correspondence. May God bless us every one as we diligently continue our search for all truth.

Using the

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT



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DISTINCTIVE PREACHING

We're hearing a lot from some quarters about the need for "distinctive preaching." This phrase is used to describe preaching on Biblical truths which distinguish churches of Christ from other religious bodies.

This article is not written to take issue with that thought. Yes, we need distinctive preaching. Themes such as the one body, the church; immersion for the remission of sins; the need for Scriptural authority; and the nature of New Testament worship need to be preached with regularity. There is danger in failing to ground disciples in these "distinctive" areas.

But I have often noted another danger that may be even more problematic. This is the failure to stress truths that most all religious groups hold in common.

Shall we call this "common preaching?"

I have heard the statement with reference to different preachers any number of times: "Why he could have preached that sermon in any denomination in town!"

May I suggest that if one is declaring the whole counsel of God he will have to preach a lot of things that may be preached in any denomination in town.

The subject of love is the major doctrine of the New Testament. While there will be some applications to passages like 1 John 5:3 that would not be welcomed in the denominations, most of what a gospel preacher would have to say in expounding various passages on this subject would be welcomed anywhere.

The subjects of joy, peace, and kindness, and other attitudes of the Christian life are by no means distinctive. But these subjects are taught in the Scriptures fully as much or more than is baptism.

Lessons that deal with the family; and with our mutual responsibilities as husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and children are welcomed anywhere. I've never heard anyone say, "He could have preached that in any denomination," after a sermon or even a series of sermons on the family.

Sermons on the inspiration of the Bible, the deity and Lordship of Christ, the existence of God, and the theory of evolution might not all be acceptable in just any denomination, but they are certainly not distinctive doctrines.

I have been preaching a series of sermons on "Love, the More Excellent Way," in many gospel meetings. The lessons have been well received by most, but there have been some criticisms. One couple just couldn't imagine

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why a gospel preacher would think churches need a week's preaching on love.

One can only shake his head in disbelief.

It may be that many of the schisms and splits churches have experienced in the past several years would have been averted had we majored on such major doctrines.

A brother told me that he was advised when the institutional issues arose to just watch the way things go for a few days and he would see the churches with "progressive" attitudes going further and further off the deep end. He did not know if he had the time to adopt a wait and see attitude, so he took his stand for truth on those questions without playing Gamaliel. But of course history has proved his counselor correct.

But I thought as I listened to those remarks that that process works two ways. When we view the condition of conservative churches in so many places where every trivial difference under the sun has further fragmented brethren, it becomes obvious that we made a wrong turn somewhere.

I think the words of Christ in Matt. 23:23,24 apply to our pathetic state: **"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel."**

Things Most Certainly Believed

Julian R. Snell

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ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WORD OF GOD

Attitude represents an important ingredient in any relationship. It is the key, second only to truth, in the God-man relationship. In people relationships it is the underlying factor in the quality of these. Attitude is: "Posture; position or bearing as indicating action, feeling, or mood; as, keep a firm attitude; hence the feeling or mood itself; as a kindly attitude" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary). The word is comparable to disposition, outlook, or the approach that one shows toward a subject or principle with which he is confronted.

Significantly, the idea and not the word itself is common to the scriptures. In Philippians 2:5 there is a beautiful expression of this, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." The mind within equates our attitude and represents a factor within every one of us that will determine our relationship to God, His word, our self, each other, and all things. Jesus

sought to impress the importance of attitude, particularly with respect to the teaching efforts of the disciples when he spoke the first parable. He taught them that as they went forth teaching the word they could expect to encounter various attitudes among their hearers. Remember, the seed is the word of God and the sower is of primary application to the disciples. Some hearing the word were likened to wayside soil, some rocky ground, some seed fell among the thorns and were choked, finally, some was presented as falling on the good ground and bringing forth fruit. What a graphic depiction of attitude among the hearers and how accurately it continues to present the dispositions of our own time toward the gospel. The issue is one of attitude (cf. Lk. 8).

Jesus involved the principle of attitude in the beatitudes introducing the sermon on the mount (Mt. 5:3-12). Within these passages he is presenting the nature and character of those who will be citizens of the kingdom of heaven when it is established. The good attitude, if you will, of those within the kingdom. The beatitudes are a focusing on the mind within as the fountain of activity. It has been said the law demanded adherence to the letter with little emphasis upon the spirit. While this may be subject to challenge, one cannot ignore the fact that in the kingdom, through its laws, there is a beautiful blending of the spirit and letter resulting in Christlikeness.

Jesus detected the proper attitude when he told the scribe, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk. 12:34). Having asked Jesus, "Which is the first commandment of all?" he seemingly weighs the answer. "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, There is none other commandment greater than these" (v. 29-32). Accepting this truth and responding out of a sound mind, the scribe says, "well said." This scribe is represented by an attitude of submissiveness to truth which would make him a part of the kingdom of God.

The greatest factor in the action of those obeying or rejecting the gospel is attitude. Summing up the response on Pentecost, Acts 2:41 says, Then they that gladly received the word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The attitude factor comes into play in the expression, "they that gladly received his word," without this there would have been no obedience to the "repent and be baptized everyone of you." Felix obviously did not have this kind of attitude and he stands to represent rejection of the same gospel. His disposition upon hearing the preaching of Paul was, "Go thy way for this time" (Acts 24:25).

