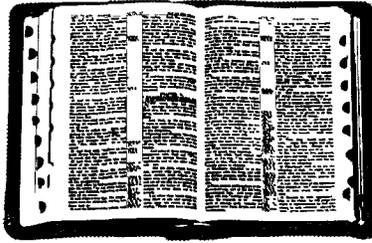


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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

H. E. Phillips

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Lutz, FL 33549



THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

It is true of the church, collectively or severally, that Christ loved it enough to sacrifice himself on the cross that each one might be made pure and holy, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. He died to make people holy by redeeming them from all iniquity. We are separated and purified unto God for a peculiar people, zealous of good works (Titus 2: 14).

The blood that was shed on the cross was the power that cleansed us from sin. We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (Eph. 1: 7). The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1: 7; Heb. 1: 3; 9: 14). We are delivered from the power of darkness, and have been translated into the kingdom of Christ: "in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1: 13, 14). The death of Christ is the power to obtain forgiveness of sins, thus be made pure and clean.

Preaching The Kingdom of God

Philip preached "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, " in the city of Samaria, and those who heard "were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8: 12). That the kingdom of Christ is the same as the church is shown in Colossians 1: 13, 14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. " When Christ ascended into heaven to be seated at the right hand of his Father, he received his kingdom and began to rule. He was seated upon HIS throne with HIS scepter of HIS kingdom (Heb. 1: 8).

Jesus said he would build HIS church upon the foundation that he was the Christ the Son of God, and he would give unto Peter the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16: 18). The church he would build was his kingdom. Evil and wicked people would have no inheritance "in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. 5: 5). "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12: 28). The "general assembly" is the kingdom which cannot be moved. The apostle John said: "I John, your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom" (Rev. 1: 9). John was in the kingdom, Christians are translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, and Christ is sitting on his throne reigning in his kingdom right now. This reign began on Pentecost following his resurrection and will continue until he comes again to receive his disciples unto himself. Then he will end his reign and turn the kingdom back to the Father (1 Cor. 15: 26).

The Kingdom Is Used In Two Senses

The word "kingdom" is used to designate baptized believers who have been added to the church Jesus established. It is used interchangeably with the word "church. " Philip preached in the city of Samaria the things concerning the kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 8: 12). Baptized believers are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1: 13).

But Luke said: "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14: 23). Here the kingdom means the eternal state of baptized believers who continue faithful to the end; it refers to heaven. Peter also referred to the heavenly reward when he said: "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1: 11).

The Reign of Christ

Christ began his reign in his kingdom when he arose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God (Acts 2: 34, 35). He will reign until the last enemy is destroyed, and that enemy is death which is destroyed in

the resurrection (1 Cor. 15: 28). After the resurrection Christ will deliver the kingdom back to the Father, and will be subject to the Father. If Christians reign with Christ, they must reign when he reigns, or between their addition to the kingdom and Christ's second coming. He will not reign on his throne after the judgment (1 Cor. 15: 28). They reign with Christ, so they must reign when he reigns.

The church is described as a chosen generation, a royal or kingly priesthood, an holy nation, a chosen generation (Rev. 1: 6; 1 Pet. 2: 9). We reign now by living through righteousness (Rom. 5: 17). We reign with the apostles by obeying their doctrine (Acts 2: 42; 1 Cor. 4: 8). We reign by enduring (2 Tim. 2: 12). We reign by over-coming (Rev. 3: 21). Christ is on his throne of glory now (Luke 24: 26), and his apostles are sitting upon twelve thrones ruling the twelve tribes of Israel. It is the throne of glory and the throne of authority now. In Matthew 19: 28 Jesus said those who followed him would be given thrones, and Luke 22: 28 those who continued with him would be appointed a kingdom in the regeneration. This is the dispensation of regeneration — born again. This reign of Christ began when he entered into his glory (Luke 24: 26) until he comes in his glory (Matt. 25: 31). As Christians reign with him as he sits upon the throne of his glory, so shall they share his glory, and that is now.

Acts 3: 19-21 says that heaven, (where Christ is seated at the right hand of God-Acts 2: 32-33) must receive (retain) Christ UNTIL the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began. Christ will stay on his throne at the right hand of God until the end of the world, the last day when all that are in the graves are raised, and the day of judgment comes (John 11: 24; Acts 17: 30, 31).

The church is the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Eph. 1: 22-23). "Ye are complete in him" (Col. 2: 10). If we are complete in Christ, and the church is the fullness of Christ, then to be complete in Christ is to be in the church, his kingdom.

Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

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SMOOTHER THAN BUTTER AND SOFTER THAN OIL

It is a remarkable trait of the human family that we often prefer a lie to the truth. The lie becomes more palatable if it is expressed in pleasant sounding language. The current fad of making people "feel good about themselves" tempts us to be hypocritical. Our desire to have people think positively of us must never so cloud our judgment nor distort our values as to make us prefer a smoothly told lie to the truth.

The Old Testament prophets spoke plainly on the subject. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords" (Psa. 55: 21). Thus the Psalmist characterized those who did not fear the Lord. What a contrast: "smooth words" but "war in the heart." "Soft words" yet "drawn swords." Heretics by the score have charmed the hearts of the untaught with words "smoother than butter" and "softer than oil" while they declared war upon the kingdom of God and left ruin everywhere they could.

The rebellious people of Isaiah's time said to the prophets "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits" (Isa. 30: 10). Jeremiah warned against the prophets who sought to heal the hurt of God's people by saying "Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6: 13-14). Later through the same prophet, the Lord said "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied: (Jer. 23: 21). Jeremiah warned of impending invasion and captivity unless they repented. His words did not make them feel good about themselves. He became a most unpopular preacher, but he was right. And the buttery, oily words of false prophets further lulled the people into a false sense of security.

The New Testament also warns against being deceived by smooth but deceitful words. Jesus said "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt. 7: 15). The appearance is innocent, but there is "war in the heart." Paul spoke of those who teach contrary doctrines "which cause divisions and offenses" and said they serve themselves and not the Lord and that they do it by "good words and fair speeches" (Rom. 16: 17-18). He further said that the word of Hymenaeus and Philetus would "spread like a cancer" (2 Tim. 2: 17 NKJV).

R. H. Boll, who brought Premillennialism among churches of Christ, and some of his closest associates

were often described as "such gracious, sweet men." Maybe so, but I know that war was in their heart for I live in a city where the ravages of that war are still evident. The words of W. Carl Ketcherside have been "smoother than butter" and "softer than oil" but they have divided and alienated brethren. Young preachers have been lured into error by these smooth words even to shipwreck of the faith. Godly parents have shed rivers of tears, elderships have been dissolved and churches greatly disturbed. Smooth and oily words are being exchanged now between some in conservative Christian Churches and men among liberal churches of Christ. Among more conservative minded brethren there is evidence of intolerance for plain, pointed, Bible preaching. We have heard so much "motivation" that it is time to ask: "motivated to do what"?

The secular world cringes at calling sin what it is. People living together without honor of marriage do not want to be called adulterers and adulteresses. They speak of "meaningful relationships." We have heard all sorts of approaches to hinder the spread of AIDS and to cope with pregnancies out of wedlock, except the simple truth of God which mandates "flee fornication." Sleep-in arrangements outside marriage, homosexuality and use of illegal drugs may be called "alternate life-styles." These are words "smooth as butter" and "soft as oil" but they mask the real truth. They are abominations in the sight of God and all the soft rhetoric in the world will not change them. We can look the other way. We can call evil good, and good evil, but that will not change things from what they really are. While we must never forget to love the sinner and reach out in compassion to help lift him/her to a higher level in the Lord, we must also never become comfortable with the sin. It is hideous, not only because of the havoc it brings in terms of human health and personal relationships, but because sin alienates from God. And let us not forget that it was because of man's predicament that God in grace, mercy and love sent us a Saviour to rescue us from the ravages of sin. This is the good news of the gospel. But, please understand that it is impossible for anyone to perceive the need for salvation until he has been first made to realize that he is a sinner, lost and on his way to Hell unless he avails himself of God's plan to save him. We must not only hate the sin of others, we must despise our own sin.

