

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 XXXII

SEPTEMBER 1991

NUMBER 9

THINK ON THESE THINGS

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WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH A LITTLE LEAVEN?

"Ye did run well, who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal 5: 7-9)

There are several statements in this epistle to the Galatians that indicate a departure from the gospel that was preached by the apostle Paul "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.." (Gal. 1: 6) "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" (Gal 3: 1) "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Gal. 4: 9-11) "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4: 16) "Ye did run well, who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" (Gal 5: 7)

Those in Galatia had been removed to another gospel, they were not obeying the truth, they were turning to the "beggarly elements" of the former bondage from which they were delivered, and were not running well. What caused this problem? Why did they turn from the way of truth? Throughout this epistle is the evidence that "false" brethren had in-

fectured them with the old Jewish Traditions that had carried them back to the bondage from which they had been delivered by the gospel.

The apostle said, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5: 9). This is a warning to all that a little false teaching will eventually affect the whole body. All too often brethren console themselves with the statement that "we do not have many who hold to false teaching in this church." But these brethren make little effort to teach them the truth or deal with them scripturally. It takes only a little leaven to affect the whole body.

The Holy Spirit used the word "leaven" because it has a certain quality about it that parallels the working of real leaven in dough. It is used metaphorically of the false doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt 16: 12), and of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Luke 12: 1). A false teacher injects his teaching a little at a time. In time a little yeast will penetrate an entire mass of dough. Because of that quality of leaven the apostle employed that figure here. Just leave a little false doctrine alone in a congregation of people, and soon the whole body is led away from the truth.

To express the serious danger of tolerating fornication among disciples of the Lord, Paul said, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (1 Cor. 5: 6). The leaven of malice and wickedness is to be put away and the un-leaven bread of sincerity and truth put in its place. False teaching and evil practice is described by the "leaven" of the Pharisees and Sadducees and their hypocrisy.

It is well known that one rotten apple will infect a barrel full if left together. In that same sense a little false teaching will destroy the whole body where it is tolerated. The only way to save the barrel of good apples is to get rid of the bad apple. The whole barrel of good apples will never make one bad apple good. Neither will a whole body of believers made one false teacher sound and good by holding him in their fellowship. Many brethren believe a little false teaching will do the church no harm.

The fellowship of a local church is not really disturbed by confronting one who is teaching something

without divine authority. But some will say, "we do not want to divide the church over such a little thing." Brother, let it go and in time the whole church will be polluted by that "little harmless thing."

A respected brother begins to pervert passages from God's word to support a false view of some Bible subject. Far too many brethren will insist that this good brother's view will not do any harm. Leave him alone, some will say, and there will be no problem. In fact, many will take issue with the one who does challenge the error with this brother. He becomes the "trouble maker" who does not manifest "the spirit of Christ." He is treated as the enemy of the church. That is the sense of Paul's question: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4: 16).

The Judaizers were affecting the churches of Galatia with their efforts to go back to their traditions of the law of Moses, which could not provide salvation through Christ. Paul said, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5: 9). In 3: 1: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" To permit a little leaven is to be bewitched not to obey the truth. And by his question in 4: 16, Paul affirms that he is not their enemy when he tells them the truth. We cannot betray the truth of the gospel by tolerating even "a little leaven" to remain with those trying to do the will of God.

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Searching The Scriptures
VOLUME 32 SEPTEMBER, 1991 NUMBER 9

Published Monthly at
BROOKS, KENTUCKY

Second Class Postage Paid at Brooks, Kentucky
 and at an Additional Mailing Office
 USPS-487-440

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Office of Publication
 315 Yearling Drive
 Brooks, Kentucky 40109
 Phone (502) 957-2257

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" QUOTE

"He who lives in a glass house should never invite over he who is without sin."

UNQUOTE "

Editorial

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LIVING PEACEABLY WITH ALL MEN

Rom. 12: 18 is a short verse that says a lot about human relationships. It reads, "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men." This passage sits in a context that deals with relationships.

Human relationships are basic and the basis of everything in life. How we relate to people affects our homes, jobs, the church, friendships and neighborhoods. Paul Parker said, "The act of dealing with people is the foremost secret of successful men. A man's success in handling people is the very yardstick by which the outcome of his whole life's work is measured."

This text divides itself into four sections from which we learn four lessons.

"If it is possible... "

1. From this phrase I learn that *there are times and circumstances when peace is not possible*. There are some people with whom it is impossible to get along. There are times when strife creates a rift and someone will ask, "What else can I do to solve the problem?" Part of the time the answer is that there is nothing you can do.

Somewhere a few have developed the idea that if you are a good and kind individual that you can be at peace with anyone. That is just not so. Even Christ, who was called the "prince of peace" (Isa. 9: 6), wasn't able to have peace with all (John 1: 11-12; 5: 19-ff). Dennis Wholey said, "Expecting the world to treat you fairly because you are a good person is a little like expecting a bull not to attack you because you're a vegetarian."

2. I also learn that *if peace is not possible, it must not be our fault*. Pursue peace to see if it is possible. If others will allow it, have peace with them. However, make sure, if you can't get along with someone, it is their fault and not yours.

3. Those with whom it is impossible to get along: (a) One who cares little about what the Bible says. When this is the case, we have no standard to which to appeal to settle any dispute or as a guide for conduct, (b) One who is domineering and overbearing like Diotrophes (3 John). This kind of person "interacts with their environment like a tornado in a trailer park" (*Quote Magazine*). (c) The person who is strong and self-willed, (d) Those who have no feelings for others (Matt. 7: 12; Phil. 2: 4). (e) The proud and arrogant one who looks down his nose at others. We will give evidence of this list later from the context.

"... as much as depends on you... "

1. We must *do all we can* to have peace with others. We have no control over others to make them do their part. But, we can do our part. Notice that the text tells us to make *every effort*. It says, "... as much as depends on you..." (Emphasis mine DVR).

We are to be peacemakers for they are called the sons of God (Matt. 5: 9). Paul instructed the Romans to "... pursue the things which make for peace..." (Rom. 14: 19).

2. How do we try to get along with others: The answer is found in the context of Romans 12. (a) *Be dedicated to the Lord* (vs. 1, 2, 11). One who is not diligently serving the Lord will not care anything about the Lord's instructions about how to get along with people, (b) *Be humble* (vs. 3, 16). (c) *Have sincere love for others* (vs. 9, 10). (d) *Care about other people* (vs. 13, 15). Be kind and considerate. Mark Twain said, "Kindness is the language which the deaf man can hear and the blind man can read." Dale Carnegie said that you can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years in trying to get other people to become interested in you. (e) *Be honest and fair to all* (v. 17). (f) *Be good to your enemies* (vs. 20-21). (g) *Be honorable citizens* (Rom. 13).

3. The efforts we make must not violate our responsibility to God or our conscience (Rom. 14: 23). Thus, our text is not talking about peace at any price, but peace that can be attained following God's law.

"... live peaceably... "

1. Living peaceably with others is not merely a suggestion that makes life more enjoyable, but we are commanded to do our part in getting along with others (Mark 9: 20; 2 Cor. 13: 11; 1 Thess. 5: 13; 1 Pet. 3: 11).

2. What does it mean to live peaceably? W. E. Vine suggests that it involves harmonious relationships, friendliness, rest, contentment and being void of bitterness, strife, friction and enmity.

3. To live in peace with others is both *good* and *pleasant* (Psa. 133: 1). It is *good* in that it is right and good for us to live in peace. But, it is also *pleasant*. To help you get the picture of how pleasant it is, think for a moment about a close friend or family member. Think of how pleasant the relationship is. Think of the fun times and the great memories. Now imagine for a moment that something suddenly changed and now you just don't get along. Can you envision the pain, the hurt, the agony and frustration? If so, we can understand, at least in part, how pleasant a harmonious relationship is.

On the other hand, think for a moment about a person with whom you cannot get along. Think about how unpleasant, tense, nerve-racking and how it hurts. What if something could be done to resolve that? Can you imagine how good and pleasant that would be? If so, we can see the nature and the blessing of living peaceably with others.

"... with all men. "

There are times that we apply these principles of trying to get along to some, but not in our relationship with others. We can be so cordial to strangers or friends

and yet be so rude, cutting and unkind for our own family members.

