

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me"—John 5:39.



"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so"—Acts 17:11.

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

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THEY KNEW NOT WHY THEY CAME TOGETHER

By the authority of Jesus Christ saints all over the world come together upon the first day of the week to break bread, and to engage in other expressions of their praise and adoration unto God in spirit and truth (Acts 2: 42; 20: 7; 1 Cor. 11: 17-34). In various localities churches assemble for worship and edification each Lord's day, and at other appointed times between Lord's days. In many cases some of those people who come together do not have any real understanding why they have assembled. Some assemble to fulfill a duty to the church; some to criticize and find fault; some to sleep; and some come to play; some come because they like the preacher. The reasons for the assembly of the saints are clearly taught in the word of God.

An assembly of citizens in Ephesus resulted from a complaint by Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines for Diana, the goddess of the Ephesians. He called together the workmen of the same occupation as that of himself and proposed a solution. "For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen, whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: so that not only this

our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth" (Acts 19: 24-27).

The whole city of Ephesus was said to have been filled with confusion. "Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused: and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together" (Acts 19: 32). Most of those in the assembly did not know why they were there.

This reference to an assembly did not refer to the church meeting, but was a mob created by Demetrius who was concerned about losing his trade. The circumstances of this assembly may be much like that of the church in many places today. In almost any assembly of any size there are those who "knew not wherefore they were come together."

Some people use the assembly of the saints as a place to make friends and acquaintances for business purposes and to plan socials for the coming week. This hour of public assembly for worship and edification is sometimes used to promote picnics, parties, showers, etc. One would think the singing and praying are secondary matters.

Some think they come to the assembly to accommodate the preacher and elders. It is as if they viewed themselves as clients, doing a great favor to the preacher by coming. If the preacher speaks too plainly of their sins, they threaten to quit coming to the assembly, and sometimes they do. They are doing him a service by coming, they think.

Some come to the assembly to be seen: to show off their new clothes. These use the assembly as a time and place to impress others with appearance, and vie for popularity with the group. They do not know the real reason for the assembly.

Some make their plans to rest and even get a nap for the afternoon activities when they come to the assembly of the church. No higher purpose for the assembly occurs to them.

Why do we meet together on the first day of the week? It certainly is not for the above reasons. We are authorized to assemble to "break bread" (Acts 20: 7).

We must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together to exhort and provoke one another unto good works (Heb. 10: 25). We will say that the church assembles on the first day of the week to worship the Lord and to teach and exhort one another—to edify the body in love.

Worship consists of singing; teaching and admonishing one another; praying: the church prayed together in an assembly for Peter (Acts 12: 5, 12); preaching: Paul preached to the disciples assembled on the first day of the week (Acts 20: 7); breaking of bread: eating the Lord's supper in memory of his death (Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 11: 20-34); and giving of our prosperity to the work of the Lord (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2; 9: 14; 2 Cor. 11: 8). The combination of all these expressions of worship include nothing more than worship to God and edifying the church. Other matters should be left out of the assembly on the first day of the week. We hear far too much about profit and pleasure and far too little about the word of the Lord.

Prepare your hearts and lives to meet with the saints of like mind on the first day of the week to get the most from the worship to God at that time. If you come with the right heart and for the right purpose, you will be blessed beyond your expectation.

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Editorial

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OUR GLORY AND JOY

Why do faithful men preach the gospel? Is it an ego trip in which men delight in the large audiences they have addressed, the well-known churches they have served, the honors heaped upon them, and whether or not their names are "household words" in a large brotherhood? Is it to glory in the vanquished foes in and out of the church when issues, serious and otherwise, create tensions?

Paul said "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9: 16). Of his own countrymen he said "My hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved" (Rom. 10: 1-2). To the Romans he said "As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also" (Rom. 1: 14-15).

But no passage better expresses the motivation of the faithful preacher of the gospel than his statement to the new converts at Thessalonica. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? **For ye are our glory and joy**" (1 Thes. 2: 19-20). Earlier in that chapter he wrote of his work among them marked by courage, fidelity to the Lord and his word, unselfishness, gentleness as a nurse with her children and understanding as a father with his own, and all to the end that "ye would walk worthy of God." His overriding ambition was to present them blameless before the Lord at his coming.

Such men do their work because they love the souls of all people. They are willing to "spend and be spent," to go to the ends of the earth, if possible, for them, to snatch some out of the fire. They are willing to work whether supported by the church, or by the labors of their own hands so they can continue the work of telling the old, old story of Jesus and his love. They delight in teaching those, who like the Thessalonians of old, receive it "not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (1 Thes. 2: 13). To teach these receptive souls, see them baptized into Christ, and then to see their joy and eagerness to learn and grow—that is their glory and joy. Then to watch as they mature into strong Christians, able to digest the meat of the word, and see them take places of responsibility and leadership among the saints of God—that is their glory and joy. To see them handle adversity with faith and courage—that is their glory and joy. That glory and joy cannot be put into a check

from the treasurer. It does not come from brotherhood adulation or tributes of praise from the famous. It is the sustenance of devoted servants of God the world around, whether breaking fresh ground in eastern Europe, amid the poverty of India or the Philippines, in China where every Bible study session poses the threat of arrest, imprisonment, or possible execution, or in the heartland of the USA where general apathy toward spiritual interests makes the hungering soul the more unique.

If it is the "glory and joy" of the faithful to see earnest souls preparing well for the presence of the Lord, it is also the greatest sorrow to see the work destroyed. Paul wrote of this when he said "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor. 3: 11-15).

While there is no joy to compare with seeing honest people obey the truth and then grow in grace and knowledge, neither is there any sorrow to compare with seeing once eager young Christians growing weak or falling away altogether. Thank God the teacher will not lose his reward because the student turns out to be "wood, hay or stubble." One of the greatest joys of my life was to baptize a young man in Norway in February, 1958, the first fruits of the gospel in that land. It was a glory and joy to see him lead in public prayer for the first time, then later hear his first attempts to preach the gospel. *Ah* our ship left port that night in September, 1959 headed to New York, this young man stood on the dock with a small band of disciples and I commented to my wife that this young man would "stand until the judgment." But I was wrong. What had been a glory and joy turned to bitter tears and disappointment for the Harrises who remained along with the Pierces, and for me, when this young man left the truth and disturbed the faith of others. That ache continues to the present hour. What preacher of the gospel, having labored for only a few years, cannot identify with this case and multiply accounts from his own work?

It would help all preachers of the word to reassess their motives for preaching against the background of these statements from Paul which we have noticed. It would equally help Christians in their relationship with those men who preach among them to realize that true servants of the Lord are doing this for YOU. YOU are truly their glory and joy. Whether or not they ever become famous, ever write a book, ever have a public debate, ever speak on a lectureship to a large audience, or ever preach outside their own county, does not really matter to them as long as YOU are growing in your service to God so that you may be presented to Christ at his coming. That is what makes such men endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ.

Think about it brethren. When you are tempted to

quit, or you think you are not being fairly treated, or that you are not appreciated, or that you could make a lot more money in business, or... well, whatever, please ask yourself, What is my glory and joy? Am I doing this so that others might "walk worthy of God"?

GEORGIA DEANE COPE
Funeral Address by Colly Caldwell

There is a wonderful phrase in the apostle Peter's instructions to married Christians which speaks of their "*being heirs together of the grace of life*" (1 Pet. 3: 7). If she lets her beauty center in the gentle and quiet spirit, the hidden person of the heart which trusts in God, as she maintains moral purity and follows the leadership of her husband in the home; and if *he* gives honor to her, understanding her needs; *their* prayers will not be hindered and they will be "*heirs together of the grace of life.*"

The ultimate "*grace of life*" inherited by the children of God is, of course, that undeserved eternal blessing of the life beyond. There is, in addition, for those who love and pray and share and care as Jim and Georgia Deane Cope have these past forty-six years a certain shared "*grace of life*" upon this earth. God caused Solomon to write: "He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord" (Prov. 18: 22).

We share sadness today, but through our tears we smile and feel a profound sense of joy that she was part of our lives. We also cannot help but be happy as we look by faith at the wonderful experiences she has now entered. And we feel an excited sense of encouragement in the memory of all the wonderful experiences she brought into our lives by the grace of the good Providence of God. In all of those ways, she would not like for this to be an unseemly or unhappy time for us.