I liked John T. Lewis. This good man spent most of his life preaching the gospel in Birmingham, Alabama. The fruit of his faithful and numerous labors are yet to be seen there. He was an elderly man when I saw him last in 1957. I was preparing to go to Norway to preach the gospel and went to Birmingham looking for support. Marshall Patton took me to see brother Lewis. We had hardly been seated in his modest home when he drove straight to the point. He said "Young man, what put this bee in your bonnet to go across the ocean?" After I answered that he said "What makes you think you can do any good over there?" That made me a little uncomfortable but it also made me think. His words were neither "smooth" nor like "oil" but I have never forgotten them. Before I left he bluntly said "Now, don't go over there and try to make Americans out of them, just teach

them the word of the Lord and make Christians. " All I could think to say was "Yes sir!" Then before I left he sent sister Lewis in the bedroom and had her write a check for \$100 to help on my travel expenses. I would much prefer a man who will speak plainly and tell me the truth, with genuine love in his heart, than to hear the buttery, oily words of false prophets.

"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4: 16)

WAKE THE WORLD
AND TELL THE
PEOPLE

Wilson Adams
891 Autumn Valley Lane
Gambrills, MD 21054



19

BOOZE 1
Maryland

88

Personalized license plates are obviously "in. " For an annual fee you can spell out almost anything. Some-times they reflect a person's occupation or one's passion for his car or even his/her own personality. Anyway, most are rather clever and fun to figure out.

I saw one the other day that said "BOOZE 1". I suppose it could have been owned by *Mr. and Mrs. Booze* but I doubt it. I suppose, too, that the owner was proud of his personalized claim to fame. Some mark of notability, huh?

Do you know what really upsets me? It's *Christians*, people who have been born again in the image of God's dear Son, who seek to justify their support of the booze business. **Alcohol is the biggest drug problem in America!** Would any sensible person deny that? Ask yourself the question: Has the saint the moral right to support an industry which sells an addictive drug as a social pleasure? Liquor enslaves... impairs... and kills!

We are not talking about one beer a day — we're talking whether or not it is acceptable before God for a Christian to support the liquor industry. Let me ask you this: How would it grab you if a Christian opened a liquor store or bar? *If a Christian has a right to moderately drink alcoholic beverages, what's to prevent him from selling it?* The more I study the question the more I am convinced that the support of the booze business by one of Christ's own is a shame and disgrace.

"Didn't Jesus Turn Water Into Wine?"

I get tired of people implying that Jesus gave credibility to the booze business by turning water into "intoxicating" (?) wine. Turn to John 2: 1-11 and let's look at it.

We need to understand that the word "wine" in the Bible can refer to a *fermented* (Prov. 20: 1 — "*wine is a*

mocked... ") and *unfermented* (Isa. 65: 8) — "*as the new wine is found in the cluster... "*) beverage. But what do people do? We see the word "wine" and immediately jump to all kinds of conclusions. For example, in 1 Tim. 5: 23 Paul told Timothy to "*take a little wine for thy stomach sake*." Now I am not opposed to the use of drugs for medicinal purposes at all, but let me ask you this — who says "wine" in the passage has to be intoxicating wine? Have you ever been sick and taken **grape juice** to settle an upset stomach? It works wonders.

Now back to John 2... The argument given is this: Verse 10 says, "*when men have well drunk*" (K. J. V.), indicating that intoxicating wine was the party beverage. ANSWER: Look again at the verse, It says, "*when men have well drunk*" NOT "*when men have gotten drunk*." There is a difference. A BIG difference.

To our way of thinking the word "drunk" means intoxication, inebriation and insobriety. But is that the *only* definition? No, the word sometimes means "*full and satiated*" and can have absolutely nothing to do with intoxication. For example, see Isa. 34: 5; Ezek. 39: 19 and 1 Cor. 11: 20-21. In the Corinthian passage Paul says, "*for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another drunk*." Paul, in this contextual setting, is using opposites and "*intoxicating*" is **not** the opposite of "*hungry*." But "**FULL**" is! And the term "*drunk*" by definition can mean "full." Further-more, in the Corinthian scripture, the apostle did not say a word about intoxication. He simply rebukes them for selfishness. Question: Can we seriously believe that these people were "bombed out" at the Lord's Supper and Paul didn't say a word about it?

Some have argued that John 2: 10 suggests that people would become intoxicated on the good wine and then the coarser wines would be brought out when no one could tell the difference. ANSWER: The head-waiter was **not** suggesting anything of the kind. It's just plain common sense (and common courtesy, too) to bring on the best of **anything** first, food or drink.

"To make a good impression we bring on the best we have — if this is not sufficient then we bring on whatever else we have. Would you bring a guest to your home and give him the inferior first? Would you not feed him the T-bone first and then the bologna sandwich? Of course you would. You would hope that a large helping of the best would satisfy him so that you would not need to produce the inferior. This is what the head of the feast was saying. He was not offering an insult but stating a kindness. He was saying the first was great but the latter was even better.

When men have "drunk freely" they don't feel like drinking more — when people have eaten abundantly they don't wish for more. This is the law of food and drink! This would mean that when the host had fed everyone well on the best of food and drink, they'd all be full and not inclined to eat or drink further so the inferior which is kept in reserve is not needed. (The Bible, the Saint, and the Liquor Industry— Jim McGuiggan, pp. 121.)

And is there anything to make us think that this wine

was UNintoxicating? YES! For one thing I seriously doubt that a sinless Jesus would make 150 gallons of intoxicating wine knowing the evil result such produces. How could He do so morally? For another thing, "wine" is used to refer to UNfermented grape juice. And for a final thing, people in Jesus' day did drink unfermented grape juice as a common beverage. Therefore, all things considered, I conclude that Jesus turned water into wine (unfermented juice of the grape). And, by-the-way, it was unsurpassed in quality!

"What About 'Not Given to MUCH Wine'?" Question: In 1 Tim. 3: 8 Paul said that deacons are not to be given to "much" wine. Does this imply that the consumption of alcoholic beverages in moderation is approved?

Answer: Looking at the passage we raise the question: Is the apostle saying that the deacon is not to be a drunk? We believe that he is. That being so, we raise yet another question: Can you not urge a man to avoid drunkenness without approving moderate drinking? SURE YOU CAN!

Telling a man — "Don't get bombed out on whiskey!" — does not intend approval that drinking whiskey in moderation is acceptable. Or... "Don't be a drug addict!" (which is the same as saying — "Don't be given to much drags") is certainly not approval for the occasional use of cocaine. "Don't be a slave to sin" certainly does not approve of sin in "moderation."

"Do not be given to wine" > "Do not use drugs"
(1 Tim. 3:3)
IS THE SAME AS
"Do not be given to much wine" > "Do not be a drug addict"
(1 Tim. 3:8)

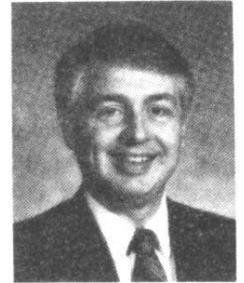
And while we are on the subject... take a peak at Ecclesiastes 7: 17 which says, "Do not be excessively wicked." Am I to believe that such lends approval to wickedness in "moderation?" Deacons (and I believe all Christians) are not to be given to "much" wine i. e., they are not to be drunkards. But such does not imply acceptability of moderate drinking anymore than Ecclesiastes 7: 17 implies acceptability of moderate sinning!
* * *

"BOOZE 1" turned off the road and headed straight for a (can you guess?) liquor store. I suppose that people of the world will always do things like that but aren't Christians supposed to be different? The whole thing leaves me disgusted. How does it make you feel?

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GIVE ATTENTION TO THE RIGHT THINGS

DIVINE MESSAGE: "... give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Timothy 4: 13).

A recent headline over a Robin Wilson article in the **Chronicle of Higher Education** (February 10, 1988) declared: "Bennett Blames Lost Faith in Education on Colleges' Ouster of Classics." Secretary of Education William Bennett told college officials that "we are witnessing a shift in how the American people view the condition of higher education generally" because faculty members are replacing classic works from the curriculum with more contemporary "nonsense" promoted by "trendy lightweights." Brethren, we must not let that happen in our spiritual teaching and preaching!