The value we place on having the proper attitude is only as great as our appreciation of the fact that attitudes govern actions. Actions cannot be in harmony with God's will unless we maintain the right attitude. Our acceptance or rejection of the truth depends upon our attitude toward that truth. "And with all deceiva-

bleness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thess. 1:10). In arguing in favor of the overpowering influence of truth and love for it, Paul treats us to the importance of attitude toward the truth. Where love for truth is prevalent unrighteousness is less likely to deceive and cause us to perish. Fact is, if that love is what *it* ought to be, if that attitude toward truth is what it must be, we shall not be deceived, simply because we hold to it tenaciously.

The joy of the kingdom cannot be experienced without the right attitude. All too often we become party to or see evidenced dispositions clearly out of harmony with the gospel. What is responsible? It may be time for an attitude check. What causes the indifference often prevalent within most congregations? When we hear constant murmuring and griping that always seems to center in or around the same ones, what is responsible? To some, nothing seems to be right, dissatisfaction with classes, teachers, preacher, about everything. A surprising number of these things will smooth out and at least be tolerable if we will work on our attitude. It is the difference in attitude that explains the boredom of some and the enthusiasm of others within the kingdom. When we develop the proper attitude toward the profession of commitment to Christ, remembering that we are "Christ—ones" and are saved by the grace of God, then and only then will we thrill in serving our God.

What is the proper attitude? Everything, admittedly, depends on it. If it is not right toward God and his work, nothing else matters. In the first place, nothing must be allowed to take precedence over desire to know and practice the truth. Truth equates the word of God. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). One must place truth before everything and everyone. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Mt. 10:37). One must view scripture as it really is, as the last word in all matters of faith. His word to me is the answer to my problems, the guide to my life. It is real and practical. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:3). Only where this attitude is prevalent can one be right with God, maintain a relation of confidence in his precious promises and be truly faithful as a Christian. Without the proper attitude all else is futile.

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GAMBLING (Part I)

As more and more states have adopted a state lottery there has been an increase in the interest in gambling. That is true for both sides of the question. In this article we shall attempt to answer such questions as: (1) What constitutes gambling? (2) Is it a sin? (3) Can it be proved to be a sin even though it is not mentioned in the Bible? (4) How can one say that betting two dollars on a race horse or buying a lottery ticket is a sin and also say that losing a thousand dollars in the stock market is not? (5) Is gambling justified in that it is legal and brings in revenue for the state?

The problem of gambling is widespread. The Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan made an extensive survey that revealed that in 1974 two out of three Americans made a bet and that more than 30 billion dollars was being gambled away every year in the United States. Paul Fino, a US congressman from New York estimated that 57% of American adults gamble. I'm told that the total taken in by gambling is greater than the combined profits of US Steel, General Motors and General Electric and more than 100 of the largest manufacturing companies. A 1983 issue of **US News and World Report** stated that a survey of 100,000 gamblers revealed that the total bets (most of which were illegal) totaled more than 1/3 of the Gross National Product — more than a trillion dollars annually. That comes to about \$4,500 for every person. The 30 billion mentioned earlier would just be legalized gambling. A 1982 Gallop Poll revealed that 60% of all adults gamble and 80% endorse legal gambling.

It is now legalized and state governments are involved. Twenty-six states now have a state lottery. Others will in time. As the problem increases so does our responsibility to deal with it (cf. 1 Thess. 5:22; 1 Pet. 4:1-ff; Rom. 12:1-ff; 2 Cor. 6:14-ff).

It is not a new problem by any means. The Greeks in Homer's time had knucklebones from sheep and goats that were marked to serve as dice. A gambling board was discovered in Crete that dates back to 1800-1900 B.C. In Babylon headless arrows were used for making wagers. Children in Rome played "heads or tails" with coins. Tertullian said, "If you say that you are a Christian when you are a dice player, you say what you are not, because you are a partner with the world."

Without a doubt there are and will be problems among brethren. As the states install their lotteries

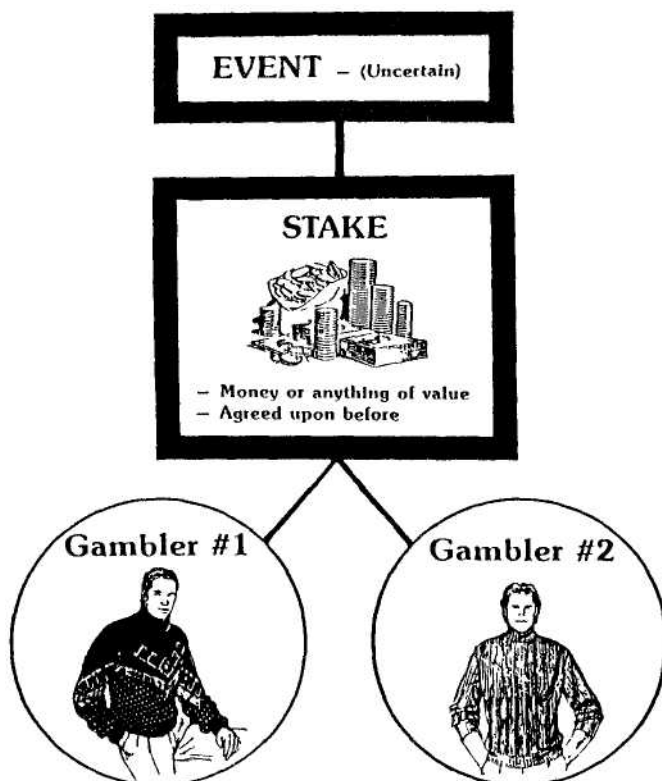
and possibly some day a national lottery, some Christians will be tempted to participate. Others will not only be tempted, but will yield and buy the tickets as well as engage in other forms of gambling. Already the first million dollar winner in the Florida State lottery was a member of the church. There are others who may not buy a lottery ticket but would gamble in some small way like flipping for a coke or pitching pennies.