All of us will always remember Georgia Deane as among the most graceful and beautiful women we ever knew. The bright colors in her clothing, the radiant glow in her eyes, the captivating smile that brightened her entire face, and the charm of her expressions (both facial and verbal) were inescapable... they drew us to her like the brilliant light of the sun or the fragrant aroma of a rose in full bloom.

But like the woman described by Peter, her real beauty to us was not the outward appearance. She possessed all that and more; and as she added years, she added grace and charm. Age seemed only to enhance her beauty and the calm and quiet spirit which accepted change with dignity and poise only added to our pictures of her beauty and made her appearance even more pleasant to all of us. Where her beauty was really found, however, and it was always so, was in her character... the kind of character that God has blessed with the "*grace of life.*"

To me, and I think to most of you, the beauty in Georgia Deane's life centers in two great qualities. First, her understanding of who she is. Sister Cope committed

her life to Christ and first and foremost she wanted to be a Christian. She saw herself simply as that... no more, no less, and in that fact she seemed always to be herself. She was equally at home with those of us who have little as with those who walk with kings... and she wanted us to be so... to be ourselves before God and men. She entertained very important people with grace and charm, but she loved to be with those important people with whom she could share a taco and talk about family and church. I never knew her to seek any kind of recognition for herself. She simply served others—ALL others often at great cost to her own personal needs, when it was easy and when it was not.

And that brings us to say that her beauty is also found in our knowledge that the guiding principle applying all the beliefs and values in this woman was one articulated by her Lord when he said the "*greatest among you shall be your servant.*" *Truly* she was as giving a person as I have ever known. Even in dying she put others before herself. Perhaps especially in dying, she showed her love in how much she cared that her loved ones were all okay. I wish all of you could know as we know that to end the suffering of these last days was her wish for Jim and Connie and Sissy much more than for herself.

And she was thankful: a gratitude that was articulated almost unbelievably to me when she said that God was blessing her by her illness in letting her experience the love her family and friends showered upon her in visits and cards and beautiful flowers and words. That was an experience she saw as a great gift given by the Lord.

One time a man asked Jesus, "*Who is my neighbor?*" I cannot imagine Georgia Deane asking that question. First of all, she considered everyone who contacted her to be important to her and a part of her life. She sewed up the students' ripped clothes, she made little meringue "Connie Kisses" by the thousands, she fed and cared for the brethren... because others were important. But beyond that, I think Georgia Deane would never have made that statement because she thought more in terms of "family" than "neighbors." The church is her family. The people, all the people, here at the College are her family. Her friends are "family" to her.

Of course, she has her own immediate family which she literally served until the moment she left us and who in many ways she will continue to serve through all she has already done. She came out of a wonderful Tennessee family of Christians. Her grandfather McFarland was an elder in the Donalson church near Nashville and her grandmother was a fine Christian named Georgia Ellen. Her mother was named Naomi after that wonderful mother in the Bible and her father, Charles Combs, was a dear man who walked along the streets of Temple Terrace greeting us in his own way. Georgia Deane and Sissy gave themselves to their father's care as long as he was with us. Her sister, Sissy, who is here today was almost her twin... a year and day separated their birth-days, but there was not a year and a day separating their love and devotion to one another as the dearest and closest of sisters.

Isn't God's Providence wonderful. Let me tell you a

story. When Georgia Deane's parents married, they went to Texas on their honeymoon and never returned to Tennessee. Brother Combs worked in Galveston for the old Wells Fargo company until 1941 when his job moved the family to Dallas. It was there in the summer of 1944 that Jim Cope came to the Preston Road church for a meeting. On the opening day, he met the young woman who would be his bride for life. He had preached for four years on a regular basis at Donalson where her grandfather McFarland now in his nineties had served as an elder, but he had never seen Georgia Deane, except perhaps in a family picture or two, until now. During the next two weeks she heard him preach every evening, spent almost every moment during the daytime hours in his presence (at his insistence we might add) and before he returned to Tennessee she had promised to become his wife.

Can anyone doubt her loyalty and dedication to Jim? "The heart of her husband safely trusts in her."

She has been in his love and she bore his children. She has been his friend and confidant and she never violated his trust or broke his confidence. She has been his helper, intellectually and emotionally and he has always been proud to have her at his side. They read the Bible together, they prayed together, we know they have shared and we trust they will share the "grace of life" together.

She has been his homemaker in the truest and fullest sense of all that that means. She has cared for so many in their home. She has literally fed thousands. She did it for Jim and she gave all that from her love... and it was not easy to do. A private, quiet life would have fit her personal desires much more.

Jim could well have written the words of that beautiful song we often hear on the radio: **"It must have been cold there in my shadow; you always walked a step behind; I was the one with all the glory; while you were the one with all the strength; I never once heard you complain."** And had he written these words, he would have gone on to say, **"It might have appeared to go unnoticed, but I've got it all here in my heart; Did you ever know that you're my hero, and everything I'd like to be? I can fly higher than an eagle, cause you are the wind beneath my wings."**

And her children, they call her blessed. She gave so much to them without regard for herself... beginning in the labor which brought them forth. When Jim had to be gone to find help for this school or to preach the gospel of Christ, she took the support of his work and the family as her mission in life, and she cared for Connie and Cathy and "Butch" and nurtured them and loved them and their mates, Mike and John and Jenny, unselfishly. Her touch was gentle and comforting. Her voice was pleasing. Her nature was sympathetic. She was fulfilled as a wife and mother. She loved her grandchildren and her new great-granddaughter. She certainly wanted to share the "grace of life" with them.

I do not believe that love ceases when one moves to be with the Lord. Jesus spoke of the concern of one who had passed into the spirit realm for his five brothers on

earth. Be that as it may, I know our love for Georgia Deane did not suddenly stop when she went away. She will always be there in Jim's heart, and in the hearts of her family, in mine and Lynda's, and in all of yours. And she would want us to love one another as well so we can share the "grace of life" with her.

I want to close with some verses from God's word. The Bible passages I find myself wanting to read today are not the passages that speak of death and mourning. I think Georgia Deane might like for us we read one like this: *"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud but associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do right in the eyes of everyone"* (Rom. 12: 10-17).

As we pray for God to comfort Jim and this wonderful family, let's pray also for God to bless Georgia Deane's extended family, all of us, with the same spirit she had so that we might practice the words we have read in our lives as she did so that we all may share the "grace of life" together with Georgia Deane.

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THE WORLD IS IN TROUBLE!
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THE TRAGEDY OF DIVORCE

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"For the God of Israel says that He hates divorce" (Malachi 2: 16).

One of the greatest tragedies to face this country today is the breakdown of the family unit. With nearly 50 percent of all marriages ending in divorce, the first step to solving the problem is to recognize that there is a problem. Furthermore, members of the Lord's church must not bury their heads in the sand and ignore the same problem within the church. Many Christians are learning more from the world than they are from God and consequently are ending their marriages also.

Everyone needs to take a serious look at what is happening. I fear that these matters are being taken too lightly. We have a tendency to think, "it can't happen to me." We have probably all thought that about a family that now have divorced. We then sit back and wonder with complete amazement, "How? Why?" Actually we know how and why; I just don't understand how or why Christians let such things happen. It is a real problem that needs to be addressed and seriously thought about, because with the breakdown of the family comes even a more serious problem: the rejection of God and His will.

Divorce is a tragedy for several reasons. Consider a couple.

1. It shows a disregard for God and His word. Anytime a divorce takes place, there is sin involved by someone. And how often do we see those who get divorced completely fall away afterwards? People are entering marriage these days with the concept that they can get a divorce if things just don't work out. Marriage is held in contempt by those who advocate "trying each other out" by living together first. People are entering first marriages with pre-nuptial agreements, just in case they might need a divorce (this is not to suggest that *all* such agreements are wrong; just the ones that do it with a view toward divorce). Others substitute the vows "until death do us part" with "until the love between us dies." Such attitudes are geared for divorce in the first place. We should not be surprised they are so common.

Yet, the tragedy so close to home is that Christians also show disregard for their vows to each other. Members of Christ's body, including elders, deacons, and preachers are leaving their families and rejecting the will of Almighty God. Instead of letting our lights shine and holding fast the word of life (Phil. 2: 15-16), we are giving non-Christians opportunities to blaspheme Christ. It ought not to be so! "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13: 4) How many souls

will be lost to the cause of infidelity or the abandonment of responsibility?