Paul instructed Timothy to give attention to: a) reading; b) exhortation; and c) doctrine.

Give Attention to Reading

It was important that Timothy not only read, but that he read the right material. Shall we imagine that Paul was telling Timothy to read just anything? Paul knew that Timothy's reading would stimulate his exhortation and generate the doctrine in his preaching. Timothy had to read the right things.

Paul exhorted Timothy to continue in the things he had learned from **the Holy Scriptures** which, "are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3: 14-15). The Scriptures are the "Classics" and they should appear in our preaching work more than the composite of all else we read or quote (in preparation and in presentation).

Obviously, however, we are going to read some things in addition to the Scriptures. In this we especially need to "give attention" to what we read! Harry Pickup, Jr., recently said, "... our guiding principle in choosing much of our reading is a mistake. Some are not reading enough; that is, they read a little of the Bible, very little, and none of what brethren write ___ At the very least, our attention is disproportionately divided between Christian and denominational literature.... It is one thing to do research in order to gather data with discrimination from men of unsound faith; it is another thing to let them teach us their conclusions so that we believe their lies and to teach them.... A vast number of Christians are almost totally unfamiliar with the sound and scholarly writings of brethren of past generations.... To compound the problem, people who are exceptionally ignorant of the writings of these men are increasingly familiar with denominational writers.... If I don't want my

children to learn about conjugal love from a philosophical hedonist or a religious humanist, why would I want immature believers to learn about Christian living and the duties of a local church from an institutionalist and a 'social gospeler.' " (**Hebrews for Every Man**, "Let Us Press On To Perfection," Florida College Annual Lectures, pp. 166-67).

Two of the key words in brother Pickup's remarks are "disproportionately" and "discrimination." When we "disproportionately" choose literature written by men known to be doctrinally unsound we fill our minds with their erroneous ideas and vocabulary. "Oh," you say, "they are not 'unsound' on the subject I read." Now, that appears to adequately answer the problem, but that is terribly naive. The false teacher's assumptions on the nature of man, the plan of God for man, the work of Jesus, the requirements for salvation, the character of the kingdom of Christ, the work of the Spirit, or any other major doctrinal subject permeate his teaching and find their way into his writings in the most subtle fashion. When we have not read the Bible enough and when we have not first studied to compare the writings of men sound in the faith with the Word of God, we cannot expect to be able to properly "discriminate" between Truth and error in these other writings.

You older Christians might simply ask yourselves, "When my children (or other younger Christians) ask me what commentary to use, do I suggest that they read first from such Calvinistic theologians as Lenski or Hendriksen; or do I recommend that they read commentaries written by brethren of recognized faith in true New Testament teaching?" If the answer to that is obvious, then it ought to be equally obvious that my attitude is going to be similar toward other religious literature... at least until I know for certain that the young can deal with it in a careful, learned, questioning, balanced, and discriminating way making sure to read more from God and men truly committed to Him than from those with whom they would not even share fellowship in the church of the Lord.

Do not forget the admonition of Paul who said, "Preach the word,... for the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. But be thou sober in all things... (2 Tim. 4: 2-3). Are we afraid that the brethren and the lost will not accept the simple preaching of truth in our generation?"

Give Attention to Exhortation

The faithful are discouraged by a lack of zeal among many brethren. Dedicated men are looking for ways to encourage the brethren to be active in the Lord's work. Paul exhorted Christians in his day! Barnabas encouraged men to serve Christ (Acts 4: 36). Paul taught Timothy to encourage others! These men and many among the apostles and first-century disciples of Christ were successful. But never forget that they were successful because they had a powerful message and they worked to get that message to the lost. It was the message which moved members to the right kind of activity because

they loved the Lord and they loved the Truth! They did not get their enthusiasm from the pagan or the sectarian ... nor from their messages or methods. They got it from the Word of the Lord (Acts 8: 4; 16: 4-5; et. al).

In February, William Bennett commended college and university administrators for doing a good job of bringing education to all the people, but he expressed concern "about the watered-down curricula that... students would encounter once they arrived on the campuses." I commend the enthusiasm of men who use their great talent in the service of the King. I encourage them to keep that driving passion to convert the lost to Christ. More of us should imitate them in that lest we be condemned. The object is not, however, exhortation for exhortation's sake. One is not called upon to be a "Barnabas" in only one aspect of Barnabas' character. I believe Barnabas would say to give attention to "reading" and "doctrine" and base all exhortation on Biblical teaching using Biblical methods. None of us can "water-down the curricula."

Give Attention to Doctrine

A major concern of the Lord, and the apostle Paul, in instructing evangelists was the content of their preaching. Simply "preaching" (even preaching in an articulate convincing manner, or preaching that which is interesting and exciting, or preaching with numerical growth as the primary motive) is not enough to accomplish the purposes of Christ. Paul "did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom" because he "determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." His "speech and preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom" but demonstrated the power of inspiration through the Holy Spirit so that our "faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2: 1-5).

In that same speech, William Bennett expressed consternation that teachers moving away from the classics contended that they were inspired by "serious thinkers such as Karl Marx." Beside the obvious problem created by the teaching of an evil political system (a problem we may compare here in some ways to the dangers of teaching doctrinal error which we have already discussed), Bennett declared that their ideas seem to "spring from Groucho Marx" rather than Karl Marx. He quoted George Orwell who referred to "nonsense so bad only an intellectual could believe it."

We must give attention to doctrine in two respects. First, the doctrine must be pure. We must learn the truth. My friend, study the Truth! Study until you know that you know the Truth. Do not think that you can superficially study or study quickly or study from man in error and do it properly. Paul said, "Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1: 13).

Secondly, we must work to know how to preach on doctrinal subjects. Do not be content with "fluff" (nice sounding, devotional and/or motivational lessons with little substance). Lessons which teach little provide little of the right kind of devotion or motivation. They also leave the brethren with shallow understanding of "why" they are motivated and "to what" they are devoted

and motivated. Such motivation is short-lived.

My brethren, we will sow what we reap in the pulpit just as we sow what we reap in other aspects of life (Gal. 6: 7). Paul admonished Timothy, "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou has followed until now" (1 Tim. 4: 6). Let's not forget what gospel preaching is all about. It is about the Gospel!

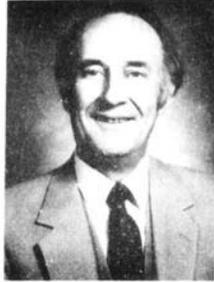
WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

Send all questions to:

Weldon E. Warnock

1021 Welford Dr.
Xenia, OH 45385



SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND TALENTS

QUESTION: *What is the difference between spiritual gifts and talents? A friend of mine says everyone has a spiritual gift, and if a person doesn't have such a gift, he has not God. My friend claims her spiritual gift is showing mercy (Rom. 12fi-8).*

ANSWER: The querist's friend misunderstands the difference between spiritual gifts and talents. The spiritual gifts of 1 Cor. 12: 1-10 were miraculous endowments. There are nine of them enumerated: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. No one was born with these abilities, nor did anybody develop them. They were given supernaturally by the Holy Spirit as He WILLED, dividing to every man severally (1 Cor. 12: 11).

First century Christians received these miraculous gifts through the laying on of the hands of the apostles. This is clearly seen at Samaria where Peter and John were sent by the other apostles to the new converts at Samaria in order for them to receive the Holy Spirit (i. e., the gifts of the Spirit). "Then laid they (Peter and John) their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money" (Acts 8: 17-18).

At Ephesus, after the twelve disciples were converted by Paul, he laid his hands on them, and when the Holy Spirit came upon them, they spoke with tongues and prophesied (Acts 19: 1-7). We do not have these spiritual gifts today. They were temporary and terminated when the perfect, complete revelation of God was given, that is, when the New Testament was finished (cf. 1 Cor. 13: 8-13; James 1: 25).

The manner of receiving these spiritual gifts no longer exists, namely, through the apostles. There are no living apostles among us to impart the gifts. Hence,

no person has such gifts today. Where is the man or woman that can prophesy, discern spirits, has miraculous knowledge, etc. ? There are those who claim it and those who try to fake it, but where is the person who can give a genuine demonstration of it?

