

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"

THINK ON
THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

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THE PROBLEM WITH A LITTLE LEAVEN

For some time a large body of religious teachers and leaders have been busy trying to find a basis for "unity" in what they call "diversity" of opinions on Bible teaching. Many of them are interested only in opening their arms to embrace all who "believe that Jesus is Lord and Christ." The doctrine of doing something to be saved, or obeying the law of Christ, is obnoxious to them. They want to be "Free" from all law in Christ. But that is not possible if one wants to be saved. All who will go to heaven must obey God (Matt. 7: 21, 22). All who "obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. 1: 8, 9). That "law of Christ" is the gospel which began in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and began to guide them into all truth (Gal. 8: 2; John 16: 13; Acts 1: 1, 2, 8; 2: 4; 31-33).

Who will go to hell? Who will be lost in eternity? The answer clearly is: All who live and die in sin. Sin and iniquity separate men from God (Isaiah 59: 1, 2). "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come... I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8: 21, 24). All those who disobey and reject the will of God are sinners

Sin is defined as the "transgression of the law" (1 John 3: 4). Where no law is, there is no transgression (Rom. 4: 15). If we are not under law, of any kind, we are not sinners, because the apostle Paul said where there is no law, there is no sin. That is what the word of God says. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3: 23). Both Jew and Gentile, all men, are guilty of disobeying the law of the Lord, and are therefore sinners. Unless these sinners hear and obey the gospel, which is the power of God to save, they will be lost.

I am sick of hearing brethren whine because one speaks forthrightly against error from the pulpit, in the classroom, in religious journals and publications and in private studies from house to house. Over the years I have had my part of canceled meetings, canceled subscriptions to Searching The Scriptures, when I edited the paper; and verbal assaults by phone, letter and in person. My offense was to speak out about error someone was teaching.

The critics always, charge that one who opposes error is attacking the person who is teaching the error rather than the error. Who was guilty when Christ opposed error in the strongest terms? Any one who has read the 23rd chapter of Matthew cannot deny that Christ used plain and forceful speech in denouncing the scribes and Pharisees for their sins against God and the people. They taught and practiced things contrary to the word of God (Matt. 15: 7-9). Jesus called them hypocrites, and said they would compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and when he is made, they make him twofold more the child of hell than they were (Matt 23: 15).

Stephen, one of the seven chosen in Jerusalem to attend to the needs of the Grecian widows, was opposed by some of the most prominent religious leaders of his day. The plain truth he preached to them, recorded in Acts 7, caused his death by this mob of religious fanatics. Even in the face of death, Stephen said to them, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just

One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it" (Acts 7: 51-53).

Some say, it was different then because Stephen was inspired and knew the hearts of these people. Stephen was inspired to speak the truth, not to judge their hearts. He knew their false teaching and opposition to the doctrine of Christ which began on the Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ. He knew also that the truth of this doctrine would make men free (John 8: 32). If error was not opposed without compromise, the doctrine of Christ would not convict these people of their sins that they might be saved. Stephen loved the truth and the souls of the lost. For that reason he denounced error that truth may prevail.

Would some of these complaining brethren condemn courageous preachers of the gospel today for doing exactly what Christ and Stephen did in opposing error? We could cite verses that tell of Peter, James, John, Paul and the other apostles doing the same thing. The reason: that is what the gospel requires of all who preach the gospel of Christ. Do we not teach that disciples of Christ should do as he did? Paul said, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11: 1). "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample" (Phil. 3: 17). That has been preached from the beginning.

If faithful brethren love the truth enough to oppose error any where and at all times, regardless of who teaches it, why should they not be regarded as faithful to the Lord, just as Stephen and Paul are?

The truth of the matter is that one cannot preach Christ and his word without condemning error. Just remember that "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Let error and evil remain with those of truth and good, and before long the power of truth and good is destroyed by the error and evil. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12: 21).

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—Connie W. Adams, Editor

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" QUOTE

"Truth is tough. It will not break, like a bubble, at a touch. Nay, you may kick it about all day, and it will be round and full at evening."

—Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

UNQUOTE "

Editorial

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"EVIL COMMUNICATIONS CORRUPT GOOD MANNERS"

This frequently quoted phrase is found in 1 Cor. 15: 33. Many who are reading this have this text memorized. Let's see its context, its meaning and how it applies to us.

The NKJV says, "Evil company corrupts good habits." The ASV states, "Evil companionships corrupt good morals."

This text is generally used in a discussion of choosing our friends. We rightfully warn that running with the wrong crowd can easily destroy one's morality. Our text is cited as proof of our warning. However, there is another circumstance that we need to see in the context of the 1 Cor. 15.

The Context

Chapter fifteen deals with the resurrection from the dead. There were some (probably Greeks) at Corinth who denied that there would be a resurrection in the end of time. They denied a *general* resurrection. Yet, they believed in the *resurrection of Christ*. Thus, Paul argues from the resurrection of Christ to the general resurrection in the end of time.

The first section of the chapter presents The Resurrection Of Christ - An Established Fact (vs. 1-11). The gospel that was preached, believed and by which the Corinthians were saved centered around the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (vs. 1-4). There were witnesses of the resurrection (vs. 5-11).

The second section argues that **All Men Shall Be Raised** (vs. 12-34). Paul speaks of our hopeless condition if there is no resurrection from the dead (vs. 12-19). If there is no resurrection, then Christ has not been raised. Thus, our faith is vain, we are still in sin and the dead have perished. We are to be pitied more than any person because of the empty hope we have of being raised.

Yet, the resurrection of Christ provides hope for us (vs. 20-28). The resurrection of Christ tells us it is possible to be raised again.

Then Paul raises this question: If there is no resurrection, then why do you do what you do (vs. 29-34)? Why are you baptized in view of death? Why do you stand in jeopardy every hour? And, why do you fight and resist evil (vs. 31-34)?

The third section of the chapter deals with The

Nature of The Resurrection (vs. 35-63). We plant a physical (corruptible) body, and a spiritual (incorruptible) body will be raised (vs. 35-44). In the resurrection we will bear the image of the heavenly Adam (vs. 45-49). Since flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, our bodies must be changed (vs. 50-53).

The fourth section pictures the **Victory Over Death Through Christ (vs. 54-57)**.

The Last division of the chapter tells us that **We Must Live In View Of The Resurrection (v. 58)**.

It is obvious that the context is dealing with the denial of the general resurrection. Thus, a statement about "evil company" would refer to those who taught that there is no resurrection.

While it is true that choosing the wrong friends can lead us astray, the verse is in the context of false teachers corrupting morals with the error they teach.

The Text

In the previous verse Paul had shown the consequences to the doctrine. He said, "If the dead do not rise, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die'" (v. 32). The doctrine being taught to the Corinthians would lead to all forms of sensuality and immorality. That's why he said "Evil company corrupts good habits" (v. 33).

Let's see what some of the commentators have said about our text. "So Paul insists that the Corinthians must not associate with those who say that there is no resurrection. To associate with such is inevitably to risk an infection which can pollute life" (William Barclay, *The Letters To The Corinthians*, p. 174).

"Paul's use of it here was to warn the Corinthians against any toleration of the evil teachers who were denying the resurrection; for the toleration of them was certain to have corrupted some of the church. The truth spoken is timeless and applicable to all who ever lived in any generation" (Burton Coffman, *Commentary on 1 Corinthians*, p. 260).

"Paul warns the Corinthians against associating with evil men. He seems to have in mind those who were denying the resurrection. He has just shown how their doctrine would logically result in the abandonment of morality in favor of sensuality. Some believe that we may associate closely with the wicked or tolerate the false teacher in the church without being affected by them, but Paul says one who so believes is deceived" (Darrell Conley, *1 Corinthians* (Living Way Adult Series), p. 107).