2. Divorce has a deep effect on many people. It embraces a large circle of people. The divorcing couple cannot rightly say that they are the only ones involved. There are the friends, the church, the family, and most tragically, the children. Sometimes families that seemed to be pillars get divorced and the effects on the church are astounding. Churches can be torn apart, the very heart of their activity and encouragement ripped out when a family whose example is so strong breaks up. Some lose their faith, and others might think, "if they can't do it, how can I?" It can become a serious stumbling block to many.

But perhaps the most affected and least thought of in these situations are the children. Divorce is something that will have a dramatic impact on the rest of their lives. It's not like a beat up toy that they can toss away and forget about. While still at home they will be juggled between parents, trying to learn how to deal with instability both physically and emotionally. They will be torn in their feelings, desperately wanting to have their parents together, yet thinking that they must make a choice between them (even though such may not be necessary, the feeling is still there).

Once gone from home, the child still feels the pressure that comes from a torn family. They may have a family of their own now and it becomes difficult to "share" their own children with the parents that they feel had let them down. It is said that "time heals all wounds," but this is a wound that will forever change their outlook on life. It could very well be the thing that drives them from God. Though this does not justify their actions, it reminds us that "whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea... woe to that man by whom the offense comes!" (Matt. 18: 6-7). How tragic when it is the parents who become such a factor in driving their children away from the Lord! Parents, do not underestimate your influence on your children!

With all of my heart I wish I knew how to properly impress upon Christians how important marriage is and how terrible divorce is. Brethren, "Marriage, Divorce, and remarriage" is more than an academic issue. It is a stunning reality that is sweeping this country and ruining more people than we can imagine. Some will know what I'm talking about. Others might think I'm an alarmist. But if that's what it takes to wake us up, let me sound the alarm loud and clear! Souls are going to be lost over it. And believe me, it *can* happen to you, whether you want to believe that or not. "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10: 12). Your realization of this will help prevent it happening to you.

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SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

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"FIRE IN THE HOLE!"

Originally, "Fire in the hole!" was the warning cry which accompanied the use of dynamite or nitro in mining and petroleum operations. Gradually, it has become a generic warning for any impending danger.

The thought of fire conjures up the worst possible scenario in a building, on board a ship or plane, or just about anywhere else. Even the use of explosives or a backfire for the purpose of quenching or controlling an existing fire is a delicate procedure fraught with risk and danger.

And when it comes to preachers, the cry of "Fire in the hole!" would tempt some of us to enter a burning building to rescue our sermon outlines. This story is about a preacher who lost not only his sermon outlines, but most of his other possessions in a destroying fire. But before we hear about him, how would you other preachers and brethren (especially brethren), react in the face of such a real or threatening loss?

Like most young preachers, I had to wrestle with the real or perceived value of sermon outlines in my earlier preaching days. In my first meeting, I thought I had enough outlines for a two-week meeting, but found out the last day that my last outline was merely a summary of things I had already preached. A record snowstorm closed the meeting, and I doubt that the Lord sent that storm just for my benefit, but I sure did appreciate it. And I don't even like snow.

Older preachers advised me to get some sermon outline books, and loaned or gave me some of their own. I even went to the Gospel Advocate store in Nashville and bought a joke book, "Snappy Stories That Preachers Tell," thinking it would give me some needed or expected (in the eyes of the brethren), illustrations to spice up my sermon outlines. What a waste of time.

At one point in my preaching days, I accepted the responsibility of speaking on a daily radio program, only had two "radio sermons," and had already used one of them on the same station before I took on that monumental task. I bought and read a book of 50 radio sermons delivered by a famous preacher, and couldn't use a single one of them. What another waste of time.

When preachers would get together, especially younger preachers, the first question somebody asked was, "Have you found any new sermon outlines lately?" Some even engaged in a chain letter-type practice in order to get some new outlines. I broke that chain real quick.

While readily admitting that I have received help from other sources as to sermon content and outlines, I can truthfully say that most of my sermons have resulted from long hours of study and meditation spent in the greatest sermon outline book of the ages—the Bible. And the longer I preach, the more time I spend arranging my sermon subjects and outlines in quotation marks which enclose some Bible statement or principle. I may depart from that format on rare occasions to deal with some contemporary problem by design or by request, but I still try not to let the tail wag the dog.

I personally believe that every preacher should have some plan, some outline in mind, whether written or unwritten, when he stands before an audience of judgment-bound souls. They have prepared to hear him, and the least he can do is make some preparation on his own part.

And even in any emergency, the Bible is full of the best sermon outlines we can find. Stephen gives us one on the seed of Abraham (Acts 7), and Paul used a similar one at Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13). If a preacher can't preach the outline on "The Mystery of Godliness" (1 Tim. 3: 16), he couldn't preach one from *Pulpit Helps* either.

One older preacher said that we should use our sermon outlines once, then throw them in the trash can, thereby disciplining ourselves to study the next time we address the same subject. This may be an extreme formula, but it makes a point.

Some of our best outlines, like the Gettysburg Address, have been written on the backs of old envelopes, grocery bags, dinner napkins, sales slips, or any remnant of papyrus which we could bum from our wife's purse. And some church bulletins which rely on the "Selected"/"Anonymous" format could be more useful if they would provide a blank space for store lists or sermon outlines.

Written and preserved outlines can provide a valuable source for future use in classes, publication, and even for posterity. I have sermon outlines which I haven't used for years, and probably never will use again. But I don't aim to throw them in the trash can or set fire to them. But neither will I allow them to lull me into a metal state of lethargy and slothfulness, nor deceive me into thinking that they would bring a premium bid at an auction.

Ordinarily, I would not mention the name of the preacher who lost most of his possessions and sermon outlines in a fire, but in this case I make an exception, not just to verify my story, but because I want him to know that we appreciate his years of service in the Lord's vineyard.

Larry Hayes is not well known, as preachers go. But besides preaching in meetings and other labors in this area, he worked with one congregation for 17 years. And I can assure you that the loss of sermon outlines in a fire has not affected the quality of Larry's preaching.

Some folks resort to arson in order to collect insurance or to punish some enemy, or maybe just to get rid of some old structure that has served its purpose and become an eyesore in the community. So I am not advocating that either preachers or the brethren (espe-

daily the brethren), set fire to the preacher's outlines in order to infuse some new life into the pulpit.

But "Fire in the hole!" wouldn't necessarily herald the end of the world even if we did lose a few sermon outlines, and may even be a blessing in disguise if we could salvage the preacher.

**WRITTEN FOR
OUR INSTRUCTION**

Frank Himmel

1575 14th Ave W.
Palmetto, Florida 33561



"NONE RETURN AGAIN"

During a recent family reading of Proverbs 2 we paused to consider verse 19. Wisdom says in reference to an adulteress, "None who go to her return again, nor do they reach the paths of life." What does it mean, none return again?

Most expositors take it as stating a general rule. "It is very rare that any who are caught in this snare of the devil recover themselves, so much is the heart hardened, and the mind blinded, by the deceitfulness of this sin. Having once lost their hold of the paths of life, they know not how to take hold of them again, but are perfectly besotted and bewitched with those base lusts" (Matthew Henry).

Sadly this observation is true. The unbridled lust which leads one to adultery will likely lead him there again and again. One so naive as to fall for the adulteress' flattering words (e. g., she "understands him" as his wife does not) is apt to repeat his folly. Witness the number of people who are in their third or fourth marriages, or those who have quit bothering with marriage and just cohabit with one "lover" after another. I confess that I do not understand why anyone, even those who disregard God's law, would seek a marriage partner among adulterers. They have proved unfaithful to their vows once. Is there reason to think they will not do so again?

I do not mean to rule out forgiveness, by God or man. "No one gets so far into sin that God will not receive him back if he makes the proper amends. But the danger and rule is that a patron of the kind of life described above will continue therein to the end of life" (E. M. Zerr).

Now consider another sense in which the statement, "None who go to her return again," is true. And in this sense it is not a general rule, but an absolute certainty.

No man who becomes involved in adultery will ever be the same again. He cannot return to where he was. He can be forgiven by God. He can be forgiven by his mate. He can even be forgiven by the spouse of his partner in adultery. But things can never be quite the way they were.