Whoever said "Sticks and stones may break our bones, but words will never hurt me" was wrong. Robert Fulgham said it correctly, "Sticks and stones may break our bones, but words will break our hearts. "

Sometimes we work hard at making and maintaining our friendships and yet make no effort to get along with our enemies.

The text says, "all men". That includes friends, fellow-workers, neighbors, fellow-Christians, family members (parents, children, in-laws, brothers and sisters) and even our enemies.

I find myself thinking about this verse quite often because I see so many situations where it is applicable.

**A PERSONAL NOTE
FROM
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THANKS FOR YOUR RESPONSE

The reader's response to our mail-out about our computer problems has been great. Many have written kind and encouraging notes. A number of people have responded by paying for subscriptions for others. We thank you for your help.

—Connie W. Adams

I am very grateful to Donnie V. Rader for editing the paper during the summer months of June, July and August and for continuing in this work until the first of the year. First of all, his writing and layout work has been excellent. The July special, "Whatever Happened To Common Decency?" was well done and well received. We had to reorder to meet extra demand.

It has been an eventful summer. We were struck twice by lightening within one month. Our loss of computer billing data has been largely recovered by now, thanks to a mountain of effort by Karen Arbuckle, my wife, Bobby, and the cooperation of so many of you who responded quickly and compassionately to our appeal for information. I have been surprised to find out how many computer "experts" there are out there among the brethren. Yes, we know you have to "back up" your work daily. We have always done this. But "back up" can get fouled up too, and that is what happened to us. We have now installed a better system and added hard copy backup in case of future problems. We are thankful to those of you who took this occasion to write words of appreciation and encouragement about the paper and to those also who sent in new subscriptions. They could not have come at a better time.

I had to have additional back surgery on August 6. If all goes as planned, I should be back into my meeting work in September, though I will have to live with some restrictions for a few months. I cannot sit very long without exercising and that poses some problems about working very long at a desk. Once again, my good friend and brother, Donnie V. Rader, has agreed to help. I have asked him to work as guest editor until January 1st and hope to be able to be back at my post by that time. He is a busy man and extra effort is required to maintain his own work and take care of this task as well. I have utmost confidence in his knowledge, ability and character. He is true to the book in his preaching, writing and life. Please give him your support and encouragement. We continually owe a debt of gratitude to those men who consistently provide excellent material for the paper, just because they want to do it. God bless all of you. Pray for us.

SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

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"NOT DONE IN A CORNER"

Concerning the fulfillment of those things "which the prophets and Moses did say should come," including the revelation of Christ and his will, Paul said, "this thing was not done in a corner" (Acts 26: 22-26).

Even in the presence of hostile witnesses, Jesus said, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing" (Jno. 18: 20).

Even the Old Covenant, given at Mt. Sinai, was given openly so that "all the people" were witnesses to that revelation (Ex. 20: 18). And when that covenant was abrogated, it was done so "openly" (Col. 2: 14-17).

The New Will and Testament of Christ was revealed openly by the Spirit, working through apostles and prophets (Eph. 3: 5). The resurrection of Christ was confirmed "by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1: 3), and by witnesses whose testimony is unimpeachable to this day (1 Cor. 15: 5-8). And the word preached was confirmed, not by alleged "proofs" emanating from some dark corner, but by "signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost..." (Heb. 2: 3, 4).

Now, let us compare all these things "not done in a corner" with the confusing and contradictory claims of so-called "latter day revelations." And not only do these "foolish prophets" (Ezek. 13: 3), contradict each other, they even contradict themselves.

Around the year 610 (A. D.), a man by the name of Mohammed claimed that the archangel Gabriel appeared to him in a corner of the world somewhere around Mecca, Arabia. Out of this corner came a new "revelation" known as the Koran, and the subsequent religion of Islam.

And Muslims base their faith and their eternal destiny on something done in a corner.

Around 1830, in a corner of upstate New York, Joe Smith made the claim that he had found and translated some golden plates, and with the abracadabra of another religious magician, the Book of Mormon was born.

And, peculiar to these corner revelations and religions, Joe Smith conjured up not only his golden plates, but peep stones of quartz through which he allegedly translated the plates. And not only was all this done "in a corner," it was done behind a bed sheet in secret, and the translation passed through to scribes on the other side.

Joe Smith and the Mormons claimed witnesses to these clandestine operations, but three of his original "witnesses" (Cowdery, Whitmer, and Harris), were discredited and "cut off" by Smith himself in less than ten years.

Not only did Mormonism begin "in a corner," its leaders and authorities have continually attempted to suppress certain writings and evidence which is detrimental to the claims of Mormonism. Even to this very day, Mormons are urged to avoid any kind of confrontation where their claims and the Book of Mormon can be subjected to the light of God's word, the Bible.

And if you doubt that, just try to arrange an open, fair, public examination of the Bible vs. the book of Mormon.

Not to be out-cornered, William Miller and Ellen G. White came on the scene about 1844-45 with their version of "vanity and lying divination" (Ezek. 13: 6, 7), claiming like the false prophets of old that the Lord had sent them. Mrs. White even claimed that she was "caught up to the third heaven" to receive her revelation, which surely should give it more credence than what Joe Smith claimed to have gotten through peep stones behind a bed sheet.

In the latter part of the 19th century, Charles Russell came up with prophecies from the southwest corner of Pennsylvania, predicting the return of Christ in 1874. When Christ did not show up, Russell claimed that the Lord and his apostles did come, but that they were invisible. Or, to use Paul's phrase, they were hiding "in a corner" somewhere.

Not sufficiently embarrassed by previous failures, Russell's followers predicted that Christ would return and set up his kingdom in 1914, and that "millions (then) living would never die." Again, they claimed the event happened, but only a few could see it. "In a corner" again.

Dear readers, we are not trying to make fun of you, or your religious beliefs. Many sincere people have followed, and continue to follow, these false prophets who got their "visions" in the darkened corners of human revelation. Their claims are so shallow, inconsistent, contradictory, and even ridiculous that it is a marvel that intelligent people could be deceived by them.

Jesus came the first time and set up his kingdom in keeping with Old Testament prophecies (Lk. 24: 44; Heb. 12: 28). When he returns the second time, it will be to deliver up that kingdom to God (1 Cor. 15: 24). And you need to get into that kingdom (Jno. 3: 5), stay in it (Rev. 14: 13), and stay out of every religious system that "shall be rooted up" (Mt. 15: 13).

The once-revealed scriptures are a complete and sufficient revelation to guide us until the Lord returns (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17; Jude 3).

And we can "say unto you by the word of the Lord" that the second coming of Christ will not be "done in a corner" either.

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IN MEMORY OF
IRVEN LEE

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1914



1991

On May 4, 1991, at ten minutes till two in the afternoon, I watched as my father-in-law exhaled his last breath. Suddenly, the body that had been alive lay still and quiet. Though it has been over two months since that day (this article is being written in mid-July), vividly, the moment of death can be called to memory's eye and relived.

At the funeral, Donnie Rader asked if I would write a memorial for brother Lee. The text of the funeral sermon has already appeared in the *Guardian of Truth*. I did not wish to repeat the thoughts of that sermon; therefore, it has taken a little time for me to comply with brother Rader's request. The time has been good because it has already begun to give perspective to the past. As I tried to do in the funeral sermon, I want to honor brother Lee's memory while not violating what his wishes would be. My article will therefore attempt to say what I know he would want me to say.

Brother Lee came to be widely known and very influential, but his power and influence accumulated slowly through a life of diligent toil and service in the quietness of the Lord's fields and vineyards where he worked.

Those who know trees realize that generally the faster the tree grows, the softer and weaker is the wood. Those men who devote their lives to the service of God, and work quietly, studying and preaching, those men who remember the importance of godliness, grow into the solid oaks and cherries from which beautiful furniture is made. On the other hand, often, influence and prominence are handed to a young preacher in a gift-wrapped package, and he is ruined by it. He remains a quick growth tree that is really good for nothing: it burns too readily even to use for firewood.