This verse can only mean one thing in this context. Paul is telling the Corinthians to cease associating with those among them who denied the resurrection of the dead. The influence of such men might not be evident at first, but it would, nonetheless, lead to a destroyed morality. At first, the false doctrine would appear to be an innocent theory about the dead; soon those who accepted it would reason, "Why deny myself of this fleshly pleasure since there is no resurrection anyway?" This truth is just as applicable today as ever before. Association with those who deny some of God's revelation, still corrupts good morality" (Mike Willis, *A Commentary On Paul's First Epistle To The Corinthians*, pp. 567-568).

Many scholars and commentators connect our text with the writings of Menander, a heathen poet (3rd century B. C.). Some think it has been passed on as a proverb. It is possible that Menander was only citing a proverb as he wrote. However, Paul uses it here by inspiration to warn the Corinthians.

The Application

Yes, this verse can be properly applied to friendships and associations with the wrong crowd. The verse is a general statement from which Paul makes specific application. We need to echo this proverb to our young people time and again.

Our text also applies to our association with those who teach a doctrine that will corrupt our morals. Today there are a number of doctrines that will do that, but one that is certain to do so is the false teaching on divorce and remarriage. There are brethren today who wonder what harm there is in someone teaching that the alien is not amenable, that the guilty party can remarry or that those who have committed adultery need not separate when they are baptized. The same question could have been raised about those who deny the resurrection.

The danger was that if those who listened believed the doctrine of no resurrection and lived consistent with it, it would lead to immorality (1 Cor. 15: 32). When people believe what is being taught by some today on divorce and remarriage and live consistent with what is taught, they are guilty of adultery (Matt. 19: 9).

Was Paul not informed as to how to handle these teachers who denied the resurrection? Maybe someone should have pointed out that the issue of the resurrection was not all that clear. There were some side issues that had to be discussed like the nature of the body that is raised. Therefore, there would be no need to draw any lines of fellowship. Why would this not work on the issue of the resurrection since we are told that it works on divorce and remarriage?

Maybe Paul did not know that the Corinthians could just tell these teachers that they disagreed with their position and thus they would not be having fellowship on that point. Why would that not work since that is being argued on the question of divorce and remarriage?

It would seem that someone could have told Paul that the question of the resurrection was just an individual matter and does not affect the collectivity.

I suspect that a better conclusion is that Paul knew exactly how the teachers of an erroneous position should be handled.

The lesson that I learn from our text is the danger of corrupting morals by false teaching. The teaching that the alien is not amenable to the law of Christ on marriage leads to adultery. The teaching that the guilty party can remarry leads to adultery. The teaching that the couple who have divorced and remarried (contrary to Matt. 19: 9) do not have to separate leads to adultery. Thus, our morals are corrupted by those who so teach. Who can deny it?

Commending you to

THE WORD OF HIS GRACE



Marshall E. Patton

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**THE LOVE OF GOD—
ROMANS 8—NO. 5
THE HOLY SPIRIT — "HELPETH
OUR INFIRMITIES"—VS. 26, 27**

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. "

In our former lesson (vs. 17-25), **hope** is set before us as a sustaining power and motivating force throughout all human suffering. In this lesson our text adds further comfort and encouragement to those who are children of God who might grow weary under the burdens we are called upon to bear.

Controversial

Many know already that these verses are highly controversial. Fortunately, however, not all erroneous views are fatal. Brother J. W. McGarvey, one of our highly esteemed pioneer preachers, pointed this out clearly in his sermon on "Believing A Lie." He made use of the young prophet of Judah (1 Kings 13) showing that while he believed a lie that was fatal, there were other lies he might have believed that would not have resulted in a fatality: "If, for example, the old prophet had said, an angel sent me to tell you to get from under this tree and run for your life, and not stop until you get home, the young man would have been scared, and would have run himself out of breath; but the lion would not have killed him. In like manner, I can imagine a man believing some lies in religion, which, though they may injure him some, and I suppose there are very few that would not, might yet fall short of proving fatal to him... If the belief of a lie, then, leads a man to commit sin, it will prove fatal unless that sin shall be forgiven. It was thus with the young prophet. The lie which he believed led him to disobey God" (**Sermons**, By J. W. McGarvey, p. 334). I judge that nearly all, if not all, of the differences among brethren over our text would not lead one into a practice that would involve a transgression of God's will. Hence, tolerance is to be exercised. Alexander Campbell said of the position he affirmed on the very verses of our text: "But I make no bond of union, no terms of commun-