As to talent, it is a skill or superior ability that a person possesses or develops in art, mechanics, learning, etc. This is a natural ability, while a spiritual gift was a miraculous ability. We all have some talent in one field or another, to a lesser or greater degree, and we should always use it to God's honor and glory.

Actually, every native talent is a gift of God, a favor bestowed. In Rom. 12: 6-8 all of the gifts mentioned, with the exception of prophesying, are native, natural talents or gifts that are to be cultivated and improved through the proper exercise of them. The gifts specified in addition to prophecy are: ministering, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling, and showing mercy. Prophesying is the only gift in the passage that required supernatural assistance.

All gifts in the Bible were not miraculous. Many are natural, native abilities and functions. The context shows which ones are under consideration.

THE HEAVENS SHALL PASS AWAY

QUESTION: *Is 2 Pet. 3: 10 literal? If literal, then heaven will also pass away.*

ANSWER: The passage says, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. "

There are *three heavens* spoken of in the Bible, the third one being the dwelling place of God (2 Cor. 12: 1-4). Plainly, this one, the third heaven, will never pass away. But the first two heavens will cease. The first heaven is the atmosphere where the birds fly (Gen. 1: 20), and the second heaven is where the sun, moon and stars are hanging in the vast universe (Gen. 1: 14-18). These will pass away with a great noise and the elements (the components or matter of which the material universe is made) will be melted with fire, and the earth, on which we live, shall also be burned up.

Yes, 2 Pet. 3: 10 is literal, but it does not include the heaven where God, the angels and all the redeemed will dwell eternally. The querist must realize that heaven is used in different senses in the Bible and the third heaven is not under consideration in Peter's statement.

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LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE TEMPLE

There are many of us across the country that are preaching in the "shadow of the temple." Here in Orlando "the temple" is Calvary Assembly. A 5000 plus seat complex that casts a giant shadow across the entire religious community of Orlando. But Calvary Assembly is not the only mega church in the central Florida area. A few miles west on I-4 is the First Baptist, often referred to by those of us who live close to Disney World and Sea World as "Baptist World." Then only a few miles west of that group is the Carpenters Church in Lakeland which has a 10,000 seat auditorium.

In close observation of these major religious movements we come away with several conclusions. First, they are not wrong because of their size. The Jerusalem church was very large. Secondly, they are not wrong because they wield a powerful impact on the community. The Jerusalem church sent out shock waves that were felt all the way to the 20th century. Yet, there are major problems with this type of "megamedia" religion that is so popular. The theological base, if there be one, for this type of religion is mostly, Pentecostalism. It is about as far from New Testament Christianity as darkness from light. What are the major pitfalls of this type of religious business? 1. Bumper stickers and Politics:

As you drive past "the Temple" on your way to Par Street the highway patrolmen try to flag you into the Calvary Parking lot. You will note that every car pulling into that parking lot has a "Robertson for President" bumper sticker on it. It has been my feeling that Pat Robertson would do much better in the primaries than the press and the political establishment thought he would do. And such has been the case. Why is that?

The people on the national broadcast news don't drive by Calvary Assembly every week! There has been forming over the last few years an alliance with the New Right and the Republican party. The New Right is not doing what liberal religion has done since the 50's. It was from religious leaders that the Civil Rights movement and the anti-war movement formed its leadership in these social causes. Now, with the conservatism of the Reagan Administration it is only natural that Pentecostalism enter into the political arena. There is nothing wrong with being a Republican. On many of the moral issues of the day such as abortion, homosexuality, and ERA they have the preferred position. But there is a fine line between the Christian who is a citizen exercising his right to vote and the church becoming the "grass roots

political machine" for any one political party. It is not only a scriptural mistake but it is also an organizational mistake. What happens with the political pendulum swings back to the more liberal position? What happens when the mood of the country swings to the more liberal political party as it did during the 60's and conservative parties are "out"? Then the church will also be unattractive due to the political climate and not due to the doctrine it seeks to teach.

2. The financial fiasco:

Following the Jim and Tammy Bakker episode we have seen a great distance between the life style taught by our Lord in the sermon on the Mount and the life style of the rich and famous Bakkers. What will this type of excess in life style do to the financial base of these large churches? This may be particularly pertinent if the general economy of our nation takes a down turn in the coming year. People will have fewer dollars to do with as they please and the over extended churches will suffer. Isn't it amazing that more have not questioned the effectiveness of the vast television and radio shows anyway? How many "converts" do they make? Most of the time people are influenced more by their close friends through personal friendship. As the economy turns down and money dries up it will soon be obvious that these media programs are not the cost effective means for evangelism.

Most of the "temples" are built on the personality of one man. They are lead by charismatic preachers who become the focal point of a personality cult. Many of them will not survey beyond the effectiveness of that personality. Then the possibility of that huge debt and complex of buildings continuing to be used effectively ceases. The buildings will become a monument to a waste of many good but gullible people's money.

3. The defection to the shadows:

Because of the thinness of the doctrine of these mega churches there are those who have become aware of their needs by the glitter of their sparkle only to realize that there is nothing of substance in that glitter. They are the fallout as a result of the shallowness of these ministries. Here is where we need to be ready with the "Oracles of God." It is here that we in the shadow can pick up those that are sincerely looking for a deeper response to Jesus Christ than a "Christian Gymnastic team" performing on Sunday night. We need to be ready to open the word of God without a "holier than thou" attitude and show them the real substance of the word.

4. The end of the energy:

The result of the possibility of shifting political opinions, of economic downturn and finally the lack of substance to the doctrinal convictions will be that the endless amount of energy needed to keep these large "temples" going will also dry up as well.

Consider how much time, effort and money that goes into that which is not even spiritual in nature. The hours of labor for everything from young groups fund raising to tubing down the spring fed river in the summertime will somehow take its toll. The committee on the committees will have to meet to establish new by-laws for all the other committees. The softball league, the golf tourna-

ments, and the basketball free throwing competition all will demand so much time and effort until someone is going to ask, "Why? and What is all of this worth?" My father always said that a fellow won on a hamburger would have to be feed steak the rest of his life to keep him in line.

While these carnival-like attractions may have a magnetic appeal to the unchurched, soon the effort needed to top the last extravaganza is just not there. On one Sunday morning that the religious world calls, "Easter Sunday" several giant hot air balloons tried to land in our parking lot. They needed to land here because of shifting wind directions after they had taken off at the conclusion of the "Sunrise Service" in their parking lot. With the amount of paid and volunteer labor that went into that one service alone half of the city of Orlando could have been contacted concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What does all of this say to us who live in the shadow of the temple?

First, be careful about the Lord's church and politics. We that preach need to be careful about our private political convictions becoming a part of the gospel message while we preach. One couple said after visiting with us, "We just want to find a place to go to church where we are not told how to vote." It is more than possible that we too may blur the distinctions between the individual's rights and responsibilities and that of the group of individuals assembled together.

Secondly we need to view objectively this type of religion. There are some things that they do well. Their emphasis on love for each other and seeking to build each other up is to be commended. If we have failed in that area we need to look to the word of God and if we find that it is taught there we need to practice it. Jesus used the unbelieving cities of Tyre and Sidon as well as Sodom to shame Capernaum for its unbelief. Maybe the spirit of evangelism, the spirit of joy, the spirit of love for one another ought to shame us who need some of those qualities while we live in the shadow of the Temple.

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**STUDIES IN FIRST AND SECOND TIMOTHY 1
Tim. 5: 17-25**

**"TREATMENT OF ELDERS AND
GENERAL ADMONITIONS"**

The first part of this chapter involved properly dealing with age groups, and particularly widows, studied in our last article. Verses 19-21 deal with another specified group — elders in the church.

Elders

We distinguish these from the elders (older in age), mentioned in the previous verses, because these are said to "rule" over brethren, and the only ones with this responsibility in the New Testament are elders in a local congregation (Heb. 13: 7; 1 Tim. 3: 4-5; 1 Pet. 5: 2). Arbitrary ruling (as lords) is forbidden (1 Pet. 5: 3). Their ruling is as shepherds over a flock, with watchfulness, tenderness, gentleness, and a genuine concern for the flock.