We will have (and already have) some Christians who will be asking what is wrong with gambling. Some will be sincere, for they know it is wrong, but they don't know why. Others will be merely seeking to justify what they want to do.

What Is Gambling?

1. Definitions: Webster says gambling is "to play a game for money or property — to bet on the uncertain outcome." The **World Book Dictionary** (1981) says, "To play games of chance for money or other valuable stakes — to gamble at cards; to gamble on the result of a race." The **World Book Encyclopedia** (1979) states: "Gambling is betting on the outcome of a future event. Gamblers usually bet money or something else of value as a stake on the outcome they predict. When the outcome is settled, the winner collects the loser's stakes."

2. Elements: The above definitions indicate that there are three basic elements in gambling. There is (a) **the uncertain event** that is arbitrarily determined, and (b) **the stake** (wager or bet) that is deliberately chanced, and (c) **a winner and loser** (gambler #1 and #2). When these three elements exist you have gambling. If it doesn't fit this model, it is not gambling.



3. It is not: (a) **A risk.** The word "gamble" in one sense means "risk" and the dictionaries so define it. However, a mere risk is not gambling in the sense of the definitions given earlier. Many have tried to justify gambling on the basis that it is merely a risk, and after all, we all take risks every day like crossing the street. However, the risks involved in the crossing the street are not arbitrarily and deliberately determined as in the case of placing a wager on the outcome of some uncertain event. If you make it across the street you do not stand to gain at the loss of another. There has been no stake or wager placed. If you were to wager \$5.00 that you could cross the street without getting hit, you now have gambling. It fits the model given above.

Some have tried to compare gambling to farming and the risks involved there. Yet, the farmer is not seeking to gain at the loss of another. If he has a good year, all stand to benefit by that. If he doesn't, all stand to lose.

Buying and selling stock does not fit the model of gambling. When you buy stock you have bought something of value. It may increase or decrease in value. If that business thrives then all will benefit. You do not have the three essential elements of gambling. There is no stake, nor a winner and loser built in. However, one could gamble with reference to the stock market as he could on a ball game or horse race. If one bet \$50.00 that the stock in a certain company will go up tomorrow, he is now gambling. The three elements are there: (a) The uncertain event (the stock going up or down), (b) the stake (\$50.00) and (c) a winner and a loser.

Starting a business or making any kind of investment may involve some risks, but like all the things mentioned above, they are not gambling.

(b) **Insurance.** Believe it or not, a few have thought that there is no difference in gambling and buying insurance. When you buy insurance you are buying financial protection. The buyer and the company both gain by the purchase of the policy. The risk that is involved is not created by the buying of the insurance. Again, it does not fit the definition and model of gambling.

(c) **Prizes.** When one registers to win a prize at a store's grand opening or receives a prize that is given away for advertisement, he is not gambling. There is no stake or wager. There is no risk that is created. The prize is a gift.

4. Gambling is not determined by size or degree. Gambling is a matter of **kind** and not **degree**. It doesn't matter if it is \$50.00 or 50 c. If the three elements are there, it is gambling. So, matching pennies, pitching pennies and flipping for a coke or coffee is just as much gambling as buying a lottery ticket or placing \$2.00 on a horse at the Kentucky Derby. It is interesting that Gamblers Anonymous urges its members not to flip for who is going to buy the coffee.

Different Forms

Gambling comes in many different forms. There are the card games such as poker. (Don't confuse a mere card game with gambling). There is the lottery, horse races, dog races, slot machines, raffle tickets, bingo, pitching

pennies, flipping for a coke or coffee, roulette, dice games. The list goes on and on because gambling takes place anytime there is a wager made on an uncertain event. That uncertain event could be anything like a ball game, an election or shooting the ducks at the fair. If it fits the model given above, it is gambling!

When gambling is properly defined many of the arguments made to defend it have already been answered. In the next article we will see why gambling is a sin.

DIVINE COMMUNIQUES

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RAPTURE AND REVELATION OF CHRIST

THE DIVINE MESSAGE: "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:16-17).

Another effort in a long line of date-setting attempts has failed. September 12, 1988, was the day of speculation for Margaret Riedel (author of **The Blessed Hope and the Glorious Appearing**) and Edgar Whisenant (author of **88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988**). This time the prediction was based on Matthew 24:32-34 which Riedel and Whisenant interpreted as saying that Christ would return to receive all Christians in the rapture within a generation of the founding of the modern nation of Israel. "Israel" was founded in 1948. The speculators figure a generation is 40 years. They decided that the Rapture would take place during the Jewish New Year at the last trumpet blast signaling the end of Rosh Hashana.