The implicit trust his mate placed in him has been broken. The special intimate relationship between husband and wife has been violated. The painful memory of the act remains in the consciences of all involved, try as they may to remove it. The feelings of guilt are still there. To the extent the sin is known to others the reputation is damaged. If those involved are Christians the Lord's holy name is reproached. If they have children who know of the affair the confidence of those little ones is shaken. Time will aid in healing these wounds, but it cannot completely erase them.

Some mates elect to put the adulterer away. If they so choose, he/she loses the privilege of a God-approved marriage (Mt. 5: 31, 31; 19: 9), despite what men may say about the matter. His only options are to remain single or be reconciled to his mate (1 Cor. 7: 11).

Before you become involved in this or any sin, take time to sit down and count the cost. Do not be dazzled by the enticing array in which Satan clothes sin. Look at what is inside. Look at the price you must pay. Look at where you will be after the momentary pleasure is past. Are you entering a place from which there is no return?

"The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; he who would destroy himself does it. Wounds and disgrace he will find, and his reproach will not be blotted out" (Pro. 6: 32, 33).

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SINCERE WORDS

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Dick Blackford

P.O. Box 83
Tuckerman, Arkansas 72473

CHRIST, MAN, AND SIN

Following are some questions that have troubled brethren in recent times over the nature of Christ, man, and sin. While admitting that this is an oversimplification of a complex subject we have attempted to answer each question from the Scriptures. We hope this will be helpful to the Bible student who doesn't have the time or resources for an in-depth study.

1. HAVE ALL MEN SINNED? Answer: Yes (Rom. 6: 23; 1 Kgs. 8: 46).

2. DOES MAN HAVE TO SIN? Answer: No (1 Cor. 10: 13).

3. WILL MAN SIN? Answer: Yes (1 Jn. 1: 8, 10).

4. HOW DOES MAN SIN? Answer: By transgressing God's law (1 Jn. 3: 4). He may sin by omission (leaving undone what God said to do, Mt. 25: 41-46) or by commission (doing something God said not to do, Rom. 13: 8, 9).

5. WHY WILL MAN SIN? Answer: Because of the weakness of the flesh (Mt. 26: 41; Rom. 8: 1-4; 6: 19; Heb. 5: 2).

6. DOESN'T THIS MEAN MAN HAS TO SIN? Answer: No, not in the sense of being forced or compelled to sin. It means he sins because he is not as strong against temptation as he ought to be. It doesn't absolve him of responsibility (Js. 1: 14, 15).

7. DOES THE FACT THAT THE BIBLE TEACHES MAN WILL SIN, MAKE GOD RESPONSIBLE FOR IT? Answer: No, no more than the fact Jesus knew Judas would sin meant he caused it (Mt. 26: 20-24). It just means he knew it ahead of time. Man still has a choice.

8. WAS ANYONE WHO SINNED GIVEN TIME TO REPENT? Answer: Yes (Rev. 2: 21).

9. WHEN I REPENT TOWARD GOD MUST I SPECIFICALLY NAME EACH SIN FOR WHICH I AM REPENTING? Answer: No scripture says so. Jesus did not teach it in the model prayer (Mt. 6: 9f) nor was anyone condemned for not doing so. To prevent misunderstandings (thus causing confusion) there will be times when we will need to do so before men since they cannot read our hearts.

10. DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THE BLOOD OF CHRIST CONTINUES TO CLEANSE ME EVEN AS I SIN AND BEFORE I REPENT AND CONFESS? Answer: No, we are forgiven *if* we confess (1 Jn. 1: 7-9). Simon was not forgiven even as he sinned before he repented and confessed, though he had entered a blood relationship with Christ when he was baptized (Acts 8: 13f).

11. WILL GOD EXTEND MERCY TO ANY WHO ARE GUILTY OF SIN WHEN THEY DIE (SUCH AS CURSING AND THEN GETTING KILLED IMMEDIATELY IN A CAR WRECK)? Answer: The Scriptures imply mercy at the judgment (Js. 2: 13; Mt. 25: 31-46; and possibly Mt. 5: 7). One should not take comfort in sin from this. On what basis or criterion God will extend mercy, only He knows. In our finite minds we may not understand how He can have perfect justice and yet extend mercy. We should have enough faith in Him to believe that He is a just God and He will do right. "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?" (Rom. 11: 33, 34).

12. WAS JESUS SUBJECT TO THE SAME TEMPTATIONS THAT WE ARE? Answer: Yes (Heb. 4: 15).

13. WAS JESUS JUST AN ORDINARY MAN WHILE ON THE EARTH? Answer: No. The word just means "only." Jesus had two natures. He possessed humanity and deity (Phil. 2: 5-8; Heb. 1: 6-8; Mk. 2: 5-7; Col. 2: 9).

14. CAN A MAN SO LIVE (SINLESSLY PERFECT) AS NOT TO NEED THE BLOOD OF CHRIST? Answer: Suppose one were to arise among us today and confess that *I have lived to the full potential of my ability and taken advantage of every opportunity to do good. I have not left undone anything God commanded me to do. Nor have I violated any of the prohibitions He has made. I have lived without sinning.* What would Jesus say to him? You are a liar and self-deceived! You have made me out to be a liar and my word is not in you." Jesus has said it won't happen (1 Jn. 1: 8, 10; 1 Kgs. 8: 46) because of the "weakness of the flesh" (Mt. 26: 41; Rom. 6: 19; 8: 3; Heb. 5: 2). To say man can so live as not to need the blood of Christ is to say he can earn his salvation on meritorious works and place God in debt to him. It is to say that Christ died in vain for that person.

15. SINCE ALL HAVE SINNED AND WILL SIN DUE TO THE WEAKNESS OF THE FLESH, SHOULD WE LOWER THE STANDARD FROM TRYING TO ALWAYS DO THE RIGHT THING? Answer: No. Scripture tells us that all sin (Ec. 7: 20; 1 Kgs. 8: 46; 1 Jn. 1: 8-10; Rom. 3: 23) but it never hints that the standard should be lowered. It should ever remain our goal, even if we stumble.

16. IS IT PROFITABLE FOR US TO STUDY SUCH A SUBJECT AS THIS? Answer: If a subject is dealt with in Scripture, then it is profitable (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17). What may be unprofitable is the amount of time and space we give to a matter. Am I treating this as a weightier matter than God would want me to? Does it merit volumes and reams? Why should we become obsessed in theorizing over something Inspiration says won't happen (that one of us might live sinlessly perfect)? It is not merely "remote" or "unlikely" to happen. The Bible teaches *it won't*. EVERY man will need the blood of Christ. To uphold a theory we may feel forced to take an indefensible position, such as: (1) that we are forgiven by the blood of Christ even as we sin; (2) that Jesus was divested of his divinity and godhood and was just an

ordinary man; or (3) that we can be saved on the basis of merit and not need the blood of Christ.

To uphold cherished views of cherished men we are often tempted to brand each other with prejudicial names, hold allegiance to a man more highly than we ought regardless of the absurd things he might say, become unethical in our journalism, and divide. Is that profitable?

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

Send all questions to:

Weldon E. Warnock

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Beckley, West Virginia 25801



BROKEN BODY OF CHRIST

QUESTION: *Would you comment on 1 Cor. 11: 24, specifically the word "broken." Is it proper to speak of the broken body of Christ? Many versions omit this word.*

ANSWER: Quoting from vv. 23-24, Paul wrote concerning Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper, "That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."

"Broken" appears in the King James Version which is based on the *Textus Receptus*, meaning the received text of the 16th century. But its genuineness is widely disputed. It is absent in the best manuscripts and omitted in the most modern translations of the Bible.

However, inserting "broken" into the text does no injustice to the passage if we understand it to mean *given* or *sacrificed* in death. This is precisely what Luke's record states. Jesus said, "This is my body which is given for you" (Lk. 22: 19). In Paul's account, Jesus said, "this is my body, which is (broken) for you." The word "broken" may logically be supplied or inserted by the context, preferably italicized or in parenthesis. The body of Jesus was for us as a sacrifice. Hence, it was broken.

"Given" is from the Greek word *didomenon*, nom. sing. neut. part. pres. pass. of *didomi*, which means in Lk. 22: 19, "give up, sacrifice" (Arndt-Gingrich, p. 192). The word "broken" is from the Greek word *klomenon*, nom. sing. neut. part. pres. pass. of *klao*. Moulton says of *klaso*, "with figurative reference to the violent death of Christ, 1 Cor. 11: 24" (p. 232). Thayer states, "shattered, as it were, by a violent death, 1 Cor. 11: 24" (p. 348).