How should such men who rule well be treated? They are to be "counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine." These are men who preach the word as well as oversee a congregation. They give full time to their work.

The word "honor," in the Greek is TIME (Noun); TIMAO (verb) and means "primarily a valuing... esteem" (Vines). The word not only involves the idea of respect and esteem, but also the support of (providing for (1 Tim. 5: 3; Mark 7: 8-13).

Counting such worthy of "double honor," removes the matter of support for preachers and elders from being benevolence or pittance, and their being regarded with suspicion, jealousy, and envy. Two Old Testament scriptures (Deut. 25: 4; Lev. 19: 13) are cited as basis for this instruction. One teaches that the ox that works the corn is entitled to eat of it, and is not to be muzzled or restrained therefrom. The other simply states that the "laborer is worthy of his reward" (KJ) "wages" (NKJ & NASV).

Verses 19-20 deal with the treatment of elders when charges are made against them and when they are guilty of sin. In the first place, a charge (accusation) against an elder is not to be received unless it can be substantiated by two or three witnesses. Many elders and preachers have been seriously hurt (and the cause of Christ) by the expression of someone's suspicion, or the spreading of rumors. Brethren should give heed to Jas. 1: 19 "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak" in hearing

accusations.

But, what if a substantiated charge is made against an elder, thus proving him guilty of sin? What does Paul tell the young evangelist, Timothy, (and every evangelist) to do? The answer is, "rebuke before all, that others also may fear. "

General Admonitions

The charge given Timothy "before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels (v. 21) was that he observe these things (Treatment of various age groups, widows, and elders) "without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. " First there is the charge of "do (observe) these things. " There may be present a temptation to not observe (ignore) proper action in some cases, especially in the matter of rebuking an elder who sins. Regardless of what may produce hesitation or timidity on the part of God's servant, God, Christ, and the elect angels all say "do it. "

Secondly, the doing of what the Lord says is to be without preference or partiality. Some brethren to whom we have an obligation may be closer to us, more compatible, congenial, have more in common, than others, and this may enter into our treatment of them. The Lord says it must not. I can think of a number of things that might be a deterrent to an evangelist rebuking an elder who sins — His job may be at stake; The man is a heavy contributor; He has a large family and many friends who might be offended, etc. Sometimes evangelists, and brethren, instead of doing the Lord's will, desire to "sweep the matter under the rug" and keep it as quiet as possible. Race, station in life, position, personality, family, or any other like thing must not stand in the way of doing what the Lord says do.

Further admonitions are given to Timothy, the young evangelist, in verse 22. He is told to "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partakers of other men's sins; keep thyself pure. " I believe these admonitions are given in connection with the previous verses, where the subject is elders. The action of verse 22, however, is not limited to elders, as a class, but involves "no man, " or any man. The action required, or forbidden, would apply to elders, but also to others.

The expression "Lay hands suddenly on no man, " has been interpreted and applied variously. I do not believe it refers to bestowing spiritual gifts by the "laying on of hands, " because only an apostle could do that (Acts 8: 14-17), and Timothy was not an apostle. Obviously the reference is not to physical discipline, for this would imply that after due deliberation, Timothy might fight an unruly one. The most popular view is that the refer-ence is to the common practice in New Testament days of "laying hands on" in ordaining one to the eldership or to some special work (Acts 6: 6; 13: 3). Timothy would be involved in this. A person should not be put into any important position hastily, before proper investigation and a time of proving (1 Tim. 3: 10) exists. There is merit to the position that this admonition refers to the disciplining of an elder who sins and is rebuked publicly (v. 20). "Lay hands on" is figurative of affirmative action, in this case, discipline, as "put his hand to the plough" (Lk. 9: 62). This view would make the expression repetitious

of vs. 19 where examination of witnesses would rule out haste. Whether referring to ordination or discipline, Timothy was to do neither in haste, but with care, investigation, and deliberation.

The next admonition, "neither be partakers of other men's sins" seems to be connected with the preceding one (a neither this **nor** that thing). If ordination is under consideration, we can see how Timothy might appoint a man to the eldership in haste (maybe because of an outstanding personality, self commendation, recommendation of friends, show of piety, etc.) and be a partaker, or participant in putting an unworthy, maybe sinful man into a position in the church.

The admonition, "Keep thyself pure, " would be accomplished by Timothy following the apostle's instructions about dealing with elders and other men, if the command be limited to this context. The admonition, how-ever, is important and true, standing by itself. Thus, one would keep himself separate from the world and continually make Christ manifest in his life.

In verse 23, Paul gives the young evangelist some personal advice regarding his health. "Drink no longer water" (KJ): "no longer drink only water" (NKJ) suggests that Timothy practiced complete abstinence so far as wine was concerned. He is advised to drink a little wine for medicinal purposes. There is absolutely nothing in this passage to sanction or justify drinking intoxicating wine as a beverage. A little wine is recommended as a medicine for his sickness. Too, the wine here recommended for sickness is "a long way" from that used as a beverage today. The Greek word for wine is oinos and is used to designate both fermented and unfermented juice of the grape (Matt. 9: 17; Rev. 19: 15). The same is true of the Hebrew word "Yayan. " (Gen. 9: 4; Isa. 16: 10; Jer. 40: 10).

In the closing verses (24-25) of this chapter, Paul instructs Timothy, and all who deal with men, about the nature of both sin and good works in men. With some, their sin is open and manifest, requiring no inquiry or proof in order to judge and discipline, but with others their sin is concealed from view, making judgment and action difficult. Eventually their sins "will find them out, " especially at the judgment. It is the same way with good works.

Faithfulness in observing all these things, or neglect, will affect our destiny in the judgment, therefore, has to do with "saving thyself and them that hear. "

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KEL AND WINNIE

This particular column is devoted and dedicated to the memory of two faithful saints — faithful to their friends and family, faithful to each other, and faithful to the Lord.

It would take several writers and many pages to chronicle the works and influence of these two saints, so I shall not even attempt to go in that direction. Suffer a few observations which may help us all.

M. Kelly Wilson departed this life in May of 1986. He was followed by his wife, Winnie, Jan. 30, 1988. In the flesh, I was one of their three sons-in-laws. In Christ, our relationship far exceeded that of the flesh.

Funeral services were conducted ably by brother Richard Brewer, of Macdale, West Virginia. While the flowers from Winnie's funeral are still fresh, it is fitting that both she and her husband be remembered at this time. To all who knew them, the names of Kel and Winnie were as synonymous as are the names of Christ and the church. To speak of one is to speak of the other, and this is as it should be (Eph. 5: 22-33).

For the past few years, Winnie was the victim and prisoner of Alzheimer's Disease. But, thankfully, both she and Kel enjoyed the fourscore years of reasonably good health.

Winnie's body gradually deteriorated and at the last, dehydrated, until it was only a shadow of the active tabernacle most of us remember. Likewise, it seemed incongruous that one who had cooked for and fed so many people should have to perish for lack of nourishment. But, like Solomon and Job, we must look beyond the vanities of life to find the greater lessons.

On a rainy February day, we carried what remained of that frail body up the steep hill to the cemetery overlooking the little town of Daybrook, West Virginia. Then, as the mingled tears of sorrow, sympathy, joy, and hope began to dry, the feeling of "vanity and vexation of spirit" began to flee also.

God speaks to us through his word (Heb. 1: 1), and Winnie, like Abel, "being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11: 4).

To see a body emaciated by illness and overtaken by death is to be reminded that "the sting of death is sin...., But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15: 56, 57). To see a body fail for lack of nourishment is to be reminded that spiritual food is more to be desired than food for the outward man (2 Cor. 4: 16).

Truly, God still speaks through his word, while Win-

nie, Kel, and others like them speak in death as well as in life.

When the doctors told us in June of 1985 that the end was near for Winnie, I penned the first five verses of the following poem. As she continued to linger on, I quietly filed the poem away. But, while we all were preoccupied with Winnie's illness, her husband died of an heart attack. The last two verses of the poem were composed on the occasion of Kel's funeral.

Like others, I supposed that Kel would outlive Winnie. My only regret now is that I did not show the poem to Kel while he was living.