Two problems are at issue: a) the fact of "rapture" as defined by premillennialists; and b) the determination by human calculation of the date of Christ's coming.

How Premillennialists Define the Terms

Rapture: The sudden and silent coming of Christ in the air to catch away from the earth the resurrected bodies of those who have died in the faith and with them the living saints.

Revelation of Christ: Christ's second coming to the earth in flaming fire to execute judgment and to establish His glorious reign upon the earth for a literal thousand years.

Tribulation: According to dispensational premillennialists, there is a seven year period between the rap-

ture and the revelation called the "Great Tribulation."

Two Resurrections: According to dispensational premillennialists, there are two resurrections. The first has two parts. The first **part** of the first resurrection will occur at the time of the rapture in order to bring forth the righteous dead. The second **part** of the first resurrection will occur at the time of the revelation of Christ to bring forth the "tribulation saints" who died during the seven years of trouble. The second (actually third) is designed to bring forth the wicked dead for judgment. It follows the millennium, a thousand years after the first resurrection.

When Will the Rapture Occur?

Post-Tribulation Rapture Theory: The position that Christians will have to endure the tribulation after they are raptured. This theory says that the rapture and the revelation of Christ take place at the same time ... there is no seven year interval.

Mid-Tribulation Rapture Theory: The position that the first part of the tribulation results from man's afflicting the saints and that the latter part of the tribulation results from God's pouring out His wrath upon the evil doers. The saints will have to endure man's evil but not the outpouring of the wrath of God; therefore, mid-way through the tribulation the rapture will take place before God executes his wrath.

Pre-Tribulation Rapture Theory: The position that the saints will be taken away before any part of the tribulation begins. This is the dispensational view and the most popular position. Major proof-texts for this position are Genesis 5:21-24; John 14:1-3; 1 Thes. 3:11-13; and 1 Thes. 4:13-17.

Some Terms Used to Refer to the Second Coming of Christ

Rapture: This word does not appear in the New Testament.

Coming: (Gr. parousia). Premillennialists say that this is the Bible word for the "rapture." The position also holds that the coming is secret and invisible. Therefore, it will not be an appearance, or revelation. Christ will come only part way to the earth (in the air) at this time and so will not be seen by unbelievers at all.

Parousia is used by Paul fourteen times, several of which refer to the second coming of Christ (cf. 1 Thes. 4:15; 2 Thes. 2:1; 1 Thes. 3:13).

Revelation: (Gr. apocalypse). Dispensational premillennialist say that this word refers to Christ's second coming at the end of the tribulation to set up His earthly kingdom in Jerusalem. This word is used by Paul thirteen times. Again several of these refer to the second coming of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 1:7; 2 Thes. 1:7-9).

Appearing: (Gr. epiphany). Premillennialists say that this word is synonymous with the word "revelation" (apocalypse) when used to refer to the second coming of Christ in the New Testament (1 Tim. 6:14; Titus 2:13).

The premillennial problem: the words are not used in the New Testament as they claim. ALL THREE GREEK WORDS REFER TO THE SAME TIME PERIOD WHEN SPEAKING OF THE EVENTS WE ARE DISCUSSING. The distinction between the "coming" and the "appearing" of Christ is artificial.

Notice 1 **Thes. 3:13**: To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coining of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." The "coming" (**parousia**, their word for "rapture") is "with all the saints." If "the saints" includes the church (which all premillennialists accept) and the "revelation" or "appearing" is when Christ returns to earth "with the saints," then the word "coming" and the "appearing" are used synonymously. According to their view, the coming is to "receive the saints" and the "appearing" or "revelation" is coining back "with the saints."

Look at 2 **Thes. 2:8**: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his **coming**." All premillennialists believe that Paul is talking about the return of Christ to earth to take care of Anti-Christ. The word, however, is "coming" (**parousia**).

In several other passages, Christians do not receive **until** the "appearing" or "revelation" of Christ what millennialists claim for the "rapture" (cf. Matt. 25:31; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:13; 5:4; 2 Thes. 1:7-9; 1 Tim. 6:14). There is no secret rapture when Christ will come to deliver His troubled saints ... and there will be **none** who escapes His "coming" (2 Thes. 1:7-9).

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WHEN YOU MARRY ONE WHO IS NOT A CHRISTIAN

Recently, a lady asked me for some advice for a friend. It was asked out of deep concern for the plight of another Christian. The friend had married a man who was not a Christian. He had a bitter disposition, verbally abused her and the children, and unfortunately, the only part of the Bible she had been able to teach him was Ephesians 5:22. That's the verse that says wives are to submit to their husbands. He took advantage of the situation and often required her to do meaningless tasks just to prove she was in subjection. This lady had problems.

I wish I could tell you that I had all the answers she needed and was able to give some very wise advice which brought the problem to an easy and complete solution. But I did not.

Some Warnings

I realize we are not living under the Law of Moses, but it was written for our learning (Rom. 15:4). Under the Law God strictly forbade his people intermarrying with the heathens (Deut. 7:3, 4). Solomon married heathen wives and they turned his heart away from God to serve idols. God punished Solomon for marrying those foreign women (1 Kgs. 11:1-13). Similar problems have been encountered by Christians who married those who were not. If they lose the faith it will be impossible for them to please God (Heb. 11:6).