True, Jesus' body was pierced (Jn. 19: 34), but his body was not broken, that is, in the sense we use the word in our vernacular. The Bible plainly states, "A bone of him shall not be broken" (Psa. 34: 20; Jn. 19: 36). The word "broken" in Jn. 19: 36 is from *suntribo* (shattered,

crushed), a different word than the one in 1 Cor. 11: 24. Therefore, when we break or separate into parts the bread of the Lord's Table and say, "This (the broken bread) represents the broken body of our Lord," we fail to understand the broken body of Jesus Christ. Indeed, the bread represents the body of Christ that was given or sacrificed for us, but breaking the bread into parts is not a symbolic picture of Jesus' body being fractured. As already pointed out, Jesus' body was not broken. Breaking or separating the bread has no symbolic significance. Breaking the bread was (is) for distribution or to eat the bread (cf. Acts 2: 42; 20: 7; 1 Cor. 10: 16).

Things Most Certainly Believed

Julian R. Snell

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Lawrenceburg, Tennessee 38464



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOB

Our title presumes upon the understanding that Job was not a man living in the gospel age, he was an Old Testament patriarch who lived hundreds of years before Christ. However, since the Bible is the unfolding of God's eternal purpose, human redemption, we must recognize that every book of that sacred volume is in complement to this purpose. Within the Old Testament there are types and shadows which look to the New Testament for the anti-type and substance. Sometimes these references are glaring, sometimes they are subtle, but in either case there is the ultimate pointing to Jesus Christ, the savior of the world. Within the Book of Job we are treated, for the most part, to the subtle inquisitiveness, pleading and longing, the questioning that finds answer only in Christ. While we are attentive to Job's questions we are more intent on the answers from Jesus.

Generally speaking the book of Job addresses the problem of human suffering, ever present and a fact to be recognized and dealt with. "And in my dream I stood with an angel on one of the balconies of heaven. And the angel allowed me to lean over and listen. But I could not bear to hear. Sounds of pain came up to me: the cries of widows, children in agony, strong men wounded and mutilated, the burden of the bereaved, the lonely, the bewildered, the frightened. Men crushed women beneath their feet, and starved little children, and hunted their brothers into poverty and unemployment and disease. Even women hurt one another with cruel deeds and malicious words. There were pains of body and mind and soul which no one on earth could understand and no one could cure. The world seemed full of sorrow and pain, and the sound of it all came up to heaven until my soul was sick." (Leslie D. Weatherford, *Why Do Men Suffer?* page 11).

Admittedly, the above quote comes across bleak and pessimistic, yet expressing truths not to be denied. The sources of human suffering are varied. There is nature, the elements, disease, pestilence and the like. From man himself suffering is traceable to greed, lust, wars, cruelty, as we meditate upon the attitudes toward others generally prevalent. Then we must not ignore self in respect to the violation of law, moral and spiritual. The problem of suffering? How can God, all wise, absolutely good, tolerate such as the heritage of all men, good and bad? To answer, "such is God's will" while expressive of truth generally, does not either adequately or specifically explain.

Suffering in the case of Job recognizes Satan as its source and origin. In Job the struggle of piety, faith and resignation to God's hand with despair, adversity and gloom are presented with the overriding conclusion, suffering may be unexplainable. Thus one must bow and say, "I do not understand yet I believe and trust in my God." While suffering is the abiding thrust of the book no real solution is herein afforded to the problem. It is certainly impossible to crystallize into a brief statement the book of Job. Nevertheless it is of inestimable value and in the introduction to this series we approach it simply as the Book of Job, the story of a man whose name is Job.

Within this central fact, Job the man, we become aware that he is related to both God and Satan, suggesting initially that both God and Satan had an interest in him. He is related to other human beings, his wife, family and a group of friends along with numerous acquaintances referred to, but who quickly pass across the stage of his life. Most importantly we see Job within the consciousness of his own personality. All things retire from him until he is alone. Here we concentrate our study, Job within his own personality, Job as a person.

Although we hear the voices of the philosophers, we pay little attention. Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and finally Elihu offer words which must pale before more profound matters. Job answers his critics, even refutes their philosophy in personal application. We do not consider this nearly so important as the cries and inquiries from within the man as he seeks for and asks for some answers. The book of Job is an unanswered agony. There are no answers till we find them in Jesus, here we have answer to the agonizing cries of Job.

First, see the man Job as he is revealed in verse 1. Two words describe him, two phrases tell the secret of his being, what he was. He was "perfect and upright," complete and straight, if you will. Could any higher compliment be paid? This however does not touch on relationship to God. It has to do with human relationships. The secret of his completeness is in the fact he was one "that feared God," he was religious. He "eschewed evil," he turned down evil, this is his moral quality. Here is a man with an upward outlook from which he has learned to deal with the things by which he is surrounded. We suggest in this connection that morality is ever rooted in religion, there can be no true morality without religion. God ratifies that estimate of Job and

amplifies, "there is none like him in all the earth" (v. 8). Here we have a man of integrity, uprightness, having relationship with God, and turning away from evil. What a beautiful character, how easily we are attracted to him.

We are able to watch this man in the realm of the physical, mental and spiritual. He is seen visited by Satan, this resulting in overwhelming calamities. The reason for which is not found in the man himself. This was the mistake of the three friends and it is sometimes our own as we search for the why. Job is stripped of everything which man naturally depends upon, wealth, children, health and even loses the partnership and support of his wife. The process runs on, his friends forsake him, even though they spend seven days in silence with him and offer three cycles of speeches by way of explanation of his predicament, they finally turn from Job.

Now consider his mentality, his personal consciousness. Rooted within was a conviction of integrity, this was assailed and misunderstood by his friends. Presently he lost the sense of greatness of his own personality and is heard to say "naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (1: 21). This seems to reflect the idea, I am still here, no matter what. However, he lost this and cursed the day he was born. And not only so, he lost his sense of God as just. Our man, physically stripped, mentally misunderstood, therefore spiritually groping after a solution as to why God was thus dealing with him. Thus, Job faces the perplexing question of suffering which is not the result of the sin of the sufferer.

Job presents a man in the majestic loneliness of his own being. It is in this that we must be impressed with the reality that man in the final analysis is in a one on one relationship with God. But hear the mental cries of our man. Rising from the center of his personality, stripped and lonely, he cries out of need, inquiry and even challenge. Cries to which the book gives no answer. Then we turn to the New Testament and see Jesus, who began earthly life without wealth, went through life devoid of things others depend on and before we are through with him we find he has answered every question Job has asked, supplied every need that Job revealed. And so it is with every man.

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EXHORTING PEOPLE TO OBEY

Over the last few years I have observed a trend that has become troubling to me. It seems that in many sermons that I hear there is very little emphasis placed upon exhorting people to obey the gospel and extending the invitation for them to obey immediately. In one lesson I heard an excellent exposition of an Old Testament passage that was designed to stir our hearts (and it stirred mine) but the teacher closed his otherwise splendid lesson suddenly by saying only, "If we can help you in any way just come to the front while we stand and sing." No mention was made of the plan of salvation, no exhortation was given for those in the audience needing to obey to do so, no pleading with the hearts of lost people that were there and needing to respond.

When Paul taught the unbelieving Philippian Jailor he exhorted him to "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16: 31). Paul taught him the urgency of the Lord's plan and he obeyed "that very hour of the night" (Acts 16: 33). On Pentecost Peter preached a soul stirring message and to those believing Jews he commanded, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins..." (Acts 2: 38). "and with many other words he solemnly testified and exhorted them..." (Acts 2: 40). The success of this kind of preaching is evident.

It appears to me that preaching a good lesson and then virtually extending no invitation is like a hunter taking aim on his target only to find out when he pulled the trigger that he had loaded his gun with blanks. Really, it's not even taking good aim.

Have we lost our faith in the power of the gospel? Do we no longer believe that it can touch the hearts of lost men and women, boys and girls? Do we feel that the story of Jesus has lost its appeal? Do we feel that we have repeated the invitation so much that senses have become dull? Could it be that we have offered so many invitations to which no one has responded that now we have come to expect no one to respond? Is this why we have come to spend less time and emphasis on exhorting people to obey the gospel? Is this why the song leader sometimes only leads the first and last verses of an invitation hymn? Is this why so few do obey the gospel? I hope these questions challenge your thinking and tug at your heart.