Dear reader, if you have a kind word to say, or deed to do, get it done while there is time. Death may come to you, to someone else, or the judgment may come to us all, while we wait. As our Lord said, "... the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jno. 9: 4).

WINNIE

Winnie—That name alone will amply tell
The story of her life, To one and
all who knew her well
As mother, friend, and wife.

Winnie—The name that every tongue would know
Whose lot with her was cast.
Who saw her lovely flowers grow
Or through her kitchen passed.

Winnie—But simply "Mama" to her girls
Who learned from her the ways of life;
For them she sews, and knits, and purls,
Sorts out peace and discards strife.

Winnie— "Her own works praise her in the gates, "
"She shall rejoice in time to come; "
Her epitaph the wise man states
In Proverbs, Chapter Thirty-One.

Winnie—She always took the lowest seat,
The best she gave to others;
May she find on that golden street
A throne reserved for mothers.

* * *

Winnie—" 'Sing to me of heaven' always,
Tis my fav'rite hymn you see; "
With echoed strains from yesterdays
The song means more to such as we.

Winnie—Now her "burdens will be lifted"
As the evening shadows fall;
When the sands of time are sifted
Comes her "sweetest song of all. "

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SINCERE WORDS

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."

Dick Blackford

P.O. Box 225
Owensboro, Kentucky 42302



THE UNIFICATION THEOLOGY OF SUN MYUNGMOON(3)

(This is the final article which resulted from the author's trip to Japan and Korea to study Unification Theology. See first article for abbreviations used). X. DID ANYBODY ACCOMPLISH THEIR MISSION? "Elijah ascended into heaven without having fully accomplished his divine mission (2 Kgs. 2: 11)" (DP, 153). "... The gospel of Jesus should have been proclaimed by John the Baptist himself. But through ignorance, he could not accomplish his mission, and at last he degraded his life, which was to have been devoted to Jesus, to a thing of practically no value" (DP, 159). "If Jesus had not been crucified, what would have happened? He would have accomplished the providence of salvation both spiritually and physically. He would have established the Kingdom of heaven on earth which would last forever... he should have fulfilled the salvation of both spirit and body... Jesus could not accomplish the purpose of the providence of physical salvation because his body was invaded by Satan... Therefore all the saints since the resurrection of Jesus... have enjoyed the benefit of the providence of spiritual salvation only... the original sin remains in the flesh and is transmitted continuously from generation to generation" (DP, 147-8).

Unificationists begin by showing how Adam failed in his mission, then attempt to create a whole string of those who did likewise till SYM comes on the scene. It is granted that Adam failed. But Elijah "went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kgs, 2: 11). Not bad, for a failure who later appeared with Moses and Jesus at the Mount of Transfiguration! (Mt. 17).

Concerning John, the UC has wrongly interpreted John's question sent by his disciples ("Art thou he that should come, or shall we look for another?" Lk. 7: 19) as meaning that John became a skeptic and made shipwreck of his faith. That John and his disciples had faith that the Messiah would come is **proven** by their question. People who do not believe in the Messiah do not ask such questions. The question strongly implies that if this WAS NOT he, they would look for another! They wouldn't quit hoping and looking. Likewise, if they were convinced that it WAS he, they would be satisfied and would look for no other. This is plainly implied by the question. Further proof that Jesus did not interpret it to mean John had made shipwreck of his faith is found in the next few verses. Jesus said John was "more than a

prophet" (v. 26), that he was a fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy as being the "messenger... who shall prepare the way before thee" (v. 27), and that "among them that are born of women there is none greater than John" (v. 28). That doesn't sound at all like John had made shipwreck of his faith and betrayed Jesus!

XI. THE ROLE OF MOON. "With the fullness of time, God has sent His messenger to resolve the fundamental questions of life and the universe. His name is Sun Myung Moon. For many decades, he wandered in a vast spiritual world in search of the ultimate truth. On this path, he endured suffering unimagined by anyone in human history. God alone will remember it. Knowing that no one can find the ultimate truth to save mankind without going through the bitterest of trials, he fought alone against myriads of satanic forces, both in the spiritual and physical world, and finally triumphed over them all. In this way, he came in contact with many saints in Paradise and with Jesus, and thus brought into light all the heavenly secrets through his communion with God" (DP, Introduction, p. 16). During World War II, Moon went to the capitol of North Korea, Pyongyang, and began preaching. "He was arrested for his activities, tortured and left for dead outside the Dae Dong Police Station. His congregation found his bloodied, unconscious body in the snow, and began to prepare for his funeral" (PSP. 6). "I believe with all my heart that he was dead, but God brought him back to life: (Levy Daugherty, Conference Director, testimony at the "Rock of Tears," Pusan, Korea, Sept. 8, 1987). Unificationists view SYM as the "Lord of the Second Advent, who comes as the central figure of Christianity... will also play the role of Buddha, whom Buddhists believe will come again, as well as the role of the "True Man" whose appearance Confucianists anticipate, and 'Chung do Ryung' ("Herald of the Righteous Way") whom many Koreans expect to come. In addition, he **will also play the role of the central figure whom all other religions await**" (DP, 189). "... Upon the Second Advent of the Lord as the True Parent of mankind (whom Unificationists believe is SYM), all men will come to live harmoniously in the garden as one family" (DP, 129).

XII. THE BIBLE. "The Bible is not the truth itself, but a textbook teaching truth.... Therefore, we must not regard the textbook as absolute in every detail (DP, 9).

If it only contains truth then it may also contain error. Jesus said of his Father, "Thy word is truth" (Jn. 17: 17).

"The New Testament was given as a textbook... to the people of 2000 years ago, people whose spiritual and intellectual standard was very low, compared to that of today... Today the truth must appear with a higher standard and with a scientific method of expression in order to enable intelligent modern man to understand it" (DP, 131). This leaves the gate open for continuous revelation.

MY ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIFICATION CHURCH AND SUN MYUNG MOON

All the members of the UC which I have met have been nice, mannerly people (with one exception). We were treated with the utmost of hospitality. Part of the plan appears to be to "kill you with kindness" in order to

soften your attitude toward a repulsive doctrine (that Moon is the Messiah for all the world religions). The people are very sacrificial as they work selling flowers, candy, etc. to promote the cause. It is my belief that the promise of marriage is dangled like a carrot before many of the members to keep them faithful, since they do not live together immediately (and are sometimes kept apart from their chosen one indefinitely). The hope of getting to unite with their mate keeps the members hanging on. The UC has experienced phenomenal growth because of this dedication. Because its goal is to unite all religions on the basis of "Godism" against the common foe of atheistic communism (and is having some success), it appeals to the longing within many to see this unity. I predict we will be hearing more from this movement which intends to engulf all religions.

Though SYM has appealed to mankind to "abandon our egoism" (TUC, 12), he is the very epitome of egotism, believing that he is the Messiah who has returned to set up the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. He is a genius (so was Hitler) whose intelligence has been misdirected. This "genius" is seen in his ability as a master manipulator of people, ability to make money, and in his grand imagination in the plans he has for the world. One of SYM's goals is to create one universal language. It is my opinion that he intends to keep the Korean race pure. We did not observe any mixed marriages that involved Koreans. It is further my opinion that the Korean language will be the one chosen.

HOW SHOULD SYM BE OPPOSED?

The UC uses the Bible as a *foundation* for their religion, but later revelation becomes the *superstructure*. Like the Mormons, they are usually unfazed when you point out contradictions between the Bible and the DP, OTP, etc. They give precedent to later revelation. However, I try to take the Bible away from them. Here is my method of approach in studying with Unificationists: (1) Contrast what the Bible claims for itself and what the UC claims about the Bible: (2) Show that continuous revelation is the very reason we have so much religious division. It cannot be the solution for the problem it has caused (Mohammed, Joseph Smith, Ellen G. White, Mary Baker Eddy, the Pope, Oral Roberts, Pentecostalism, SYM, etc.); (3) Showing that he lacks the proper genealogy. If SYM is the Messiah, he should have the lineage to prove it (Mt. 1: 1-17; Lk. 3: 23-38). The lineage of Jesus exists to prove he is who he claimed to be. God promised Abraham that one of his descendants would bless the world. Paul identified this seed as Jesus (Gen. 12: 1-3; Gal. 3: 16). There were several intervening promises that were not fulfilled for hundreds of years. It was 300 years later that Jacob predicted that his own son, Judah, would father a line through which a ruler in Israel would be born (Gen. 49: 10). Nearly 640 years later David was promised that the Messiah would descend from his loins (2 Sam. 7). There were many similar promises which necessitated God keeping the Messianic line fertile so that at least one male would be born in every generation from Abraham to Jesus and this line-age would have to come through Abraham, Jacob, Judah, David, Solomon, etc. Each male would grow to

manhood and have a son until in this one line, running back for 2000 years, there would be an unbroken succession of male descendants until our Lord should be born in Judah. This is without parallel in all the annals of history. Can SYM prove he is descended from all of these OT characters? No, he cannot. But Jesus can! He is the only person living who has a Jewish ancestry that can be traced back to Abraham. Thus, SYM cannot be the Messiah. Nor can he perform miracles. He is deceived and is a deceiver.