Under the most favorable conditions the Christian life can be difficult. Then why embrace someone who will make it harder for you to be faithful to the one who died to save you and bring you eternal happiness? The problem is, that while courting, we often indicate that we love the fiancé more than the Lord. Too many of God's people have been led away by sectarian companions or companions who claimed nothing religiously. What a sad picture when you seriously consider the value of a soul (Mt. 16:26). Please consider some Bible truths that may relate to such a marriage:

- 1) "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3).
- 2) "A house divided against itself shall not stand" (Mt. 12:25).
- 3) "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

What May Happen

Please consider the following chart as we briefly discuss each point.



A Non-Christian Wife

1. May make It difficult for you to practice hospitality.
2. May nag and weaken your convictions.
3. May not help you with the children.
4. May Insist the children go with her.
5. May ridicule you.
6. May neglect positive teaching of the children.
7. May allow the children to do things you would not approve.
8. May set a bad example.
9. May threaten to leave.
10. May withhold sexual privileges.

1. MAY MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO PRACTICE HOSPITALITY. Though hospitality is not limited to having people over for a meal, that has always been one of the best ways to practice it. Without her cooperation your ability along this line will be greatly limited.

2. MAY NAG AND WEAKEN YOUR CONVICTIONS. This happened to Samson (Judg. 16:16). You may not notice it as it occurs over the years, but as the old saying goes, "Drops of water wear away the stone." You may become discouraged and compromise your beliefs.

3. MAY NOT HELP YOU WITH THE CHILDREN. If you, as a father, are trying to "bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," you may not have her cooperation in getting them ready for Bible school.

4. MAY INSIST THE CHILDREN GO WITH HER. Then what will you do?

5. MAY RIDICULE YOU. A person can only take so much of that. In your defense, you may say some things that will be used against you from that point on.

6. MAY NEGLECT POSITIVE TEACHING OF THE CHILDREN. Not being a Christian, she may not see the need to instill right values. I have known wives who double-crossed their husbands and worked against his values behind his back.

7. MAY ALLOW THE CHILDREN TO DO THINGS YOU WOULD NOT APPROVE. Generally, a mother is with the children more hours than the father. What if she allows this? You can't divorce her for it. That is not scriptural grounds (Mt. 19:9).

8. MAY SET A BAD EXAMPLE. How will you teach your children that their mother is wrong without friction and hostility developing?

9. MAY THREATEN TO LEAVE. If she leaves the children with you, you will have increased responsibilities that may be extremely difficult to handle. If she takes the children you may have difficulty getting to spend time with them and almost no opportunity to turn them in righteousness. In either case, if she leaves,

that of itself will not be just cause to divorce and remarry.
10. MAY WITHHOLD SEXUAL PRIVILEGES. If you are a normal male this can put you in an extremely dangerous and frustrating situation.

Now consider the situation in reverse.



A Non-Christian Husband

1. May harass you for attending worship and putting God first.
2. May not cooperate in providing transportation to services.
3. May not help with the children.
4. May not allow you to contribute.
5. May say hurtful things to you about the people at church.
6. May use profane language/pornography/alcohol/drugs before you and the children.
7. May threaten to leave you.
8. May physically abuse you.
9. May force you to do demeaning things just to prove you are in subjection.
10. May make it difficult for you to practice hospitality.

1. MAY HARASS YOU FOR ATTENDING WORSHIP AND PUTTING GOD FIRST. This can make attendance dreaded, difficult, and a drudgery. Worship can become meaningless as you become more and more discouraged.

2. MAY NOT COOPERATE IN PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION TO SERVICES. This can cause embarrassment as we hate to be dependent on others and for them to know our plight. You may be forced to miss.

3. MAY NOT HELP YOU WITH THE CHILDREN. You may become frantic and impatient with the little ones. You may lose your temper and say things that will be thrown up to you continually.

4. MAY NOT ALLOW YOU TO CONTRIBUTE. The Lord wants you to give as prospered and you should do all within your power to obey. You may have to put yourself on a tight budget, cut corners, etc.

5. MAY SAY HURTFUL THINGS TO YOU ABOUT THE PEOPLE AT CHURCH. A real discouragement. There may be some in the congregation who are not what they ought to be and you may be put in the predicament of trying to defend the indefensible to your husband.

6. MAY USE PROFANE LANGUAGE, PORNOGRAPHY, ALCOHOL, AND DRUGS BEFORE YOU AND THE CHILDREN. How can you stop it?

7. MAY THREATEN TO LEAVE YOU, forcing you to make a choice and then blaming you for the outcome.

8. MAY PHYSICALLY ABUSE YOU. There is no easy way to deal with this.

9. MAY FORCE YOU TO DO DEMEANING THINGS JUST TO PROVE YOU ARE IN SUBJECTION. This may cause you to lose respect for yourself.

10. MAY MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO PRACTICE

natural for you to want to spend time with Christian friends and have them over or go out with them. But if he is against it, this will create misery for you.

I have painted the picture bleak because there are some real cases as described herein. My prayer for you is that none of these will happen. I would not wish them on my worst enemy. It is hard to believe such could ever happen when you are courting and in love. But if the prospective mate has not had the upbringing and background that the Christian has (and everybody deserves), then these are possible if not probable.