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ion, no condition of fellowship in the adoption or rejection of it. I have no such intolerant spirit. I offer it as a favor to those who look for instruction" (**Millennial Harbinger**, Vol. I, p. 115). However, let me say with a great deal of emphasis that such an attitude toward such verses is no reason to cast aside further diligent study of the issues involved. Honest, diligent study of any revelation of God to man is not only a divine obligation but also very beneficial and rewarding.

Three Prominent Views

There are three prominent views some times expressed by brethren on our text: 1) Some say that the "Spirit" that "helpeth our infirmities" is our own spirit, and that the "groanings which cannot be uttered" are likewise those of the human spirit; that the Holy Spirit is not involved in the verses at all. 2) Others say that the "Spirit" that "helpeth our infirmities" is the Holy Spirit, and that the groanings "which cannot be uttered" are those of the human spirit which groanings are presented by the Holy Spirit to the Father thereby making intercession for us. 3) Still others say that the "Spirit" that "helpeth our infirmities" is the Holy Spirit, and that the "groanings which cannot be uttered" are likewise those of the Holy Spirit. In other words, it is the Holy Spirit throughout that **helps** us, that makes the **groanings**, and that **intercedes** for us. This latter position is the one I hold to be true.

Views Examined

View Number One: The contextual study of these verses demands that the Holy Spirit be recognized as the **helper** in this instance. Remember, the theme of the whole chapter is "The Love Of God" (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit), which love is manifested toward us in the redemption of our souls. Why should Paul turn aside from this theme to inject a **helper** from another source?

Besides this, the one who needs help in this instance is the one who **knows not** "what we should pray for as we ought." **Knowing** is not an attribute of the outward man. This eliminates the body and leaves only the inward man in need of help. The body apart from the spirit is dead (Jas. 2: 26). If it is the spirit of man that needs help and it is the spirit of man that supplies that help, then wherein is the need for help in the first place? Such need would not be for help from **without** as the text implies by the words "our," "us," "we," and "saints" which stand in contrast to the helper. The help would be self contained.

Furthermore, it would be impossible for the spirit of the Christian to plead in behalf of self and at the same time function as an **intercessor**. One who makes **intercession** occupies an in-between position—representing one to another.

Sometimes the view of the Holy Spirit making intercession is opposed on the ground of there being only "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2: 5). This objection, however, confuses the role of an intercessor and a mediator. The former represents one to another and the latter represents both to each other. Even we are commanded to make "intercession for all men" (1 Tim. 2: 1).

View Number Two: In consideration of this view, I

think it best to notice first that there are two needs for help. One is clearly stated and the other is clearly implied. The first need is for **knowledge** to know "what we should pray for as we ought. Our spirit is of no **help** here. We frequently think that what we need is that which God knows we don't need. Paul thought he needed his "thorn in the flesh" removed and so prayed three times. God's answer was "My grace is sufficient for thee." Paul acquiesced and learned a great lesson. Listen to him: "... Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (1 Cor. 12: 7-10). No doubt, the Holy Spirit made intercession for Paul, as He does for us, "according to the will of God." It would be of no help to us, if the Holy Spirit made intercession according to our will. Thus, we should be very thankful for the kind of intercession the Holy Spirit makes for us.

The second need for help is a means of communicating our deepest emotions both of sorrow and of joy to the Father that is over, above, and beyond what words can do. This need exist not because of illiteracy on our part, but rather because there are no words in any vocabulary adequate to express such. They simply do not exist—such emotions are **unutterable**. Peter speaks of the joy of the Christian being "unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pet. 1: 8). There are times when the emotions of sorrow and joy run too deep for expression in words. Such can be expressed only by unutterable groanings.