The gospel has not lost its power! When sown in good and honest hearts it will bear fruit. God has promised

that it would and so it will. But let those of us who preach and teach fulfill our responsibility. Let us not only tell the story and teach the commands, let us exhort those we love to obey.

E. A. "DIKE" DICUS
March 14, 1913 - November 3, 1990

On November 3, 1990, Emrold Aaron Dicus, affectionately known as "Dike," finished his journey in time. His funeral service was conducted on November 7, 1990 at the building of the Lorain Avenue church in Cleveland, Ohio. The building was filled with his family, brethren, business associates and friends. Interment was at Sunset Memorial Park. Ed Holcomb and I spoke at his funeral.

' Dike was the oldest son of the last A. W. Dicus. His father was widely known as a preacher, educator and songwriter. Much of A. W.'s preaching was done in his home state of Indiana. He was an administrator with Florida College in its early days, and he was the inventor of the automobile turn signal indicator. But, A. W. was probably best known as a songwriter. He wrote several songs but the best-known are probably OUR GOD. HE IS ALIVE and LORD, I BELIEVE. Several of his songs were sung at Dike's funeral.

Dike was baptized by the well-known Indiana preacher, J. C. Roady, at the age of 12. He was baptized at the Lincoln Street church in Bloomington, Indiana. He was a Christian for 65 years.

Dike had two younger brothers, David of Chattanooga, TN., and James of Agoura, CA. When A. W. died, Dike more or less picked up the mantle of leadership and exerted strong direction for the family. His father had stressed education to his sons, and they listened.

Dike graduated from Purdue University in 1936 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was something of a "throw back" to an earlier time. He was a full-time Gospel preacher who supported himself. Most of the preachers of the generation before him were farmers who preached. (It is probably more accurate to say that their families were farmers and they were preachers.) Dike was an engineer who preached.

He had many titles at Anvil Industries in Cleveland. He was Engineer, Chief Engineer, Vice President in charge of Engineering, President, Corporate Vice President and a Director of Anvil Industries. He retired in 1980, though he continued as a consultant to the Corporation until his death. I said in his eulogy, "I suspect he did more preaching than any other Mechanical Engineer in history! Or, did he do more Mechanical Engineering than any other preacher in history?"

When he and Martha moved to Cleveland, they attended the West Side church. During that time, he did a lot of "fill-in" preaching. When the church meeting at Warren Road and Detroit Avenue was established, he

began "full-time" work as their preacher. That congregation is now known as the Lorain Avenue church and Dike was the only preacher they have ever had. His work with Lorain Avenue covered a span of approximately 43 years. He **never** received full support for his preaching work with the church. Only in the last few years did he accept **any** support, and that was only after the church insisted that he do so.

Not only did he preach for the congregation, but for the last several years of his life he served as an Elder of the church. He is held in highest regard by brethren throughout this region for his service to God and His people. Only a man of such strength could have successfully carried the burdens of husband and father, a secular job, preaching and serving as an elder at the same time. He was a truly unique individual. In his "spare time" he pursued his hobbies of raising flowers and cabinet making. With his "much patience" he almost hand-made two Grandfather clocks, several tables, a cradle for his grandchildren and many toys.

He and Martha (Hewett) were married in her parents' home in Marion, Indiana on June 11, 1939. They celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary with a host of their family and friends on June 11, 1989. For over 51 years they exemplified what God intended marriage to be. The "home" was one of his favorite subjects. His mission was to keep the home intact, sacred and full of love. Building on that foundation, he knew the church would maintain its purity and harmony. Some of his greatest preaching was on the Home.

Dike and Martha had two children, John and Debbie (Mrs. Ervin Jones), both of whom live with their families in Cleveland and attend the Lorain Avenue church. John is now one of her Elders. They were proud of their children and grandchildren, Christopher, Lisa, Sarah and Rachel.

His concern for the cause in Northeast Ohio was genuine. He had spent his life promoting Christ and His church. He constantly urged preachers to "stick with the basics" and "fight digression." He knew how and when to be firm. He was esteemed very highly in love for his work's sake (1 Thess. 5: 13).

At his funeral I said, "When I pillowed my head last Saturday evening after learning of Dike's death, it occurred to me that our world is a lonelier, sadder, poorer place now that he is gone. It is now time for those of his generation who have served God so faithfully, to go home. A. C. Grider is gone! Harry Pickup, Sr. is gone! And, E. A. Dicus is gone! May God help us."

If you would like to communicate with Martha and the children, you can contact them at: 4641 West 210th Street, Fairview Park, Ohio 44126 - (216) 331-6362. We express our deepest sympathy to this good family.

—Lewis Willis

**PATIENCE—
EASIER
SAID THAN DONE**

Norman E. Sewell

824 S. Pine St.
Harrison, AR 72601



I'm sure we're all familiar with the old saying that something is "easier said than it is done." No doubt this saying is true, for it is much easier to talk about something and to recognize that the thing ought to be done, than it is to actually get busy and do it. It is much easier to see our own faults than it is to correct those faults, yet this is exactly what God requires of us. Its much easier to say "well, that's just the way I am," thinking that this excuses us, than to accept responsibility for my faults and correct them.

I understand what God says about being longsuffering, or patient as we use the word today. I know for example that God is the ultimate example of such longsuffering just as He is of love. Peter wrote: "*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3: 9). Peter was writing about the return of the Lord, and that His failure to return up to that time did not mean that He would not come, only that God was longsuffering with us. Well, He has been longsuffering with us for just less than 2000 years now, and He continues to be patient desiring our salvation. I know also that He expects me to be patient with others, just as He is patient with me (1 Thess. 5: 14). But, to tell you the truth, this is so much easier said than it is done.

I take no pride in the fact that I am not very patient. In fact, when it is pointed out that I need to be more patient I become annoyed, not because it isn't true, but because I already know the truth of the accusation. The only alternatives I can see are either to just give up trying to do better and go on in my impatient ways, or to continue making a diligent effort to do better next time than I did today. And, because I want more than anything in this world to go to heaven when that great day comes, I will continue trying to do better.

Being longsuffering or patient may not be a natural human reaction, but it is something that can be learned and adopted. In Colossians 3 Paul wrote about the need for those Christians to put away from their lives the old sins they had lived in and put on a new character. In verse 12 he wrote: "*Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.*" There's that word again. Patience is something I can develop if I want to and am willing to work at it. In Galatians 5, when Paul contrasted the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit he wrote:

READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5: 22-23). The fruit of the Spirit is that which is produced in the life of a person who allows himself to be led by the Spirit of God through the revealed word. If I am not developing "longsuffering," then it must be that to some degree, and for some reason, I am not spending enough time studying the word of God, and making proper application of it on my own life. Further, when Paul wrote to the Corinthians about the nature of love he wrote: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind" (1 Cor. 13: 4). If I am not patient with others, does this mean that I don't have as much love for others (neighbors, enemies, etc.) as I should?

Brethren, these are not fun things to think about. Most of the time we really don't want to see all our faults, and especially we don't want to have someone point out all these faults to us. But they are serious enough that we had better start opening our eyes and trying to put on the "new man" or character that God wants us to have. Maybe this seems like such a small thing compared to murder or fornication or some other highly visible sin, but the truth is that unless we open our eyes and our hearts to see the way we really are we will not grow and mature as He desires. And we may soon start excusing these other things too.

Here are some suggestions that may help us to change the things that are lacking in our lives. First we need to really SEE ourselves as God sees us; all our sins and all our shortcomings. I think sometimes that we Christians actually feel somewhat superior to others when in reality we are as much sinners as anybody else, but now we have been forgiven through the blood of the Lamb. This doesn't make us any better, only very blessed. Then comes the next step: correcting the thing that is wrong. I believe praying about the problem is

very helpful; recognizing that I need God's help to be more open to my sins and my shortcomings; praying that I may have the right spirit to make whatever changes are necessary. And, when I have sinned, confessing my sin, repenting of it and praying that God will forgive me, and He will. And third there is the determination to fight against my weaknesses or shortcoming so that I may be more the man (or woman) that God wants me to be. Sometimes you just have to eat a little "humble pie" and admit that you need to be more patient, or that you need greater self-control, or that you need more compassion for the lost, or that you need more commitment in your life to live for the one who died for you. As I suggested in the beginning, this is much "easier said than done," but IT MUST BE DONE! When you start counting the cost of following Jesus remember to count it both ways; the cost to you in this life if you do follow Him in everything, and the cost to you in eternity if you don't. And while it may be "easier said than done," IT CAN BE DONE.