There have always been those preachers who, from youth, have been in the limelight. There was less of this in brother Lee's day, and in preceding generations, because preaching was anything but a lucrative field. Often there was no "full-time" support available. Men like brother Lee preached because they had to; it was in their bones. "If I say, 'I will not make mention of him nor speak any more in his name,' then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain" (Jer. 20: 9).

Brother Lee always found it impossible to understand how a young man could say, "I wish somebody would help me get a church," or, "I wish I had a place to preach." He felt we have God's permission and help to preach. What else does anyone need?

I have delighted in hearing and reading of his first meeting held in 1931. There was an abandoned schoolhouse, and this painfully shy boy of almost seventeen went and got permission to conduct a meeting in the little building. He went up and down the country roads and lanes inviting people to come. He then preached to those who accepted his invitation. Brother Lee commented on this in *Preaching in a Changing World*: "Do you see how I got started preaching? It was simple, was it not? I preached and preached before any established church thought of asking me to work with it. I grew up into the work. There is no better way to begin."

Though circumstances have changed greatly, the principle is still good — let a man work to serve God in God's own ways. Let no man seek preaching as a means to gaining fame and prominence, or merely to have a job. Opportunities to preach still abound to the one who is willing to serve in any capacity God desires.

Often today young men enter a preacher-training program at a church with equipment galore, with enormous resources, and many such will then preach no way but first class. Many will get the idea that they have a right to expect first class accommodations always. Such men will be limited in the work they can do for the Lord. I am afraid that many preachers today have very distorted ideas about preaching. In brother Lee's life, I saw what preaching really is.

Preaching Is A Close Relationship With God
First, preaching is a very close relationship with God. When I was a teenager first thinking of preaching, and in the early years of my preaching, Elijah was one of my favorite characters because of the relationship he had with God. Actually, this kind of relationship with God characterized all the great characters in the Bible: Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Jesus, Paul, and others. I saw this relationship with God in brother Lee's life as well. The cultivating of such a relationship should be the first order of business with any would-be preacher of the gospel.

Preaching Is Commitment

A man such as I have described is going to preach whether "supported" or not. Once he puts his hand to the plow, there will be no turning back. To him, preaching will never be a way of paying for his degree. Whether making tents or receiving wages from the churches, he preaches the gospel. These words are not meant to cast aspersions upon any man who, because of health, is

prevented from preaching. I do think that, often a man may preach until he comes to an opportunity for more lucrative work. In other words, the man who, because of health or financial catastrophe, has to abandon the primary goal of preaching, has nought but my understanding, and he can still serve the Lord effectively. But that man who turns his back on preaching the gospel to seek wealth and an easier life raises questions about how deep-seated his love for God and for the gospel was. Sometimes men will preach until they discover just how able they really are; then they decide their talents are being squandered just preaching, so they go into some other field of endeavor. Perhaps that man should realize that God has nurtured him during the developing of his abilities expecting that when they are mature, he will devote his full powers and energy to the proclamation of the gospel.

Preaching Is Unfeigned Faith

In brother Lee I saw unfeigned faith, a faith solid and pure all the way to the bottom. There was love for God also. Once I asked him what had helped him to maintain such a good life. What had enabled him to resist temptations? Among other things, he said, "I realized what Christ did for me, and I felt that I should do all that was in my power to show Him how I appreciated it."

Maybe I could sum up the point I am trying to make like this: Perhaps we need to revive the expression, "man of God." These words were found often in the Old Testament. They suggested a man wholly given to God's service, no matter what he might do for his living. We need preachers who are first of all men of God. "He was a man of God" is the finest thing that could be said of any man.

Preaching Involves A Lot Of Studying And Thinking

Brother Lee did a lot of sermon preparation as he drove. In the earlier years, Sandra, his younger daughter, remembers that on Sunday afternoons, or on any afternoon when there was a service that night, brother Lee would go for a walk, and she was perfectly welcome to go along, but she knew that she was supposed to remain quiet because her daddy was thinking about his sermon.

This thinking I am talking about was called meditation in olden time. Let me tell you what meditation does for a sermon. Has your wife ever put into a pot chunks of meat, with potatoes, carrots, onion, and other vegetables, to make a stew? When she gets all the ingredients together in the pot, the meal is not yet ready to serve, is it? The stew must be cooked and simmered until the ingredients have grown tender, until their individual flavors have blended into one delicious taste. Meditation is the cooking of verses and thoughts and ideas of persuasion into a sermon powerful to move, to convince, and to convict. We need more simmering in our sermons.

Preach With A Purpose

Preaching should be aimed, it should meet a need. Often brother Lee was called into a situation where there was trouble and strife. He would preach to the need. It never occurred to him to evade the issue. He believed in applying the gospel alcohol to the skin. It

would burn when it touched where it was needed.

Let Us Run Our Race

Brother Lee has run his race; he has fought his fight. The course each one runs is different. There are many fields to be worked, many different challenges to be faced. Let us be determined that whether our challenge is faith in the face of trial, or steadfastness against the howling winds of false doctrine, or resisting the temptations of the flesh, or joyfully dealing with the hum-drum affairs of the ordinary, that we will be resolved to complete our race and receive our prize. I would like to think that brother Lee has become a part of that great cloud of witnesses who cheer us on by their example.

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ARE WE HAVING "GOSPEL MEETINGS"?

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The practice of conducting gospel meetings is widespread. While that expression is not found in the Scriptures, most would concede that the concept is Biblical. Just as one may use such terminology as "the New Testament church," "scriptural authority" and "Bible classes," so one may talk about a "gospel meeting." Most would have no problem with the language itself. The problem comes when words are applied to something they do not describe. Obviously it would be a misnomer to call something a "Bible class" if the Bible is not being studied. Likewise one should not call something a "gospel meeting" if the gospel is not the focus of the meeting.

The word "gospel" appears several times in the New Testament with phrases that modify, or qualify, its meaning. These phrases can help in determining whether a real gospel meeting takes place. The purpose of this study is to examine some of them, for surely the presence of these elements will be visible when the gospel is preached.

Terms Modifying The Gospel

It is "the **gospel of Christ**" (Rom. 1: 16; 15: 19; Ph. 1: 27). It is "of Christ" because it is **His**; it came from **Him**; it concerns **Him** — His Deity, authority and saving power. When the meeting focuses attention on the Son of God, as in the first century, it is truly a gospel meeting. Gospel meetings should deal with the **doc-trine of Christ** rather than the philosophies of men. Souls are in jeopardy when His teaching is perverted, both of the preacher and of those taught (Gal. 1: 6-9; 1 Tim. 6: 3-5). First century preachers preached **Christ** (Acts 8: 4, 12, 35).

It is "the **gospel of your salvation**" (Eph. 1: 13). What theme could be more vital in a gospel meeting? Implicit in the expression "gospel of salvation" is a truth that is explicitly declared in other passages; namely, that man without the gospel is without hope, he is lost, he needs deliverance from the guilt of sin. Paul, in Antioch of Pisidia, preached "the word of this salvation" (Acts 13: 26). In Philippi Paul and Silas were found "showing the way of salvation" to the people (Acts 16: 17).

An essential fact to remember, too, is that the gospel is called "the **gospel of the grace of God**" (Acts 20: 24). What a great opportunity the gospel meeting affords to teach the "true grace of God" (1 Pet. 5: 16) in contrast with the religious world's false notions on salvation by grace.

A study of the book of **Acts**, looking at the sermons of the early preachers, will help us to appreciate **what can** properly be incorporated into proclaiming the **gospel** of our salvation. Question: Is a gospel meeting **truly that** when sinners are not even told what to do to **be saved**?

It is "the **gospel of the kingdom**" (Matt. 9: 35; 4: 23). There surely is a place somewhere in the **preaching of the gospel** for preaching about the kingdom Jesus **came to set up** (Matt. 16: 18, 19). Informed Christians **know that the "kingdom"** generally refers to the **church**. Those **in the church** at Colosse were said to be in "the kingdom of **God's dear Son**" (Col. 1: 13). The fact that both words are **used in** Matthew 16: 18, 19 to refer to what Jesus had **come to build** further demonstrates this. Let us **preach "the gospel of the kingdom."** Paul did (Acts 19: 8; 20: 25; 28: 23, 31). People still need to understand the unique nature of **the Lord's church**. One has cause to wonder just **how many of** our younger generation in the church think **that "our denomination"** is just one among the many. **Do they** understand Bible teaching about the Lord's organization and work of the local church so that they will not **become** associated with liberal, institutional churches when **they** move from place to place? Would not a gospel meeting **be** a proper time to speak a few words about that body of which Christ is the Savior (Eph. 5: 23)?