Concerning view Number Two, I agree that the Holy Spirit is the one who "helpeth our infirmities." However, I have difficulty believing that the Holy Spirit intercedes by presenting our groanings to the Father in words that man cannot utter. This reads too much into the text. It does not say that the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered by man. It simply says these groanings cannot be uttered—period. How can the Holy Spirit present our groanings unto the Father in words which do not exist in the first place? Hence, I opt for the third view.

Concerning view Number Three, I am persuaded that while the spirit of the Christian can only give expression to such deep emotions with groans that cannot be uttered, God the Father who "searcheth the hearts" comprehends. Elsewhere we learn that Jesus our advocate and sympathizing high priest is touched by the feelings of our infirmities and also intercedes in our behalf (1 John 2: 1; Heb. 2: 17, 18; 4: 14-16). Now, in our text, we are assured also of the help of the Holy Spirit, especially in the matter of expressing the deepest emotions of the soul. He makes intercession for us with His own groanings which cannot be uttered. No words are needed. God fully comprehends the mind of the Holy Spirit.

It certainly is reassuring to the Christian to know that all three persons in the Godhead are acting in our behalf in all such instances. How wonderfully God has provided for our every need in working out His great scheme of redemption. How thrilling to behold such manifestations of the **love of God!**

Using the
**SWORD OF
THE SPIRIT**

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**THE SEARCH FOR
TRUTH**

"What have I always told you? Everything must be taken into account. If the fact will not fit the theory — let the theory go."

These are the words of Hercule Poirot, the Belgian detective created by Agatha Christie. The quote is taken from her book, **The Mysterious Affair at Styles**. It represents simply and succinctly the inductive method of investigation which is indispensable in arriving at truth.

Inductive reasoning has many applications. Poirot was speaking, of course, of the solving of a crime, a murder. To reach the truth every fact must be considered. If a fact contradicts a theory, then some other theory, or at least a revised theory must be sought.

It is regrettable that in our judicial system, facts are often concealed because of some breach of formality or even ethics in acquiring the evidence. If a rule has been broken in obtaining evidence, those responsible should be reprimanded or punished; but if truth is the objective, the evidence should be presented. There is no hope of justice if facts are buried.

This principle is also basic to the scientific method: "Everything must be taken into account. If the fact will not fit the theory — let the theory go." Unfortunately it is often the facts that suffer while the theory is maintained at all costs. This is especially the case when it comes to the general theory of evolution; the concept that all living things have developed from non-living chemicals through simple life forms to the complex organisms that now exist.

The facts do not fit the theory. The basic biological law of biogenesis: that life comes only from previous life, does not fit. The fundamental law of physics, that matter is constantly losing energy; is changing from the more complex to the less complex; in short that entropy is occurring in the known universe; that things are running down; does not fit the theory.

The simple fact that there is no concrete evidence of any kind of living thing evolving into another kind of living thing; this does not fit the theory. Yet the facts are ignored and the theory is accepted as fact.

Poirot's simple formula is of essence if truth in the matter for biblical interpretation be ascertained. As good detectives we should take everything into account. If some fact will not fit the theory — let the theory go.

Our aim should always be to reach conclusions based upon all the evidence at our disposal. Our conclusions must harmonize with all the facts of revealed truth and be contradicted by none of them.

If we have reached a doctrinal position and a passage comes to our attention that has not previously been taken into account, honesty demands a re-evaluation. Perhaps we have shut the door and locked it on that subject. But we should never throw away the key. "If the fact will not fit the theory, let the theory go."

The Psalmist seems to express the principle in his declaration: "The entirety of Your word is truth..." (119: 160). The devil quoted Scriptures: "For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge concerning you'" (Matt. 4: 6). But the Lord observed that there was more which needed to be taken into account: "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God'" (4: 7).

Here is the key element to arriving at truth, whatever the nature of the search; "Everything must be taken into account. If the fact will not fit the theory—let the theory go."

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"TRAIN UP A CHILD"

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22: 6).