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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

DUDLEY ROSS SPEARS, 1609 Parkside Dr., Bowling Green, KY 42101—(Editor's note: In the December issue of STS I had a short piece entitled "Extreme Positions" in which I took exception to the last paragraph of an article brother Spears had sent. It was my view that the statement dealt with left the writer open to the charge of a consequence which I believed to be faulty and which I did not believe brother Spears would accept. We are glad to print the following from him).

Thanks for the offer, I think I will take you up. I hope to add nothing to any issue that drives people farther apart. I read my article again — and again. Your statement says, "But the conclusion was drawn in the last paragraph that when Jesus was tempted, only the outer man was involved while the inner man remained untouched." There is nothing at all about His temptation in the article. I didn't even use the word tempt, tempted, or temptation.

How could someone press what I said to a conclusion that only the outward man sins, that the inward man is untouched? The question of Jesus' temptation, whether He could or could not have sinned, is an entirely different issue than His nature as God and man. There may be a relation but they are different aspects of His nature. I was dealing with his being — not his conduct or ability.

I think that someone has to press very hard to come to the conclusion, from what I wrote, that only the outer man sins and the inner man remains secure and cannot sin. I certainly do not believe this Calvinistic concept of the nature of man.

RALPH SMART, P. O. Box 56, Milbridge, Maine 04658—We are beginning a new work in Calais, Maine, a city of some 5, 000. A couple of Christians have moved there. They have been driving 1 1/2 hours one way to Milbridge. Bruce Hudson, of Bangor, and I, will try to help this new work. We will conduct services in Riverview, New Brunswick (Canada) in the mornings and in Calais later in the day.

TONY MAUCK, 1040 Meadowland, Beaumont, TX 77706—The Pinecrest church in Beaumont, TX has moved to its new facility on Dowlen Road in Beaumont which will more adequately serve our needs in the future. The Dowlen Road church has Joe Sheffield, Jason Riley and Max Dawson as evangelists, and 16 faithful men serve as deacons. Our membership of 250 is excited about our new work. Our new mailing address and phone number is as follows: 3060 Dowlen Road, Beaumont, TX 77706. Phone (409) 1996.

KEVIN SULC, 2314 E. Hundred Rd., Chester, VA 23821—An opportunity has opened to begin a sound work in Anderson, Indiana, a city of 60, 000, located an hour northeast of Indianapolis, just off I-69. Anderson is the largest populated area in Indiana with no faithful congregation. We will be working with Alan Jones and family in this effort. Alan is already involved in evangelistic work at the Indiana Reformatory in Pendleton which is south of Anderson. A few months ago, he moved to Anderson to be nearer his work. Not only has this increased his effectiveness in the work at the prison, it has created the opportunity for the work in Anderson itself. I will assist in the work at the prison and also plan to attempt some evangelism at Anderson University. We would like to also reach out to other towns/cities in Madison County (pop. 160, 000). Most of the faithful Christians in the county are members of the church at Alexandria. We also have some contacts with some caught up in institutionalism. I stand in need of some support for this effort. I will gladly supply references of individuals and churches who know me. I will need monthly support plus moving expenses. If you cannot help, you could assist me by letting others who might be able to help, know of this need. Please call me for more information about this. (804) 452-0458.

(Editor's note: I have known Kevin Sulc all his life. His father served as an elder of the Rivermont, VA church for several years, along with my own father. Kevin has had several years experience in preaching the gospel, most recently at Rivermont, VA, his home congregation, where he had done very good work.)

BILLY ASHWORTH, Rt. 3, Box 215, Columbia, TN 38401—As of December 31, 1990, I terminated my work with the Hillview church in Nashville, TN, ending a total of nine and a half years that Lois and I have spent with this good church. During those years we learned to love and appreciate the brethren there. We were wonderfully treated by them. Such fellowship with faithful saints of God make preaching the gospel much easier, more enjoyable and satisfying.

We look forward to placing membership and working with the Collegeview church in Columbia where Jim Deason is doing an excellent work. We hope to be involved in their teaching program. The church is young but growing in numbers and enthusiasm. Plans call for an expansion of the building to accommodate the growth. I will also continue preaching the gospel over Radio WAKM, Franklin, TN, the same station over which I began preaching in March, 1955. The church at Hillview have paid for this program each Sunday morning from 7: 05-7: 30, at 950-AM. I will continue preaching in gospel meet-ings, as well as by appointment. I am not "quitting preaching" as long as the Lord spares my life. If I may be of help to anyone in this way, you may write me at the above address, or call (615) 388-8355.

JOHN AND ANNA COPELAND, 580 Maddox Lane, Powell, WY 82435—We regret that we are no longer holding services in Powell, WY. We have tried to get the work started here but have been unable to succeed. We met strong opposition from the liberal church. We thank the brethren who stopped and worshipped with us when traveling. It meant so very much to us and encouraged us to remain faithful to the Lord. We are trying to sell our property and move south to be nearer our daughter who is ill and needs our help.

MARSHALL MILBURN SEWELL

Marshall Milburn Sewell, who served 35 years as an elder of the St. James, Missouri church, passed away on September 4, 1990 at the age of 73. He obeyed the gospel while a teenager and became a member of the Oak Grove church which still meets for worship. On May 31, 1938 he was married to Martha Elizabeth Spurgeon. Two children were born to this union: Norman Eugene Sewell, gospel preacher of Harrison, AR and Sharon Ann Sewell of the home in Rolla. Funeral services were conducted on September 7 from the Atkisson-Swinford Funeral Chapel in Rolla by Larry Morris and Luther W. Martin. Burial was in Oak Grove Cemetery. —Submitted by Luther W. Martin

OLEN HOLDERBY, 4265 Lakeshore Bid #18, Lakeport, CA 95453 (707) 263-3682—All readers please take note of our new address. After living and laboring in Fresno, CA for 13 years, we have moved to work with the small group of brethren meeting in Lakeport, CA. Most of my support comes from outside in this effort. In addition of the local work, the last year found us in gospel meetings in Oroville, CA. St. Louis, MO, Tahlequah, OK, Long Island, NY and Lincoln, NE. In October Connie W. Adams was in Lakeport in a good meeting. We

have high hopes for this area and solicit your prayers to that end.

LESLIE DIESTELKAMP, 1730 W. Galena Blvd., #102W, Aurora, IL 60506—I began to know brother Joy Notarte in my work with his father in 1974 and 1976-77. Since then I have had numerous reports from American brethren, all of whom recommend him highly. His father was one of the greatest preachers in that country—the Philip-pines—and his three sons have carried on the great work since their father's death. Joy deserves some help, for economic conditions there are very difficult and the people with whom he works in various places are very, very poor. I wish I could help Joy myself but cannot now, but I do commend him to whomever might be able to help in the good work he does. Write to me for his address and information about him.

NEY RIEBER, 613 Zion Church Road, Sanford, NC 27330—The prison work continues to be profitable. Since my last report there have been three more baptized at Polk Youth Center. The chaplain continues to be an obstruction, but the inmates I come into contact with recognize his tactics and this creates a sympathetic disposition towards me which he does not realize.

PREACHERS NEEDED

BAYSIDE, NEW YORK — The Bayside church, which is located in the north-eastern part of Queensborough of New York City, is seeking a full-time preacher. The membership is nine with a few visitors on Sunday mornings. Outside support will be needed, although we will be able to supply some. Please contact Albert Dickson, 65-12 Utopia Pkwy, Fresh Meadows, NY 11365; phone (718) 445-2773 for more information.

EL TORO, CALIFORNIA—The church here is looking for a full time preacher. The congregation has approximately 35 members and an average attendance on Sunday morning of 45-55. We can provide full support. Please contact: Saddleback Valley Church of Christ, 22600-B Lambert St. Suite 810, El Toro, CA 92630; or phone Andy Anderson (714) 380-1206 or Walt Halagarda (714) 768-8518.