It is the **gospel of peace**" (Rom. 10: 15; Eph. 6: 15). Many people are in a frenzied search for personal peace and inner contentment in this age of turmoil and uncertainty, not knowing that the "Peace that passeth understanding" is found in the gospel of the Prince of peace. It is tragic that so many turn to the gurus of pagan religious philosophy, to the "New Age" voices of people like Shirley MacLaine. The voices of the "channelers" and "mediums" do not speak "the gospel of peace." A gospel meeting provides an opportunity to point desperate, groping souls to the source of genuine peace, a peace that is the possession of all who are in the "one body" of the reconciled ones (Eph. 2: 16).

It is a gospel that demands a **lifestyle that is "worthy of the gospel of Christ"** (Ph. 1: 27). There must be preaching that clearly shows that a verbal commitment to Christ is no substitute for **practicing** holy living that will "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (Titus 2: 10). The carnally-minded brother or sister must understand that thinking, talking and acting like the lascivious age in which we live are unacceptable to God (see Titus 2: 11, 12). The gospel of Jesus Christ deals with the daily conduct of the child of God, and that should be preached. **The Sufficiency of the Gospel**

The material found in the gospel revelation is sufficient for the right kind of gospel meeting anywhere at **any** time. The many truths exalting **Christ** as Lord, **the** extensive teaching about the Lord's **church** in its various facets, the abundance of instruction concerning the **plan of salvation** for lost men, the emphatic declarations about where **true peace** is found, the breadth of teaching on **how Christians are to live** — surely these gospel elements are enough.

A gospel meeting does not need the hype of sectarian charlatans. Congregations can have gospel meetings without resorting to the titillation of a pleasure-seeking

audience. Efforts to be sensational may serve the purposes of denominational revivalists, but a gospel meeting is no place for such. Attempts to project a Thespian stage presence with dramatic flair seems out of order when the aim is to have a gospel meeting. Gospel preachers need not be actors, comedians, magicians or entertainers. The precious truth of the gospel needs to be handled aright (2 Tim. 2: 15). That truth can be preached in plain and simple language that the common man can understand. It will accomplish what Christ intended. It is enough.

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OLD DISEASED WILLOWS AND CHURCHES

Norman E. Fultz

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They weren't really of much value... rotten in the heart, badly leaning, punctuated by many dead limbs which littered the ground after the slightest wind storm. But I hated to lose them.

They were pretty in a strange sort of way even if they were only willows, just plain old willows, not the weeping kind. Like other old gnarled and twisted trees that have withstood the storm and then basked in the sun while they had stubbornly stood for many years, they might have become the subject of poem or have been framed in the camera lens of some creative photographer. I'll have to admit I've had dreams of finding some old twisted tree and of being able to catch the light just right as I clicked the shutter. I have the same dream about the crusty, wrinkled face of an old man or an old woman when each deep furrow under a crown of gray — maybe even disheveled—hair tells a story of endurance through many a storm of life and many a hardship suffered.

And they — my old willow trees — were a sort of landmark, too. Standing in my yard or on the back deck of the house, it was easy to explain to any querist my property line. "Under the arched limb of the second willow, barely to the left of the third and onto the fence," I could say. And he'd know. Never had anybody failed to understand it? We all need that kind of landmark from time to time, something highly visible, dependable, immovable, that can help us keep our directions in life on the right track.

Though diseased and always dropping their dead limbs, I'd pruned them a bit, thinking they might survive a few more years. Oh, I'd thought about just cutting them down, especially when I'd be picking up the debris they shed. Then I'd stand back and look at them. Sentimentality would win out.

But in a couple of recent spring storms, two of them came crashing down. And no marvel, for other, far stronger things that didn't catch nearly the wind as does a tree succumbed to the force. In the storm's path only a mile or two before it reached these aged towers of former strength, several power poles had yielded. The trunk of one of the trees broke some four feet up and the limbs fell in opposite directions forming a 180 degree semicircle like someone dropping a handful of pick-up sticks. The other holding its own in the first storm, finally yielded in the second a few days later. Its old, diseased, hollow trunk finally broke. But only after engaging in a tug of war with its roots. Alas, they were overcome, and there they lay crying out to be cut up,

piled into a heap, eventually to yield to the flame of the torch and melt into a pile of dusty, powdery ashes.

No longer a landmark. No longer an adornment where the land ceases its slope and flattens out. No longer a place of rest for the birds, weary from flight, who stop for a brief rest, or perhaps just to perch and sing their full-throated song to a companion nearby. No longer a shade in a parched pasture to which cattle had in years past sought refuge from the hot summer sun. Their usefulness and service to man and others of God's creatures were now a thing of the past. When they've dried out sufficiently, the flame will eradicate even the memory of them except for perhaps a few folk to whom they have had some real significance. Like me, or the farmer who formerly owned the land and saw his cattle lie under them contentedly chewing the cud in the heat of the day or perhaps a horse having turned his back side to the tree for refuge from a blowing rain or winter wind.

As I tackled the task of clean up, the chain saw, with its voracious appetite, chewed its way through trunk and branch, mixing the sawdust with the smoke of its two-cycle engine, and my thoughts turned to Christians and churches. I could even think of specific ones to whom application of my analogies seemed appropriate.

Christians, genuine Christians, are things (I hate to call them "things") of beauty. And they too are much like a landmark. The Psalmist spoke of "the beauty of holiness" as the character of the worship desired by the Lord (Psa. 29: 2; 96: 9). And it is precisely that quality of life that is to characterize the Christian (Heb. 3: 1; 12: 14; 1 Pet. 1: 14-15). They are light and salt in a world of darkness and perversity (Mat. 5: 13-14; Eph. 5: 8; Phil. 2: 15-16). They are instruments of service and praise to God (Rom. 6: 1-19; Heb. 13: 15; Rev. 5: 8). And they stand like bright beacons to those lost in sin, for they hold forth the word of life (Phil. 2: 16) which points men to heavenly realms (Col. 3: 1-4).

But what if one's faith becomes hollow, and the heart is gone from his devotion; and he has become but an empty shell, his spirit diseased with the cares of this world and of this life (Mk. 4: 19; Lk. 21: 34)? Faith which can overcome the world (1 Jn. 5: 4) with all its torrents and fiery darts of the devil (Eph. 6: 16) no longer sustains in the evil day. Patient continuance in well-doing (Rom. 2: 7) is but a memory of the past; and the beauty of life fostered by holiness of heart becomes scarred as the light that had shone in darkness becomes dimmed or smothered. One whose life had been "an example of the believers" (1 Tim. 4: 12) and thus like a landmark for others groping their way through the fog and indecisive-ness of life, himself succumbs to the storms. Fruit-bearing gives way to rotteness. The shadow of faith under which others sought comfort in difficult times no longer beckons a weary pilgrim. Is it his end now to be burned, since the things that accompany salvation no longer keep company with him? (Heb. 6: 8-9).

And there are churches that have stood as landmarks and from whom has been sounded forth the word of the Lord (1 Thes. 1: 8). Lost souls have been drawn to hear and learn the truth by the lives of godly members like a magnet emitting its powerful force. As storms of immor-

ality set off a flood in society, these churches counter with the sword unsheathed and drawn to do battle. And saints are encouraged to "put on the whole armor of God and stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6: 10-18). Incursions of error that threaten doctrinal soundness are met with unflinching loyalty to the Captain of salvation.

But what if a church grows indifferent and is victimized by apathy (Rev. 3: 15-17), or what if it leaves its first love (Rev. 2: 4), or what if it begins to rest on its laurels (Rev. 3: 1), or what if worldliness creeps in and goes unchallenged (Rev. 2: 20), or what if false doctrine makes an inroad (Rev. 2: 15)? Unless these maladies are corrected, when storms eventually sweep across the spiritual terrain, such churches will be unable to withstand. Like the old, diseased willows, they will fall, their beauty gone, their usefulness a thing of the past.