Much more could be said. I have had difficulty condensing this material. Some things had to be deleted. I hope it will be helpful to those who encounter the Unification Movement.

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LESSONS FROM AN ICE STORM

**Norman E. Sewell
1932 S. Weller
Springfield, MO 65804**

It was 'Christmas Day, ' 1987 and it was raining and getting colder. My family had plans to travel for the day and spend some time with others in the family, and then to return home. It was an unusual day in that, although it was cold, the rain did not really freeze on the roads. We had a pleasant day and even a reasonably pleasant drive back, only to notice when we arrived in town that many of the street lights and business lights were off. We arrived at home at about 7 P. M. to find that there was no electrical power in our house, or in any of the houses around us for several blocks. While the ice had not built up on the streets, it had been building all day on the tree limbs, and on the power lines, and as the weight reached critical points lines broke, or limbs broke and fell on the power lines removing badly needed electrical power. For some people the power never went off at all that day, but did for a short time the next day. For some the power was off only a few minutes or a few hours. For some of us the power was off for 4 full days and nights, and there were some who were without power for at least one more day. In addition to trying to keep warm, and to have light, there were such things as food stored in home freezers, etc. to be concerned with. It was not a pleasant experience, and certainly not one that we appreciated at the time. But there are some lessons that can be learned from that ice storm. The question is, will we learn from it, or will we just gripe about it?

THE LITTLENES OF MAN — We sometimes begin to think that we humans are pretty big stuff, able to do just about anything we want to do. After all, men have traveled into space, and even walked on the moon. But as wonderful as our technology is, and as much as we have learned, we still can't stop an ice storm, or a tornado, or an earthquake, or a volcano, etc. While Jesus lived He calmed the sea, walked on the water, and did many wonderful things which demonstrated who He is, the Son of the Living God. Perhaps it takes something like an ice storm to make us stop and realize just who we are and how much we need God.

PREPAREDNESS—The ice storm caught many of us not as prepared as we should have been. We needed candles or lamps that do not require electricity; we needed some way to heat our homes; and some way to amuse ourselves when we could no longer watch TV or go rent a movie. There was hardly even enough light to read. But the lesson we could have learned from the ice storm is that our whole life is one of preparation. It was Amos the prophet who told the nation of Israel, "**Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel**" (Amos 4: 12). And, it

does me good just to be forced to stop for a time and realize the need to be prepared for whatever lies ahead.

PATIENCE — Some probably learned not to be anxious about things that you cannot change while waiting out an ice storm and the return of our electrical power. Some undoubtedly became more anxious and distressed day by day. It was Jesus who taught in the sermon on the mount not to be so anxious about day to day things but to "**seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all things shall be added unto you**" (Matt. 6: 33). And Paul urged the Philippians, "**Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God**" (Phil. 4: 6). There are some things in life that you just can't hurry; that you can't change; and one lesson you can learn from an ice storm (if you will) is to simply trust in God and let things take their course as they will.

TO APPRECIATE LITTLE THINGS — The ice storm showed us something else too. There are so many things in life that we take for granted, like lights and heat or cool. We get so caught up in our daily lives we forget to appreciate having those things. And when all of a sudden those things which seem so ordinary and always there are taken away you begin to appreciate having them. What a wonderful lesson we would have learned if we would learn to appreciate good health while we have it, or having a house where there are lights, and heat and such simple things.

TO COUNT OUR BLESSINGS—Even in the midst of the ice storm some of us had blessings that others did not have. My family still had water since the power that **ran** the city pumps was still on; and we still had hot water because we had a gas water heater and that was in operation. And we had a wood burning fireplace insert. It didn't heat a very large area because there was no electricity to turn the fans, but it was fully able to heat the main living area so that we could stay in our home. And how blessed we were that the temperatures were not so cold. We had day time temperatures in the upper 20's and low 30's. Had it been colder things could have been much worse. And we had a warm rain one night and warm temperatures that helped speed the melting process so that power crews could get our power back on quickly. And, without television and other kinds of entertainment it was even possible for people to actually talk to one another without having to compete. Even in the midst of an ice storm there are blessings that we all had if we would just take a moment and realize what we did have and be thankful.

TO LIVE WITH INCONVENIENCE — Living in a house without electricity, and with only a little heat was indeed inconvenient. It was inconvenient to try to bathe under such circumstances; inconvenient sometimes even to try to sleep with so many blankets piled on your bed; and inconvenient to try to read or sew with the little light that you had. Forget about such things as using your computer or electric typewriter; or just about anything else except listening to a portable radio to keep up with the news. Since the power was off also in the meeting house, it was inconvenient to find another

congregation that had heat and power. But it was wonderful to meet with these brethren and to enjoy our fellowship together during such a trying time. Much of the world seems hung up on convenience. But, convenient or not, there is a lesson to be learned from living with things that are not so convenient. We can learn that we can still be Christians and follow Jesus every day regardless of the things that would hinder us.

Was the ice storm fun? Was it enjoyable in any way? Not that I know of. I'm sure it was a nightmare for those men and women who worked in very uncomfortable conditions trying to get power to essential services like hospitals and nursing homes, and of course residences took much longer. But it wasn't a total disaster either. We all learned that life can, and in fact does, go on even without electricity. And hopefully we learned that we must in all things trust God, "casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5: 7).

HAILEY'S COMMENTS

By Homer Hailey

Vol. 1

Vol. 2

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BILL BOONE, 705 W. Pecan, Blytheville, AR 72315—Changes in my work schedule now make it possible for me to conduct singing schools to train song leaders and help congregational singing or to lead singing in meetings. Contact me at the above address. (Editor's note: I have known Bill Boone a long time. He is well trained in music and in the work of helping men to be better song leaders and congregations to improve singing. I hope brethren will use him).

LARRY R. DEVORE, P. O. Box 313, Medina, OH 44258—Our work in Medina continues to be encouraging. Since last report four brethren have made confession of sins, though one did not remain faithful. Also, two placed membership with us. Because of various problems, our building program did not get underway in 1987. We hope to begin in the summer of 1988. Please remember us in your prayers and when in northern Ohio, visit with us. My phone is (216) 345-9030.

PAUL S. BAKER, 108 Locust St., Mt. Pleasant, TN—We read with interest the articles in past issues of STS by P. J. Casebolt and Gailen E. Evans regarding the correcting of ceilings that were acoustically dead. Several years ago we installed acoustical ceiling tile in our auditorium. Later we added carpeting and padded pews. This put together just about destroyed all the echo we had in the building. Our singing was about as dead sounding as you could find anywhere.

After reading the above mentioned articles, we lowered the ceiling about 16 inches and installed the metal faced tiles, 2' x 2', by U. S. Gypsum Co. The first time we met after this we had to turn down the P. A. system and we could hear each other singing for the first time in several years. I am one of the song leaders and I never dreamed so much improvement could be made by just the right ceiling tile. We are very well pleased and thought you might like to know of our results.

RANDY PICKUP, 917 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 45215—On January 11-12, 1988, Greg Litner and I publicly debated Richard Lotspeich and Don Stayton, two independent Baptist preachers, on the design of water baptism. It was unique in that it was "two on two" but in other respects it was a normal formal debate. On January 11, in the building of the Lockland church of Christ, the two Baptists affirmed; "The

scriptures teach that remission of sins comes before and without water baptism." The next night, in the building of the Faith Baptist Church, Greg and I affirmed: "The scriptures teach that baptism in water is for (in order to) the remission of sins."