I rejoice for you if none of these happened, though you may have married a non-Christian. The non-Christian may be helpful to you in many ways and even attend the services with you, yet still be a hindrance to your faithfulness because refusal to obey the gospel is a discouragement. And that influence of refusal to obey often shows up in the children later. A lot of trouble, sorrow, and heartache can be avoided if Christians would marry Christians.

Conclusion

So where is a Christian young man or young lady going to find a potential mate who has wholesome values and respect for the word of God and will help you go to heaven? I will tell you where you will NOT find them. You won't find them at wild parties, horse races, bars or nightclubs. The faithful Christian will, in prayer and patience, stay away from places that could cause you to get hooked up with somebody that may bring you an eternity of misery. It makes sense to put yourself in an environment where Christians are. Visiting gospel meetings and other gatherings can do no harm and can certainly help.

Your choice of a mate can be so critical. Most don't realize it till too late. Always keep yourself faithful, and remember that when Mr. Right, or Miss Right, come along they will be looking for the same thing—a faithful Christian.

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PROCRASTINATION ON THE PLAINS

One of the oldest ploys among adversaries is to get the other party to cease effective progress or opposition.

Sanballat tried to persuade Nehemiah to procrastinate in rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, while they talked in the "plain of Ono" (Neh. 6:1-4). Sanballat considered this tactic so effective that he tried it not just once, but four times. Nehemiah was not deceived, neither did he yield to this proposed exercise in futility on the plain of Ono.

I'm all for dialogue with anyone who is sincerely interested in promoting brotherhood and unity among God's people. But such an effort must be circumscribed by "the wisdom that is from above," which "is first pure, then peaceable" (Jas. 3:17).

Also, it must be understood that those on the side of truth cannot agree to a "cease fire" in preaching the word (2 Tim. 4:1-4), while such dialogue takes place. Then, whether the effort turns into progress, or merely futile procrastination on the plains, nothing shall have been lost.

When Hezekiah invited all Israel, including the northern tribes headquartered in Samaria to the passover feast, there were no concessions to error. On the contrary, Hezekiah let them know they were welcome, but reminded them that they were the ones responsible for the division in Israel (2 Chron. 30:7-9). We may ignore the facts of history, but we can't erase them.

While the digressive "Christian Church" continues to fellowship the false religions of the world, we can have no fellowship with them, for they continue to uphold the works of darkness (1 Jno. 1:7; Eph. 5:11).

Likewise, as long as liberal brethren refuse to give up their "golden calves," to wit, their sponsoring church projects, human institutions and fellowship halls ministry, there can be no real progress made in dialogue or negotiations. There needs to be some overture of good faith on the part of those who have "trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers" before we can agree to what may be nothing more than procrastination on the plains.

If we allow ourselves to become preoccupied and obsessed with "unity in diversity" and similar ecumenical exercises in procrastination, we will soon have a generation wholly ignorant of what constitutes apostolic doctrine and practice (Phil. 4:9). That generation will not care what name they wear, what spiritual sacrifices they offer, or what God or gods they worship.

There are also individuals affiliated with liberal and digressive churches who have procrastinated on the plain too long. At the first, they vowed not to have fellowship with unscriptural practices, and claimed "not to go along" with the liberal tendencies and practices of the congregations where they worship.


But, after several years of procrastination, and becoming acclimated to the very things which they professed not to fellowship, they are now in no position to object to anything. And some "have even taken of the accursed thing" which should have been mortified along with other works of the flesh (Josh. 7:11).

We cannot afford to take off even one piece of the "whole armour of God," nor dare we make the fatal mistake of sheathing "the sword of the Spirit" while we procrastinate on the plain of Ono, "no not for an hour" (Gal. 2:5).

**ABOUT
MARRIAGE
AND DIVORCE**

A. C. Grider

Rt. 4, 1671 Bill Street
Shepherdsville, Kentucky 40165



Let me have a word with you about marriage and divorce. First, let us see what the BIBLE says on the subject. In Matt. 19:4-6 we find that, 1. God made them male and female. (That rules our homosexuality and lesbianism, those things are sin!). 2. The man shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife. 3. The twain shall be one flesh. 4. God joins them together. And then God said, 5. What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. You can read the same thing almost word for word in Mark 10:6-9.

Then God tells us in Matt. 19:9 that, "**Whoever shall put away his wife except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her that is put away doth commit adultery.** Thus the Lord has spoken on the subject and everybody can UNDERSTAND what he has said! Everybody can do what the Lord said do, and can refrain from doing what the Lord said for him not to do. Thus, everybody can avoid adultery! But not everybody avoids adultery. Why?

Because there are false teachers among us. Some say the people in general are not amenable to the law of Christ. This is about as "far-fetched" as one can get! Who, exactly does the law of Christ apply to? Does it just apply to members of the church of Christ? I say YES if it applies only to those who obey him. That would mean that only one in several thousand of the people are amenable to the law of Christ. Christ said WHOSO-

EVER puts away his wife except it be for fornication and marrieth another committeth adultery. Whereas our brethren say ONLY ONE IN EVERY SEVERAL THOUSAND who puts away his wife saving for the cause of fornication committeth adultery! Furthermore, exactly what portion of the law of Christ are the people not amenable to? Are they amenable to ANY of His law? If not, how would we preach it to him? How would he obey it? What good would it do him if he did obey it? Jesus said preach the gospel to EVERY CREATURE! Would we tell the people that though the Bible said whosoever shall put away his wife except for fornication committeth adultery, but that they could just DISREGARD THAT UNTIL THEY OBEYED THE GOSPEL?