Surely the Lord hates to lose any of His churches. But when disease and decay set in with a persistence like that of leavening which will not be satisfied until it has permeated the whole lump, and His chastening fails to "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12: 6-11), will they not cease as landmarks or lighthouses? And will He not remove their candlestick?

Christians, keep a tight grip on your faith and help the churches of which you are members not become like old diseased willows which cannot withstand the storm and whose usefulness is lost.

"YOU JUST CONDEMNED MY GRANDMOTHER!"

Wallace H. Little

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I could hear myself saying the same thing to the one teaching me the gospel more than 36 years ago. I loved my grandmother deeply. She was as near perfection as anyone I had known. After a long bout with cancer, she had passed away when I was 15. I understood that if the Bible was correct, she died out of the Lord. My heart rebelled. I was hung up on baptism.

My teacher's answer might help others. "You say your grandmother loved God, but never heard of baptism for remission of sins. As one who loved God so much, what would she do if she were here now, listening? What would she advise you to do, with your increased knowledge?"

That was enough. I obeyed God (Mk. 16: 16; Acts 2: 38; Acts 22: 16; Rom. 6: 3-5; 1 Pet. 3: 21). Will this move you to love Christ also (John 14: 15)?

Or, do you still think I'm condemning your grandmother?

**MARRIED FOR
LIFE, WITH ONE
EXCEPTION**

Ron Halbrook

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The Scriptures teach that two people joined by God in marriage are bound for life, the only exception being that an innocent partner may put away a mate guilty of fornication and remarry.

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

But I say unto you. That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery (Matt. 5: 31-32). Jesus referred here to the Old Testament law of Deuteronomy 24: 1-4 which allowed a man to put away his wife for indecent conduct short of adultery, but Jesus said such a practice will no longer be tolerated. **IF A MAN PUTS AWAY HIS WIFE FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN FORNICATION, HE CAUSES HER TO COMMIT ADULTERY WHEN SHE MARRIES ANOTHER.** The difference between the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ can be summarized as follows:

- | Moses | Christ |
|--|---|
| 1. Fornicator put away by <i>death</i> penalty — not marry another. | 1. Fornicator put away by <i>divorce</i> — not marry another. |
| 2. Man permitted to put away wife for conduct short of fornication. | 2. Man <i>not</i> permitted to put away wife for conduct short of fornication. |
| 3. Woman put away for cause other than fornication <i>not</i> said to be in adultery if marries another. | 3. Women put away for cause other than fornication said to be in adultery if marries another. |
| 4. Man she marries <i>not</i> said to be in adultery. | 4. Man she marries said to be in adultery. |
| 5. First husband barred ever getting her back if she remarries. | 5. First husband <i>not</i> from barred from ever getting her back if she remarries. |

Notice both the rule and the exception included in the law. The rule says that anyone who puts away his wife is guilty of causing her to commit adultery when she enters an unscriptural marriage. The exception says that if a man puts away his mate because she engaged in sex with someone else, he is not responsible for her subsequent adultery when she marries another man unscripturally. This shows that an innocent partner may put away a mate guilty of fornication and remarry.

The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" His answer emphasized the principle taught by God from the beginning:

For this cause shall man leave father and mother, and

shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh.

Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery (Matt. 19: 3-9).

Notice again the rule and the exception. The rule says that when anyone divorces his wife and marries another, he commits adultery. God rejects this second marriage as immoral. The exception says that if a man puts away his wife because she engaged in sex with someone else, he does not commit adultery when he marries again.

The word "EXCEPT" conveys the idea "IF AND ONLY IF." "Except ye be converted" means "if and only if you are converted" and become as little children, you can enter God's kingdom (Matt. 18: 3). No man could do the miracles Jesus did "except God be with him" — "if and only if God be with him" (Jn. 3: 2). "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" — "if and only if a man is baptized in water and does so because he truly accepts the gospel revealed by the Spirit, he can enter God's kingdom" (Jn. 3: 5). "EXCEPT IT BE FOR FORNICATION" means "IF AND ONLY IF a man puts away his mate for fornication, he can marry again without committing adultery." The Scriptures do not teach that a person who is divorced by his mate for committing fornication is free to marry another. Compare these statements of Jesus: Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: **AND WHOSOEVER SHALL MARRY HER THAT IS DIVORCED COMMITTETH ADULTERY** (Matt. 5: 32). Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it shall marry another, committeth adultery **AND WHOSO MARRIETH HER WHICH IS PUT AWAY DOTHTH COMMIT ADULTERY** (Matt. 19: 9).

Jesus emphasized that the divorced person is not to marry another.

Two cases of divorce are contemplated in the above passages. 1. A man divorces his wife wrongfully and unscripturally when she has committed no fornication. She should keep the door open for reconciliation rather than marry another man. God gives her no right to seek another spouse. If she does marry someone else, the new marriage will be nothing but adultery in God's sight. The man who causes such a case of adultery by wrongfully divorcing his wife has no right to form a second marriage. 2. A man might divorce his wife because she engaged in sex with someone else. After she has brought her marriage to wreck and ruin by immoral conduct, God does not release her to form a new marriage. If she marries another man, it will be adultery in God's sight. "Jesus here limits the right of divorce to cases of unchastity... the innocent party to such a divorce can

many again. Of course the guilty party could not, for no one is allowed by law to reap the benefits of his own wrong" (J. W. McGarvey, **Fourfold Gospel**, p. 242). All cases of divorce and remarriage result in adultery, with one exception. 1. Whoever divorces his mate and marries another commits adultery. 2. Anyone who marries a person who is unscripturally divorced becomes guilty of the sin of adultery. 3. The divorced fornicator who remarries enters into an adulterous relationship with the new mate. All cases of divorce and remarriage result in adultery, with one and only one exception. Whosoever divorces a mate for fornication and marries another does not commit adultery.

God rules over all cases of marriage. Romans 7: 2-3 plainly says that if a woman's husband dies, she can be scripturally "married to another man." Matthew 19: 9 just as plainly teaches that a man who puts away his wife for fornication can "marry another" without committing adultery. Where does the Bible plainly say that an unscripturally divorced person may marry someone else? There is no such passage! Where does the Bible teach that the divorced fornicator can marry another? No such teaching can be found in God's Word!

What should a person do whose marriage is unscriptural and adulterous? John came as the forerunner of Christ, preaching a baptism in water which required true repentance and which brought the remission of sins. "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance," he insisted (Matt. 3: 1-8; Mk. 1: 4). When John preached to Herod, who was living in an adulterous marriage, he declared, "It is not lawful for thee to have her" (Matt. 14: 4; Mk. 6: 17-18). True repentance required Herod to get out of an unscriptural marriage.

True repentance today requires the same thing. Those who obey the gospel of Christ can no longer live in such sins as fornication and adultery (Col. 3: 5-7; 1 Cor. 6: 9-11). If a Christian persists in such sin, the church must withdraw fellowship from them (1 Cor. 5). An unscripturally divorced Christian, like a divorced fornicator, is limited to these options: "let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband" (1 Cor. 7: 11).

(For further study: The weeks of 15 Jan. and 26 Feb. 1990 Ron Halbrook affirmed and Jack Freeman of N. Las Vegas, NV denied "that two people joined by God in marriage are bound for life, the only exception being that an innocent partner may put away a mate guilty of fornication and remarry." Freeman affirmed and Halbrook denied "that a person who is divorced by his mate for committing fornication is free to marry another." Video tapes of the Jan. debate are \$22. 00 from Truth on Tape, 19409-26th Ave. NW, Stanwood, WA 98292; Feb. debate, \$20. 00 from Chuck Ainsworth, Rt. 5, Box 712, Lindale, TX 75771.)

**Do you read your
Bible
every day?
(Acts 17:11)**

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

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"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isa. 7: 14). This scripture is quoted in Mt. 1: 23 (KJV).

In 1952 the Revised Standard Version of the Bible made its appearance and set forth this passage with "**a young woman**" instead of "a virgin." Obviously, there is a difference between these renderings of Isaiah's prophecy. A young woman may or may not be a virgin, and that translation was evidently intended to give aid and comfort to the Modernists who deny that Jesus was born of a virgin. However, if we look back a bit we shall find out that the Modernists of the present day did not think up this little morsel of blasphemy. They are "Johnnies come lately."