Much has been said and written about this proverb of Solomon. Some say that "it means just what it says," and that if a child does not continue in the training which it has received, it has not been properly trained. Others say this is only a general rule, and that there are exceptions to the rule. Some tie this verse into the qualifications of an elder, and suggest that a man may do his best, and still not have the ability to rule either his house or the church of God.

One man (who was an elder with unfaithful children), told me that the passage in Proverbs meant that the children may leave their childhood training when they are young, but return to it when they grow older.

But in all that has been said and written, there is one point which we are failing to emphasize, and that is the very definition of the term **training**. Webster says that training includes bending, pruning, drilling. Strong says that to train means to initiate or to discipline.

The same principle is embodied in Paul's statement to the Ephesians, "... bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6: 4). "Bring them up" means to nurture, cherish, train. The whole idea of training is to be persistent and consistent.

We seem to have no problems understanding or applying the definition of our term when it comes to things other than children. If we want to train a dog, a horse, a bird, or an athlete, we are diligent and persistent in drilling, bending, and coaching the object of our efforts.

Some parents, both in the world and in the church, are failing miserably when it comes to training their children. We deplore the practice of abortion in order to escape the responsibility of parenthood, but some parents will not accept the responsibility to train their children even after they are born. They leave that chore up to grandparents, the store clerk, the school teachers, the police, or whoever happens to be around when the child needs training.

There are 33, 000 people injured every year by shop-ping carts, and 58% of those injuries are to children under four years of age, most being ignored or unattended by their parents. It is common to see children in malls and supermarkets unattended by parents, or even lost. Security personnel or store clerks have to watch out

for someone's child.

Children run loose around church buildings before, during, and after worship. I have been in homes where parents paid no more attention to their children than if they weren't there. And you can make the antecedent of "they" either parents or children — the children may as well not be there as far as parents are concerned, and the parents may as well not be there as far as the children are concerned. Parents don't even take time to train their children how to use the bathroom. The child wears one of those padded, disposable diapers, and manufacturers just keep adding more padding so parents don't have to change them as often.

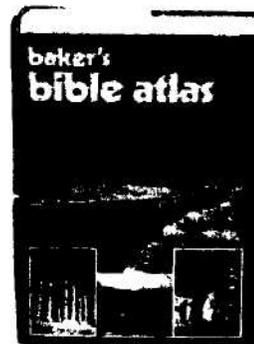
The sad thing is that the parents are too busy watching TV, shopping, visiting, or just day-dreaming while their children are both literally and figuratively crying out to be trained. And with all of our modern conveniences and appliances, some of us don't spend as much time training two children as our grandparents did training five times that many.

Contributing to this slothful attitude in training children are the child psychology "experts" who advocate allowing the children to have their own way and to "express" themselves, while the parents ignore any form of discipline whatever. We may not be able to shape the children of the world, but it is high time that parents read the rest of the book of Proverbs as it pertains to discipline and training (and discipline is training), and accept the God-given responsibility of training and bringing up our children while there is yet time. And it does take time.

I've seen so many examples of parents who just don't take time to train their children that it wouldn't surprise me if I get fifty letters from parents wanting to know if I had them in mind when I wrote this article.

If I can arose that many parents, I have only one thing left to say.

Thank God!



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"THEN WE'LL HAVE GOOD ROADS"

Like Paul in Galatians 1: 6, I marvel at some of my brethren sometimes. You can teach, preach, and instruct on various Bible subjects until you are blue in the face, only to have some who seemed to be listening intently to what you are saying, go right out and do the very opposite of what you were teaching from the word of God. I have seen some who snoozed all during the sermon go out the door and tell me how much they enjoyed the lesson. Others stay awake, take notes and look you right in the eye but they misunderstand or deliberately disregard the teaching.

It reminds me of a true story related to me by my mother. She has a unique way of telling things that helps one to remember. She recalls back when folks used to sit up with the dead. Neighbors would come in and sit up, visit, talk, eat, or doze. There was a sweet old lady who was called by everyone "old aunt Jane." She smiled a lot and could always be depended on to come and sit up when there was a death in the community. **But she was very hard of hearing.** She, however had this habit of twiddling her thumbs, smiling, and shaking her head affirmatively when someone was talking to her. You would think she understood every word.