Since all four speakers had little or no experience in public debates, humility causes me to admit that this discussion will, most probably, **not** go down in history as one of the great landmarks of polemic battles! But it was a good gentlemanly exchange with good order, interest and capacity crowds. As best we could, truth was taught and defended, error was exposed and good was done. While no immediate fruit was seen among those of the Baptist persuasion, many encouraging comments were made regarding the good of such discussions and the edification of brethren (especially young and new Christians) who attended and saw the extremes to which some will go in defending false beliefs.

This discussion came about as result of a call-in radio program which Greg and I conduct here in Cincinnati (as part of the teaching work of the Lockland church where I preach). Much good has been done by this program. Some have been baptized as a result and we have made other good contacts from it.

KEITH SHARP, 2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd., Lakeland, FL 33805—A couple of brethren have sent me copies of a brief article from a paper in Mississippi put out by institutional brethren, which purports to be a report of the debate between Thomas West and me conducted in Saratoga, Arkansas, July 20-21, 23-24, 1987. The report was so inaccurate as to be ludicrous. The debate involved social meals, the work of the church and church support of orphanages. If you desire to hear how the discussion really went, why not listen to the tapes of it? I was engaged in two other debates last year, also with institutional brethren. September 28-October 1, I debated Johnny Polk in Stamps, Arkansas on the orphanage and sponsoring church issues. November 16-17, 19-20 I debated Lewis G. Hale on the same issues. If you would like to obtain tapes of any or all of these debates, write or call Steven Saunders, P. O. Box 221, Fordyce, AR 71742. Phone (501) 352-8235.

PLATON MABUNGA, Seaside Church of Christ, Brook's Point, Palawan 2906, Republic of the Philippines—The church here is at peace. I preach in three congregations every Lord's day. Transportation problems have caused me to be late to some of these appointments. A new congregation of 16 members began at Cabor recently with these people leaving the institutional church at Tippulan. We now have a Muslim mayor but pray to God for the best. On January 28, 1988, eleven were baptized here. (He included a picture of 11 standing in the water—Editor). I am thankful for Searching the Scriptures which helps me so much for my Bible study. We are thankful to those who have helped us in many ways in our work here.

JOHNNIE P. MOCK, P. O. Box 65, Ancram, NY 12502—One was baptized here in Hudson, NY on January 9. She began attending with a young man who is a member. This resulted in a Bible study in a member's home. She is now married to the young man who brought her to hear the gospel. In February, Jim Swann of Birmingham, Alabama was with us in a meeting with lessons centered on Paul's letter to the Colossians.

BOB BOLTON, 701 Centennial Blvd., Richardson, TX—April 3-8 we had a gospel meeting with preaching by R. J. Stevens and Leon Goff with congregational singing led by Dane Shepard. (Editor's note: We regret that we received this notice too late to print the schedule before the meeting. We urge you, if you want an event published before it happens, to give us 4 to 5 weeks lead time. We send copy for each issue to the printer one month before the date printed on any given issue.)

E. PAUL PRICE, 920 N. Rockwell, Oklahoma City, OK 73127—The church in Norman, Oklahoma has changed its meeting place from the Howard Johnson Motel to the Old American Exchange Bank building at West Main and Berry Rd. We are still known as the West I-35 church. The mailing address is: P. O. Box 5624, Norman, OK 73070. We would like to contact any students you know at the University of Oklahoma. We have several who meet with us at present. We have a weekly article in the paper and a radio program in Paul's Valley. I am working with three churches and preach five times each Sunday plus teaching three classes a week and leading singing at times. I have been fortunate to keep support but will lose \$100 by August.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SOLDOTNA, ALASKA—The small church here needs a preacher. We have our own adequate facilities and will be able to assist, considerably, in a preacher's support. Some outside support will be needed. We are one of only three sound churches in the state. Those interested may write the church at P. O. Box 2288, Soldotna, AK 99669. You may call Jerry Holland (907) 262-4316; or William Lewis (907) 262-9357. Olen Holderby of Fresno, California is familiar with this area and with the church here. You may call him at (209) 292-3351.

BRADLEY, ILLINOIS—The church meeting at 1505 E. Broadway in Bradley needs a faithful preacher. Frank Vondracek has been here the last four and a half years but is moving to Davenport, Iowa. We bid him Godspeed. He is leaving here under favorable conditions and with our blessings and goodwill. We are about 60 miles south of Chicago on I-57. We are self supporting and have a four bedroom brick house beside the building. This area is not without its challenges and requires a man devoted to the Lord and dedicated to the truth. Those interested may contact J. J. Spurgeon, 378 N. Jackson, Bradley, IL 60915, or call (815) 933-5684; or Coy Lentz, 1531 Marquis Dr., Bradley 60915, or call (815) 932-5749.

CARLISLE, PENNSYLVANIA—The Walnut Bottom Road church located in south central Pennsylvania needs a full time evangelist. There are 30 members and we are able to supply \$250 support weekly. Work available immediately. Those interested should contact Don Shearer (717) 532-3193 daytime, or Gerry Smith (717) 776-3653 evenings. You may write to: Walnut Bottom Road Church of Christ, Rt. 5, Box 427, Carlisle, PA 17013.

PREACHER AVAILABLE

CARTHEL THOMAS is a fine young man determined to preach the gospel. He has already had some good experience. He is the son of Owen Thomas, gospel preacher of Charlotte, N. C. Carthel was baptized several years ago during a meeting in which the editor preached in Wellsburg, WV. Until the end of April he can be reached at Florida College. After that at 5327 S. Tryon St., Charlotte, NC 28217.



STATE LOTTERIES

A number of states now have lotteries which hold out the promise of instant riches to some lucky soul. The present governor of Kentucky was elected on a platform which included a state lottery in order to finance education and other worthy goals. The state legislature is now battling the issue. Emotionally charged arguments are being made in which elderly people and school children are used to arouse sympathy for a lottery which is perceived as the panacea for the ills of both. Who could be against improving the education of our children or relieving the needs of the elderly?

Every argument we have heard for the lottery comes down to one thing: the end justifies the means. Never mind that a lottery rests upon the principle of greed, or the mistaken notion that you can get something for nothing. Never mind that it violates every principle of the word of God by which one may obtain substance (the law of labor, inheritance, barter, gift, legitimate investment). Never mind that it panders to the weakness in people and very often addicts those who have very little to begin with. Never mind that such addiction can ruin the careers of even the well-to-do, wreck homes and leave families devastated. We must "do evil that good may come." The states which have had lotteries the longest are having to grapple with costs directly related to this sanctioned gambling. It costs more than it provides. It is nigh unto impossible to keep out the mob and vested interests. Gambling attracts the mob like honey draws flies.

It is time for gospel preachers to draw their swords and fight this evil. We must teach people to "labor, working with their hands the thing which is good, that they may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4: 28). "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12: 17). There are no free lunches.

PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Pat Robertson is running for president largely on a platform of a return to moral values and putting God back in homes, schools and government. I am not totally out of sympathy with all of that. Whether the man can deliver what he promises is another question. But there is one thing that seriously bothers me and which has far reaching consequences in terms of peace and security in the world. Robertson is a dispensationalist. He believes that the nation of Israel has a divine right to the land of Canaan. He holds to an elaborate agenda which involves the defeat of all enemies of Israel, the epochal "battle of Armageddon" and the regathering of the nation of Israel for the millennium. But that whole agenda is based on a perversion of prophesy and a misinterpretation of Matthew 24 and Revelation 20.

If you think the middle east is unstable now, then put such a man in the White House and let him join forces with the already powerful Zionist movement and then look out! You ain't seen nothin' yet! Not only is dispensationalism a false doctrine Biblically, its ramifications in terms of the peace and stability of the world are beyond description. I do not presume to tell anyone how to vote. That is not the purpose of this paper. But I do propose to warn those who will listen of a grave danger which portends much evil in the world and which would threaten the peace and safety of God's people and have a hindering effect on efforts to preach the gospel.