Irenaeus, a Christian who lived 120-202 A. D. took on some people in his day who first came up with this doctrine. Among them were an Ephesian named Theodotion and a citizen of Pontus named Aquila, who were Jewish proselytes to the Christian religion. Note here that it didn't take long for Paul's prophecy to the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts 20: 30) to come to pass. Theodotion was teaching a "perverse thing" on this matter. The Ebionites also taught this error, claiming that Jesus was begotten by Joseph, "thus destroying, as far as in them lies such a marvelous dispensation of God, and setting aside the testimony of the prophets which proceeded from God. For truly this prediction was uttered before the removal of the people to Babylon; that is, anterior to the supremacy acquired by the Medes and Persians. But it was interpreted into Greek by the Jews themselves, much before the period of our Lord's advent, that there might remain no suspicion that perchance the Jews, complying with our humour, did put this interpretation upon these words.... For before the Romans possessed their kingdom, while as yet the Macedonians held Asia, Ptolemy the son of Lagus, being anxious to adorn the library which he had founded in Alexandria, with a collection of the writings of all men, which were [works] of merit, made request to the people of Jerusalem, that they should have their Scriptures translated into the Greek language." (Irenaeus Against Heresies, ANTE-NICENE FATHERS, p. 451).

Here Irenaeus refers to the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament which was a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek language about 250 B. C. The Ptolemy referred to was Ptolemy Philadelphus (286-247 B. C.), the son of the Ptolemy Lagus, a General in

Alexander's army who took over Egypt after the death of Alexander the Great in 331 B. C. This translation is available today and Isa. 7: 14 in it says "a **virgin**," not "a young woman."

Irenaeus continues, "Since, therefore, the Scriptures have been interpreted with such fidelity, and by the grace of God, and since from these God has prepared and has preserved to us the unadulterated Scriptures in Egypt, where the house of Jacob flourished, fleeing from the famine in Canaan; where also our Lord was preserved when he fled from the persecution set on foot by Herod; and [since] this interpretation of these Scriptures was made prior to our Lord's descent [to earth], and came into being before the Christians appeared—for our Lord was born about the forty-first year of the reign of Augustus; but Ptolemy was much earlier, under whom the Scriptures were interpreted; — [since these things are so, I say,] truly these men are proved to be impudent and presumptuous, who would now show a desire to make different translations, when we refute them out of these Scriptures, and shut them up to a belief in the advent of the Son of God." (Ibid, p. 452)

We agree that any who deny that Jesus was born of a virgin are **"impudent and presumptuous."** This includes those who make modern translations of the Scriptures, so-called, which do not faithfully translate the original language into our tongue. The King James Version is not a perfect translation, since it translates the Greek word for passover "Easter" in Acts 12, but it and the American Standard Revised Version were translated by one hundred and forty-eight of the best scholars who ever lived. Those of us who cannot read the Hebrew and Greek texts can depend upon their work as being as near perfect as men can produce. It was our old Bible teacher in college, H. Leo Boles, who said that anything which cannot be proven by the King James and Revised Versions of the English Bible cannot be proven any way!

We have here given only a small part of the arguments of Irenaeus on the subject of the Virgin Birth of Jesus. He wrote several pages on the subject of the Virgin Birth of Jesus. He wrote several pages on the subject and ably defended the truth. It is refreshing and faith-building to be able to read the words of a man who was taught by Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostle John. Isaiah wrote about 700 years before the Christ was born. Thus, in spanning 2700 years of time and finding the same truth taught, we, with Irenaeus call it **"a marvelous dispensation of God"** that Jesus was born of a virgin. **This was the natural way for Divinity to become humanity because this is the way it has always happened!**

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WONDERFULLY MADE

George Hutto

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For You have formed my inward parts;
You have covered me in my mother's womb.
I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Marvelous are your works,
And that my soul knows very well.
(Psa. 139: 13-14)

The inspired psalmist most likely did not have a degree in biology or human anatomy. But he did understand some of the marvels of the human body. Also, he recognized that it must have been created. Therefore, he gave the glory of that wonderful creation to the proper One — to the God who created it.

The circulatory system is a wonder all its own. As the scripture says, the life is in the blood (Gen. 9: 4). Each human body is plumbed with hundreds of miles of living pipes which transport blood to and from each cell of the body. Pressure is maintained by the pump, the volume of blood, and the constricting of the pipes (controlled by the nervous system).

If something goes wrong, all the vessels in the extremities constrict, providing circulation for the vital organs. If a limb is accidentally amputated, the vessels constrict in that limb, slowing the blood loss and allowing for clotting.

The heart is the pump, a muscle which works from shortly after conception until death. It rests in between beats. Actually, it is two pumps with four chambers, check valves, and its own nervous stimulation systems; more than one, in case the primary system fails.

A person's well-being is so closely attuned to the circulatory system that when a heart attack or shock is experienced, the person is overwhelmed with a sense of impending doom.

The respiratory system is likewise incredible. The lungs allow blood to exchange carbon monoxide and oxygen with the atmosphere as we breathe. This is accomplished in tiny air sacks called alveoli. The average person's alveoli surface area is equal to approximately one fourth a basketball court. Here blood and the atmosphere come together for their exchange activities.

The lungs are such specialized organs that no substitute for their work has been developed. If a person's lungs are damaged by disease or injury, he cannot live.

The stimulus to breathe is the level of carbon monoxide in the blood. This level is constantly monitored. If too much carbon monoxide is in the blood, a message to breathe harder is sent. If not enough is found, a message

to breathe more slowly is sent.

But people with chronic obstructive lung disease lose this stimulus. There is a backup system. They are stimulated to breathe harder or easier by the level of oxygen in their blood.

Have you ever considered how you would survive without bones? Bones provide protection, a frame, and the ability to move. Our frames are alive, too. There are 206 living bones in the adult.

They make up joints just like the ones man used in his designs. There are hinged joints that turn only on one place, such as finer joints. And there are ball joints which turn in any direction, such as the shoulder joint.

But bones do other things as well. Inside bones is marrow which produces blood cells. Bones are strongly attached to muscles for great strength in movement. Blood vessels and nerves are plumbed into bones for protection and to provide bones with blood and feeling.

But then there are several vital organs and glands which control life. Without a properly controlled pancreas, for instance, life will cease.

Without the skin, life will cease. As a matter of fact, with only a small portion of skin seriously damaged body fluids will leave the body, heat will leave the body, and infection will invade the body.

How does all this marvelous design get started from just two little cells at conception? Each cell of the body contains the blue print in the DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) molecules for another whole body just like the one you have. These molecules are so complex that it would take many, many pages of text just to tell their chemical contents. Birth defects are often caused by small errors in these complex molecules in the chromosomes in reproductive cells.

Simple things like eye brows and eye lashes should cue us as to the wonder of how the body is designed. Windshield wipers on an automobile are one thing. But automatic dust catchers which grow on their own, require no maintenance, and automatically sense, close and flip are indeed a wonder.

A hundred years ago, when the evolutionists were having their hay-day, they claimed that the human body had over a hundred vestigial organs (organs that through evolution serve no useful purpose). But today useful purposes for all but a few (3 or 4) have been found. They are not useless tissue left over from when we were something else, but they serve vital functions. (A man can live without his right arm, but he will function much better with it.) Today authorities are not eager to cast them off as vestigial organs (although the vestigial argument is still made by some).

The knowledge acquired by modern technology and science is not contrary to the teaching of scripture. Truthfully, the knowledge that we now enjoy in the secular world was brought about by people who followed the instruction of the wise man (Prov. 23: 23). Nothing has been learned which would embarrass or violate the Bible believer. But the things learned have served only to confirm the things said by God's word. For You have formed my inward parts; You have covered me in my mother's womb.