Would not such a doctrine as I have expressed actually encourage people to stay out of the church and refrain from obeying the gospel until they were tired of playing around with women, even other men's wives! When we **repent** we make up our minds to QUIT doing things that are wrong in our lives. When we are forgiven we are forgiven only for the things that are wrong in our lives. If it isn't a sin to be married a dozen times, and if it isn't a sin to break up other men's homes, then those things are not forgiven! I can't believe that ANYBODY **really** believes that people in general are not amenable to the law of Christ.

Then there are those who say that even though Christ said whosoever marrieth one put away without fornication committeth adultery, such is not necessarily so, **provided** she didn't want the divorce and **provided** she waits around until her former companion commits fornication. Then she is free to marry again despite what Christ said.

Then there are some free-wheelers who say regardless of what Christ says when a marriage partner commits fornication the bond is broken and BOTH can marry again without peril to their souls.

We have, then, on the one hand those who say NOBODY is amenable to the law of Christ to start with, and on the other hand we have those who say that if one commits adultery both are free to marry again. In that case NOBODY is bound by what the Lord has said. So, if you have been married a thousand times, forget it, you were not amenable to Christ's law. And if either you or your partner has committed fornication, forget it, the bond is broken and you are both free to marry again. You can thus have it anyway you want it. But you had BETTER have it like the Lord gave it to you. Read again Matt. 19: 3-9 and Mark 10:5-9. Better be safe rather than sorry at the judgment.

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JAN. 30 - FEB. 1, 1989

Theme: Minor Prophets for Every Man

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
9:00 a.m. Making Sense of the Minor Prophets		Interpreters of Israelite History Phil Roberts	Spokemen for God Robert Harkrider	Prophetic Images Melvin Curry
10:00 Key Doctrine of the Minor Prophets		The God of the Nations John Humphries	Repentance Dick Blackford	The Messiah John Clark
11:00 Preaching Three Individual Books		Haggai Bob Bolton	Habbakkuk Bob Owen	Malachi Gary Henry
12:00 Walking with the Prophets: Personal Profiles		Amos Brent Hunter	Hosea John Kilgore	Micah Colly Caldwell
		EVENINGS		
Major Messages from the Minor Prophets	Preachers of the Covenants Ferrell Jenkins	Formalism and False Religion Foy Vinson	Social sins and Personal Immorality Jim Ward	God's Righteous Remnant Robert Jackson

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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EFRAIN PEREZ TO SPAIN

EFRAIN F. PEREZ, 1317 Valparaiso, Chile, South America — We have decided to spend the next five years preaching in Spain. For several years Spanish speaking brethren have shown much interest in Spain. Phillip Morgan of Phoenix, AZ has just returned from Spain where he found a small group meeting in Badalona, near Barcelona City. They begged him to stay. Phil has written to a few preachers about the great opportunity. We will have to raise support for this work and plan to come to the States in December to spend 7 or 8 weeks reporting on the work in Chile and seeking support for the work in

Spain. I will be joined in Kentucky and Ohio by Phillip Morgan and by him and Wayne Partain in visiting congregations in Arizona, Texas and California. Phillip Morgan's phone number is: (602) 252-7916. Wayne Partain's number is: (512) 333-0595.

There are now 16 congregations in Chile and 20 gospel preachers, of which 8 are working full time. I will finish preacher training programs in Limache, Pudeto and Quilpue in December. These men are strong and sound in doctrine.

FERNANDO VENEGAS, Casilla #122 C.C., 5500 Mendoza, Argentina, South America — I am happy to report two more baptized in our work here.

NEY RIEBER, 6413 Zion Church Rd., Sanford, NC 27330 — At Central Prison in Raleigh, NC, Robert A. Lillie was recently baptized. This resulted from a Bible correspondence course. On September 18, 10 inmates were baptized at the Polk Youth Center in Raleigh, and on Oct 16, 12 more inmates were baptized at the same place. At Polk I had 42 inmates at my last Thursday night study. At Blanch, I study with about 50 inmates each trip. I am losing \$500 a month support the first of the year and need to hear from any who can help.

DAVID R. TRIGG, P.O. Box 165, McMinnville, TN 37110 — The West End Ave. church here would be happy to give away a set of eight light fixtures to a congregation willing to pay the shipping charges. These fixtures are 300 Watt, 3-Ring reflector, hanging fixtures in good condition with bulbs. Contact me at the above address, or phone (615) 686-2919.

ROGER WILLIAMS recently began work as evangelist with the Greenwood Rd. church in Ft. Smith, AR, a city of 72,000. There is much potential for growth with honest effort. The church is unable to supply all his support. At present he lacks \$200 a month. He may be contacted at 4131 Kinkead Rd., Ft. Smith, AR 72903. Phone (501) 783-5004. A list of references is available.