PETER MCPHERSON, Bancroft, Ontario, Canada — We moved back to Bancroft about four years ago to labor where we had earlier spent seven years of work, baptizing nearly 100 people during that time. Many of these were elderly at the time they obeyed the gospel and many have gone to their reward. We presently have about 40 in attendance counting children and some visitors. Two were baptized in October. A new family of Christians is moving here in February. Since I did not have adequate support when we returned here, I worked in real estate and did quite well until the market went dead. The church here is able to supply \$150 a week and I have \$150 a month from elsewhere. I would like to devote full time to this work and could use some help to that end. I am known to Norman Midgette, Mike Willis, J. T. Smith, Brian Sullivan, Sewell Hall and a host of other preaching brethren.

FROM AROUND THE WORLD

ITALY—Francesco Fosci reports from Latina that on Nov. 16 another man was baptized after studying for four months... Stefano Corazza reports that they lost the location they had rented in trying to launch the new work in Rome, but have now found a better one. The dollar is now being exchanged at the rate it was 10 years ago while the cost of living is rising. For instance, meat costs \$8 to \$12 a pound, turkey \$5 a lb., chicken \$3. 65 a lb., milk is \$5. 50 a gallon, fresh fish \$12. 50 a lb., gasoline is \$5. 60 per gallon. While Stefano has replaced some of the support he has lost, he is still far short of what is needed.

SOUTH AFRICA—From Pinetown Doug and Sheila Bauer report their plans to visit among individuals and churches in the USA with whom they have been in contact for a number of years. They are financing their own trip and would like to meet with any who are interested in the work they are doing. They are leaving South Africa on January 31 and can be contacted c/o O. Fred Liggin Jr., 934 Robinson Ave., Barberton, Ohio 44203.

ECUADOR, SOUTH AMERICA—Ruben C. Amador of Houston, Texas reports on his visit to Ecuador and Brazil. Three were baptized in Ambato, Ecuador. Attendance there runs 50-60. There are also area churches in San Andres, Rio Verde and Ambatillo. He then reports the

following: "There is a power struggle among the liberal preachers in Ecuador. I was given a copy of a bulletin circulating along the Ecuatorian Christians. Enrique Romero, the preacher for the Guayaquil church in Quito, names himself as the 'director' of nearly all of the churches in Ecuador. He claims that Louis McBride, a 'missionary' with whom he is having the power struggle, is the 'direction' of just two churches in Ecuador. "Romero claims to receive support from a church in Niceville, Florida for his personal use and "for the work in many congregations." This Romero also claims to control one congregation which is sound in the faith.



MONEY WITHOUT WORKING

We have seen a number of unabashed scams over the years but recently came across one which surely takes the prize. An outfit in Brooklyn, NY has sent out a brochure advertising a kit to help you make money without working. It boasts "This new multilevel money making idea will make miracles happen. We have combined two fast moving principles for making big money without working too hard for it... This program was created for the millions of people who want to stop working, and start having some fun in their lives." They are selling vitamins and they assure us that by starting off with \$2 sent to this company in Brooklyn we can end up with \$93, 312 a month. Of course, a kit with 25 newsletters which you must send out will cost you \$20 (Not to mention postage) and you can get additional kits at increased prices, of course. All of which reminds me of what Paul said "If a man will not work, neither should he eat."

NO LAW

Ray Downen of Joplin, Missouri, a member of the Christian Church, publishes a newsletter called VIEWPOINT. He delivers himself recently on the question of authority for musical instruments in worship and decries those who "make laws where God made none." Hear him: "God gave no law of authority, no law of silence, and no law against the use of instrumental music in His praise. Men have no right, in His name, to make laws they think God should have made!" Well now, since Paul said "Where there is no law, there is no transgression" we can expect this gentleman to place his approval on infant baptism, animal sacrifice, prayers to Mary and a host of other things on which the word of God is silent. The Hebrew writer argued that Christ could not be a priest on earth since he was of the tribe of Judah "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood" (Heb. 7: 14). Silence was prohibitive there, was it not?

A MERRY HEART — GOOD MEDICINE

Tom Icard, my late brother-in-law was a man with a tremendous sense of humor. His merry heart was good medicine to all who knew him. His wife, my sister Glenda Icard, has written a summary of their life together for the family to keep and I asked her if I could lift an item or two once in awhile for this column. She readily agreed. When Tom and Glenda first married, they rented an apartment in a large house in Hillsboro, Ohio, then owned by Lloyd Barker who lived in the other part of the house. Glenda wrote "One day he (Tom) locked Lloyd in the attic with the statement that he could come out when he agreed to lower the rent. Then Tom ran downstairs to see if Gwen wanted anything out of Lloyd before letting him out. About that time Lloyd appeared at the kitchen door. Tom told everyone that Lloyd was so tight he would jump off the roof before agreeing to lower the rent." Well, sorry about that Lloyd, but that was too good to keep.

FLIES AND BALD SPOTS

"Early in his work at Tomlinson Run (PA), one Sunday Tom (whose hair was thinning and who had a little bald spot on top of his head) was being pestered by a fly. When the fly finally landed on his bald spot. Tom stopped and said 'I don't mind his landing. It's just when he skids that it bothers me.' The audience broke into laughter and Tom proceeded with his sermon.

CHURCH OF CHRIST HOSPITALS

For many years now, our institutional brethren have operated church-supported hospitals in other countries. Why they have not made a push for them in this country is a mystery to me, unless they are afraid that their folks will not stand still for it yet. Every year, I receive a brochure advertising a "Medical Evangelism Seminar." One was conducted in Dallas, Texas January 4 and 5, 1991. This one was hosted by African Christian Hospitals Foundation. The schedule lists a section from 1: 30-3: 00 P. M. dubbed "Reports on Medical Works of Churches of Christ" and (counting the 4: 45-5: 30 session) there are eight different hospitals or clinics mentioned. There is the Chimala Mission Hospital in East Africa; Clinica Christiana in Guatemala; Nigerian Christian Hospital; Ghana Mission Clinic; Predisan, Honduras; one in Mexico; a medical clinic in Tegucigalpa, Honduras; and a report on the Haiti Medical Evangelism Campaigns. These activities are not reported as the works of individuals but as "Medical Works of Churches of Christ." Hospitals are good places for the sick to go and Christians have as much right to operate them (or work in them) as anyone else, but it is not the mission of the church of the Lord to organize, operate or fund them. To argue for them as a means of evangelism is to land smack in the middle of the social gospel which argues that we must minister to the "whole man."

SAID WHAT NOW?

In the October-December, 1990 IN WORD AND DOCTRINE, Curtis A. Cates reports on four speeches delivered at Missouri Street in West Memphis, Arkansas April 20-21, 1990 by Rubel Shelly. Shelly used to be fairly conservative but has ended up out in left field. He is one of those who has been holding hands with the Christian Church folks more recently. Cates reports that he ridiculed "the old paths mentality." He belittled our imitating the pattern for the church of the first century. Said he "I reject pattern theology." He further said to imitate the church of the first century is an "eccentricity, a foolish thing to do." He also ridiculed the sermons great men have preached for years on "Marks of the True Church." He also said "The church is not the kingdom of God." "The kingdom did not come on Pentecost, whereas the church did." Once men hunger for fellowship with the forces of error, and once they lose their faith in the old Jerusalem gospel there is no telling what they will think up to say next.

EDITOR'S MEETING SCHEDULE—1991

March—	Dowlen Rd., Beaumont, Texas (3-8) Danville, Kentucky (17-22) Caneyville, Kentucky (24-29)
April—	Holly St., Denver, Colorado (21-26)
May—	Harrodsburg, Kentucky (5-10) Jordan, Ontario (19-26)
June—	Jonesboro, Tennessee (3-9) Huntington Beach, California (23-28)
July—	Yakima, Washington (7-12) Sunnyside, WA (14-19) Lawrenceburg, Kentucky (28-Aug. 2)
August—	Sycamore, Gravel Switch, KY (5-11)
Sept. —	Taylorville Rd., Louisville, KY (8-13) Beatrice, Nebraska (23-29)
Oct. —	Campbellsville, KY (7-13) Plainfield, Indiana (20-25)
Nov. —	Spencer, Indiana (4-10) Mesa, Arizona (17-22)

It is likely that two or three more meetings may be added to this list though details are too indefinite now to include them here. We would be glad to greet any of our readers who might be in any of these areas.

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(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)