I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Marvelous are your works,
And that my soul knows very well.
(Psm. 139: 13-14)

COMETS, THE ORIGIN OF LIFE AND THE REAL LEAP OF FAITH

Tony Mauck

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Beaumont, Texas 77706

Will those who take the real "leap of faith" please stand up? For years now, believers in the creation model presented in the book of Genesis have been classified as illogical persons who are taking a "leap of faith." This so-called "leap" expresses what the more scholarly(?) would consider to be the lack of evidence to support our faith. Creation has been dismissed from the curriculum of public schools, and evolution has taken its place. In our nation, evolution is becoming the most commonly believed position on the origin of life on planet Earth. Scientists and educators far and wide affirm their belief in evolution. Thankfully, there are some exceptions.

But which does the evidence favor—creation or evolution? Which is the more logical of the two? And there are only two alternatives to the origin of life. I know of no other that is espoused. All explanations of life's beginnings are variations of these two main philosophies. In elementary, junior high and high schools, young people are being taught extensively to accept evolution as fact. In college, students who believe in creation are ridiculed as being blind, uninformed and treated as if they are in fantasy land, wearing "rose-colored glasses. "

But consider this recent article in the **Houston Chronicle**. The headline grabbed my attention, "Comets may have brought life." The article began, "Are we the sons and daughters of comets? Scientists have long speculated the ingredients for life arrived on Earth aboard comets or asteroids that pelted the planet some 4 billion years ago." From that point, the short article relayed the "new calculations" of Christopher Chyba of Cornell University and his colleagues. In short, they concluded, "... at least 2 million pounds of organic material could have reached the Earth each year during the period of heavy extraterrestrial bombardment 4 billion years ago." A stunning statement wrapped up the article, "That just might have been enough to get life rolling. "

Don't let the big words and big numbers of scientists and educators throw you. Look at what is really being said by those who so confidently affirm their belief in evolution. Notice these words which appeared in the

brief article, "Are we... ?; speculated; appears to have been; if; could have; just might have been enough." THIS IS THE LANGUAGE OF EVERY EVOLUTIONIST IF HE OR SHE IS HONEST!

The FACTS about evolution are as follows: 1) The theory is replete with "what if's," "might have been's" and "I'm not sure's"—question marks and speculation! 2) Evolution provides no concrete answers for life's origin. 3) Even if evolutionists can somehow assemble on earth the materials necessary to generate life, they still cannot explain with any certainty where those materials came from originally nor how life got started. 4) No "proof of evolution from one species to another is offered. If all living things came from one source, why are there no transitional forms? Why do changes only occur within a certain species and not form one species to another? 5) No "proof" exists that our planet is 4 to 5 billion years old. All the evidence, if rationally weighed, suggests a relatively young earth in comparison. 6) Even if the evolution model somehow provides an answer to the beginnings of life (and it can't), it still cannot adequately explain man's mind—his conscience, his personality and his ability to reason. The Bible provides the answer. "Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1: 26).

Why then do scholarly men and women believe evolution and teach it with such conviction and confidence? Some are influenced and deceived by others. Some just simply will not allow themselves to consider creation as a viable alternative. Generally, we don't believe anything in life which carries so much speculation as evolution does. We demand facts, reliable evidence for our beliefs. The Bible explains why foolish, fanciful theories like evolution are accepted by certain people. Psalm 10: 4 says, "The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him. All his thoughts are, There is no God. "

I have solid facts behind my faith. It is the evolutionist who takes the "leap of faith," not me. I see the design

of the universe and know that it demands a designer. Common sense tells me "time and chance" is not the answer. Factually, I know the laws of science conflict with the idea that matter existed eternally. So where did it come from? Creation is the ONLY logical explanation! Two passages of Scripture are sufficient for me to declare my faith, rationally and logically, in the God of heaven: Psalm 19: 1, "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands." Genesis 1: 1, "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. "

If someone questions my belief in the Bible, I offer proof. I challenge anyone to refute the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It could not be done in the first century nor can it be done today. As further proof, I offer the historical trustworthiness of the documents which comprise the Bible. The testimony of the Bible is credible. Archaeology only supports the Bible record. In addition, I appeal to fulfilled prophecy as an evidence of the Bible's inspiration, being the revealed will of the living God.

Which will you believe? Did comets crashing to the earth precipitate life on this planet or is the Bible's explanation of the origin of life more plausible? Will you believe. "That just MIGHT have been enough to get life rolling" or will your response be, "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of the things which are visible" (Hebrews 11: 3)?

**"Go into all the world
and preach the gospel
to every creature"
(Mark 16:15)**

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

WAYNE S. WALKER, 310 Haynes St., Dayton, Oh 45410—Pour have been baptized so far this year, with three placing membership at Haynes St. In Dayton. We had a spring meeting with Grover Stevens and a Summer Bible study with Dan Clarkson of Brookville, Oh. Our fall meeting will be Sept. 22-27 with Wayne Chappel of New Castle, IN. We will have a weekend meeting Dec. 6-8 with Gary Eubanks discussing the errors of Charles Holt and *The Examiner*.

My own meetings have taken me to N. Ft. Myers, Fl with Jimmy Tuten, Brookville, OH with Dan Clarkson, Bowling Green, KY with Maurice Jackson, Bound Lake Beach, IL with Dave Pratte and Etowah, GA with Gary Eubanks. I will be at Loveland, OH Sept. 29-Oct. 4 and Richmond, IN Nov. 3-8.

JEFF ASHER, 5416 Dumas Drive, Amarillo, TX 79108—July 1, 1991 marks the beginning of our fourth year with the good church which meets on Dumas Drive. Our work has been very pleasant and profitable, and I expect it to be even better in the future.

In the three years we have been laboring in Amarillo we have seen twenty-seven additions to the church; seven restored from liberalism, one from one cup/no-class, ten baptisms and nine identifications. Sadly, we have had nearly as many loses: nineteen have been transferred out and four returned to the world. At present, counting everyone, our number stands at 98.

In this time we have been blessed in having fellowship with Hayes Reneau in Cash, TX, Tim Coffey at Belton, TX, Elmer Moore in Livingston, TX and Keith Sharp while at East Bradenton, FL. The church is active in local evangelism having three gospel meetings a year, a weekly hour-long call-in radio program, and a monthly 4 page 8 1/2 by 11 first principle paper which we send to 1, 000 residences around our meeting house.

Our radio program is making more and more opportunities for study. As a result of our broadcast, I have debated on the air Robert Williams, a homosexual priest, Glen Stocker, a hyper-dispensationalist, and J. David Davis, a Baptist preacher turned B'nai No'ach. Many

of those who came out of liberalism came as a result of the radio program.

If you have friends or family in Amarillo send us their name and address and we will add them to our mailing list and visit them.

B. G. Echols, 7 Ridgewood Ave., Glen Ridge, NJ 07028—Eight were baptized during the first six months of the year in East Orange, NJ. I recently completed my 19th year here.

NEW WORK

A new congregation is meeting in the Jamestown, Russell Springs, KY area. Services are at 9: 30 AM and 6: 00 PM on the Lord's day and at 7: 30 PM on Wednesday evening. Pat Scherba is the evangelist. For directions to the building call (502) 343-2206 or write the Lakeway Church of Christ, P. O. Box 1461, Russell Springs, KY 42642.

FROM AROUND THE WORLD

PHILIPPINES—CARL MCMURRAY, 1175 Hornaday Rd., Brownsburg, IN 46112—I was one of five American brethren who arrived there over a period of about nine to ten weeks. I will only mention the areas I visited, but for more information you might contact Keith Burnett, John Humphries, Jerry Parks and Norman Fultz. In the areas I visited I witnessed 46 baptisms, while over the 9-10 week period the total went over 200 in addition to the information of one or two new congregations.

Keith Burnett and I spent two weeks in the northern provinces of Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur. We spent each day traveling, preaching, visiting with brethren and staying in their homes. The work going on in those areas is tremendous. It began with the efforts of Materno Sibayan, Sr., 19 years ago in Laoag City. Since that time, in just two provinces, there have been about 40 preachers converted, trained and set to work among 70 established congregations. Literally thousands have been baptized into Christ over that time period. What has happened in your area over the past 19 years? I might add that Materno is a ex-Pentecostal preacher and has helped lead a multitude of his Pentecostal brethren to the Lord. Many of those taught by him have done likewise.