BRUCE CRAWLEY, 2053 Heather Way, Lexington, KY 40503, Phone (606) 277-4380, **BRYAN CRAWLEY**, 2929 Brigadoon Parkway, Lexington, KY 40503, Phone (606) 272-2275 — Our father, Robert Crawley, was a gospel preacher for 41 years. In spite of the urgings of many who knew him, however, he did very little writing — no books or commentaries and very few articles. Most of the public fruit of his study was born in the pulpit. Our goal is to publish some of his sermons in book form. In order to do this we will be relying on tape recordings of his actual sermons and class lectures. Thanks to brethren and friends, we have assembled about 200 sermons on tape. But before we begin choosing which lessons to include for publication we want to be sure we have built as large a library of tapes as possible. We know that many of his gospel meetings were recorded, either by churches or by individuals attending those meetings. We know that some class lectures were recorded. Because of the wide geographical scope of his work, though, we don't know who might have such tapes. Could you help us in locating any recordings of Bob Crawley's lessons?

TOMMY L. McCLURE, 3311 Longview Rd., Antioch, CA 94509 — Thanks to those who sent material, books and suggestions to help in preparation for the debate with Jack W. Langford. I speak also for Harry L. Lewis who is to represent us in the discussion. We have now secured every book written by James W. Dale whom Langford hails as one of the greatest scholars of all time, and his evident source material. What seemed an impossible task is now a reality.

J. DAVID POWLAS, 3430 Kay St., #D-3, Columbia, SC 29210 — Jamie Sloan of Houston, TX was just with the Lower Richland congregation in a gospel meeting in which he did outstanding work in preaching the word of God in a bold and plain way. Several came from the local institutional churches as well as non-members from the community. We recommend brother Sloan to any church wishing to be edified and to reach out to the lost. If you have friends or relatives here whom you wish us to contact, please call me at (803) 772-4371.

STEFANO CORAZZA, Via Tagliamento 92, 33100 Udine, Italy — The past two months we have witnessed the baptisms of three: a young man 36 years old, a woman 60 years old and her son who is 31. We are growing not only in numbers but spiritually as well.

DAVID McCLISTER, 2805 Russell St., Portage, IN 46368, Phone (219) 762-7110 — I have some commentary sets I wish to sell and also an IBM computer with Epson Printer.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SPRUCE PINE, NORTH CAROLINA — The church here is looking for a full time preacher. We have about 30 members with Sunday morning attendance of 40-50. We have a new building, well located. Partial support is available. We are located in the beautiful vacation land of western North Carolina. If interested please call: (704) 688-3932, or write: Church of Christ, Rt. 3, Box 128E, Bakersville, NC 28705.

ROCKWOOD, TENNESSEE — The Highway 70 E church is in need of a preacher. It would be necessary to bring support with whomever might come. Anyone interested may contact: Conley Daugherty, 507 W. Rockwood St., Rockwood, TN 37854 or call (615) 354-1854.

IN MEMORIAM: L. B. CLAYTON
(1902-1988)

Brethren throughout the nation will be saddened by hearing of the passing of my father, L. B. Clayton. He died on Oct. 9th, his 86th birthday, in Tucson, Arizona, surrounded by loving family and brethren. He is survived by two sons, his second wife, Pearle (Mahan) Clayton of 5313 E. Lester PL, Tucson AZ 85710, nine grandchildren, and seventeen great-grandchildren.

Dad was born near Terrell, Texas, to Elam B. and Jennie J. Clayton. The family moved to a farm near Dill City, Okla., arriving there on the day of Oklahoma Statehood, in 1907. Dad's father served as an elder of the Dill City church in its infancy.

Growing up in that area, and graduating from high school, Dad used to joke people by saying he was the Valedictorian of his class (he was the only graduate that year!) He attended Chillicothe Business College in Missouri, and began working in a Bank in Wewoka, Okla., after leaving school. He was married to Era A. Shifflett of that city, and both were baptized into Christ at about the same time. Immediately, my parents employed themselves in the work of the Lord, Dad leading singing, and Mother teaching. They worked side by side for over forty years, until Mother died in Tucson in 1969.

Dad also regularly led singing in churches in Seminole, Shawnee, Oklahoma City, and Tucson, as well as in many Gospel meetings, for a period of over fifty years. He worked in this capacity with nearly a hundred Gospel preachers. He also served as a teacher, a deacon, and as an elder in two different congregations. He began his service as an elder in the 10th and Francis Sts. church in Oklahoma City, and helped to preserve the work there against the encroachments of institutionalism. He also served on the board of Central Christian College (now Oklahoma Christian College), until his views on church polity made him incompatible with other members of the board. He has written a memoir of his experiences and impressions of the times in which he lived, which I hope to publish in the near future.

Dad is well remembered for his song-leading ability, his sound teaching, his sober leadership, and his loyalty to the truth. He was a stabilizing and strengthening force in every congregation he served. He was an honored teacher, also, to myself, and my brother, Bob F. Clayton of Phoenix. One of his favorite songs is his fitting epitaph:

My hope is built on nothing less Than
Jesus blood and righteousness. I dare
not trust the sweetest frame, But
wholly lean on Jesus' name. On
Christ the solid rock, I stand; All
other ground is sinking sand!

Joe Neil Clayton
504 Elm
Dumas, Texas 79029

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS'	345
RESTORATIONS	68
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	