We spent some time traveling into areas that the U. S. Embassy had declared off-limits because of the threat from NPA (Communist) rebels.

After two weeks in these provinces, Keith went to Palawan while I traveled through and spoke in churches in the provinces of La Union and Pagsanin, concluding with a three day lectureship in Urduyeta, where brother Eusebio Balliao labors.

While there we had an uncomfortable situation with a native preacher (U. S. supported) to arise. His living, due to alcohol, was not up to his profession. The information discovered was passed along to those in fellowship who, being worthy of commendation, did not view this as a blot on the name of faithful preachers, but instead shifted their assistance to worthy workers.

I left for the southernmost island of Mindanao. Jerry Parks and I stayed with Joy and Amy Notarte and traveled out into the rural areas meeting with various congregations. While we met several young, diligent preachers doing a good job in this area, a special word might be inserted here about the work of Joy Notarte and his brother Jul. Together, they are active in teaching and training preachers in about 20 congregations. They had already baptized about 70 souls themselves in the first four months of 1991, including an entire congregation of Baptist (20 people). They took down the sign on the building, turned it over, painted "church of Christ" on it and just hung it back up. Joy also funds a radio program from his personal support to reach into outlying areas.

Though there are some unworthy Filipino preachers (just like U. S. preachers), I met and spent time with a great number of dedicated faithful brethren who are earnestly serving the Lord amidst great hardship. Many have never received any financial support. Great sacrifices are being made to preach the gospel on *that* side of the Pacific. I commend those who are in fellowship with that work. Please do not grow weary in well doing.

If any individual or congregation would be interested in the work there, I would be glad to share any information I have gathered, in slides or by letter. If there are any young Christians who would like to correspond with a pen-pal, I would be glad to pass that information along also.

ITALY—GIANNI BERDINI, Puglie di Domio 250, 34010 S. Antonio in Bosco (TS) Italy—Things are going very well with us. I just baptized a young couple (Francesco and Fabrizia) who live near Ascoli, a town located in the middle part of Italy. Last Sunday a man named Sergio obeyed the gospel in Trieste after two years of studying with him. I am also studying with a couple in Trieste who seem very near to obeying the gospel. This gives us a lot of courage and strength to go on notwithstanding the problems we always have to face. We are now looking forward to having Stefano with us to hold a meeting (June 15) on Catholicism.

ROBERTO TONDELLI, V. Q. Roscioni, 69, 00128 Rome, Italy—Socially speaking, Italy is having increasingly hard social problems. Hundreds of people have been killed in recent months by the Mafia, not only in the South, but practically on the whole national territory.

Religiously speaking, the Catholic church is gaining more and more political—economical power. The Vatican hierarchy presents itself as the only safe religious-political power (in Italy and the world). Last year they received 800 billion Liras from our government as income from a portion of a tax which Italians pay to their government. Their propaganda says they are helping the poor with that money. Actually, among other things, they have recently purchased several important local TV broadcasting stations and are covering practically the whole country with their (mis-) information on *every* aspect of life over here. They are now attacking every non-Catholic church, labeling them as "sects."

You can easily imagine how all that reflects very negatively on our preaching work here, making it even harder than usual. I'm simply mentioning these things that you may be informed of our working situation here and that you might also be encouraged by our fighting.

GERMANY—STEVE WALLACE, P. O. Box 7257, APO NY 09012—First to the work in Ramstein. We have had one baptized. Three have been transferred back to the U. S. We will lose six more in the next three months. We have had one man transferred in and some visitors. Sewell Hall held us a good meeting (April 26-28). It was good to be with him again and Martin Broadwell who was traveling with him.

I have been teaching a teacher/preacher training class on Tues. nights at the building. The results have been real encouraging.

There is a sound church in Bitburg, Germany. Five brethren left the liberal brethren. They call themselves the "Eifel church of Christ." Their address is Gary Sowell, P. O. Box 3025, APO NY 09132.

A trip to the USSR: I was contacted about a sister in Tennessee who wanted to spend \$1000 on Bibles for the USSR. After talking it over with the brethren in Prague, it was decided that Jeff Young, Bill Bynum and I would go to the east Ukrainian city of Lvov the third weekend in March. We spent two afternoons on the square there in Lvov taking addresses from people who wanted Bibles. We were enthroned continually for hours. We ended up getting more names than we had Bibles.

Arrigo Corazza is doing a good work in a section of Europe where there is no other sound church for 150 miles. He has lost \$900 support as of April 1. He and his wife have already dipped into savings to make up the difference. He has been preaching for almost 15 years in a country where Gospel preachers are scarce. He is a worthy man. If you know of a church willing to help him, his address is Arrigo Corazza, Via Magellano 32, 15100 Alessandria, Phone: 0131-226649.

NEW LOCATION

The church that has been meeting on Chestia pike in Erwin, TN will begin meeting at a new location September 22, 1991. The new building is located on Tennessee Hwy. 107. From the Unicoi exit (23), off the four-lane, it is approx. 1.8 miles south. From the Erwin exit (19) it is approx. 2.5 miles north. If you know of anyone in our area please contact Leroy V. St. Cyr, 108 Horton Ridge Road, Erwin, TN 37650. Phone: (615) 743-8251

LECTURESHIP

The Mound and Starr church in Nacogdoches, TX is planning a weekend lectureship on the institutional and cooperative issues Sept. 6-8 with James W. Adams. We will be happy to provide lodging in the homes of our members for anyone desiring to come for the weekend. Call us at (409) 564-7286 — Mark White.

DEBATES

SHARP—DEAVER DEBATE—Keith Sharp will meet Mac Deaver in debate Sept. 23-26 in Camden, AR. Proposition #1: "The Scriptures teach that a local church may grant benevolent aid to alien sinners." Deaver affirms. Sharp denies.

Proposition #2: "The exclusive New Testament pattern for the benevolent work of the local church from its treasury is the relief of needy saints." Sharp affirms, Deaver denies.

For more information contact Washington St. Church of Christ, 1107 Washington St., Camden, AR 71701 (501) 836-5369 or Keith Camp, 749 Sharp, Camden, AR 71701 (501) 836-0266.

SMITH—HICKS DEBATE—J. T. Smith will meet Olan Hicks in debate November 11, 12, 14, 15 in Tucson, Arizona. Proposition #1: "The Scriptures teach that only those persons who have divorced their mates for fornication (and those whose mates have died) may, with God's approval, enter and maintain a marriage with another person." Smith affirms. Hicks denies.

Proposition #2: "The Scriptures teach that all divorced people (including those whose mates are still living) may, with God's approval, enter and maintain a marriage with another person." Hicks affirms, Smith denies.

PEWS FOR SALE

Twelve pews, bond oak with seat padding, has book racks and card holders for sale. They are 16 feet in length in good to very good condition. Contact: Sam Carter (317) 892-3021 or John Crouch (901) 642-8236.

DO YOU KNOW OF ANY STUDENTS AT BOWLING GREEN, OH?

If you know of any students attending Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, OH, please contact the church of Christ

in Bradner, OH. Call or write to George W. Lambroff, 629 Ordway Ave., Bowling Green, OH 43402, (419) 352-8842.

PREACHERS NEEDED

MCMENNVILLE, TENNESSEE—The West End Ave. church needs a gospel preacher. We can provide \$250 per week in support. We are located about 60 miles southeast of Nashville. Those interested should call Don Henry (615) 473-3425.

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA — The Northeast church meeting at 2040 N. McMullen-Booth Road is currently seeking a preacher to work full-time. If you are interested please contact Ed McKinney by writing to the above address or call (813) 799-0007.

MERRITT ISLAND, FLORIDA — The Merritt Island church is a small church with great potential looking for a full-time preacher. We can provide a nice house (3 bedroom, 2 bath) and some salary. If interested contact Jim Winton (407) 452-4762 or Cloyce D. Walden (407) 636-8255 or (407) 636-4361. Our Mailing address is: Merritt Island Church of Christ, P. O. Box 540591, Merritt, Island, FL 32954-0591.

NEWPORT, NORTH CAROLINA — The church in Newport is looking for a full-time evangelist to start working with them the first part of 1992. We can provide partial support. Those interested should contact us at P. O. Box I, Newport, NC 28570-0994.

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