On one particular occasion there was a man who was in the well drilling business who also came to sit up all night. As always, "old aunt Jane" was there with several others. This man was quite a talker so he began to explain in great detail to "old aunt Jane" how to drill a well of water. She sat in her customary manner in a chair smiling sweetly as she twiddled her thumbs first in one direction and then in the other. To all outward appearances one would have thought she understood every word that was being said as she nodded her head as if she comprehended.

Finally, the man finished his not very interesting story on well-drilling. "Old aunt Jane" could tell he had stopped talking so she very politely responded with the most amazing statement you ever heard. She smiled sweetly and said with all sincerity, "**Then we'll have good roads, won't we?**"

This is about like some of my brethren when you warn them about various sins such as fornication, drunkenness, divorces for any cause and such like. They seem to be listening, they seem to understand but

they sometimes go right out and do the very things you warned them about. Well, at least "old aunt Jane" had an excuse. **She was deaf.**

However, the Bible warns us of this very thing in Matt. 13: 13. Here Jesus spoke to the people in parables "because they seeing see not: and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." In Revelation chapters two and three the instructions to each of the seven churches of Asia concluded with "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches..." God wants us not only **to hear** but also **to heed** what He has said. That means to put into practice in our lives daily the precepts of the Lord.

Brethren, let us pay more attention to what the Lord has said!

Things Most Certainly Believed

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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOB "JOB MAKES TWO DISCOVERIES"

In this, the final of six articles dealing with the gospel according to Job, we turn our attention to the overall impact of the man's experience. We are now moved beyond the controversy between the man and his friends. Their voices are silent. The last speaker, Elihu, the more profound of the group, is also silenced. Actually, his speech is cut short by the voice of God from out of a whirlwind, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me" (Job 38: 2-3). The silencing of Elihu produces an immediate address of Job.

Verse 3 addresses Job as an intelligent human being, a personality capable of grasp and understanding. In this, circumstances are ignored, Job in his relation to the Lord is the overriding picture. We are unable to erase the picture of Job sitting in sorrow. He is stripped of everything upon which men depend. His wealth gone and partnership of his wife in faith is also gone. Acquaintances are noticeably absent. Friends have misunderstood him to become in his eyes, "miserable comforters". So far as circumstances are concerned, Job is derelict. The Lord's first words remind him he is still a man and had his own personality. He was what he had always been, but, hopefully more perceptive and a bit wiser. He was a man.

"Gird up now thy loins like a man." With this reminder,

the Lord continues with no reference to his sufferings; no explanation is offered for anything. What He did was bring Job face to face with the universe in which he lived and asked could he govern it. Job is brought to consider life, movements of seasons, wind, snow and storm and is asked if he was equal to creation of what he saw or even to government of it. The point of the inquiry was to cause Job, upon seeing he could not, to realize he was not equal to understanding of God and his purposes, nor was he in position to argue with Him. The consideration appeals for a striking of balance, a weighing of the relationship between man and his God, realizing God's greatness and man's littleness.

In the light of this, Job discovers himself. "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth" (40: 3). Compared to almighty God, ruler of the universe, creator of all, Job says, I am nothing. Thus, a true vision emerges. Enhancement of our understanding is tied to the word "vile" (KJV). The word did not mean as now, the Hebrew word has no suggestion of moral failure. Literally, of no weight. Job acknowledged his comparative insignificance. God had called upon Job to "gird up his loins as a man." He did so and rose to a level of greatness not previously achieved. He was able to grasp in thought the greatness of God and make comparison with self.

What does Jesus say to that consciousness in man? Never did he argue that Job declared the final truth about man. Consider two statements complimentary to this. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matt. 16: 26)? This, among other things, emphasizes the value of man's soul. In God's sight it is worth the blood of His own Son, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3: 16). "What shall it profit" is the language of the market place, suggesting that we strike a balance or weigh the two. Job says, "behold I am of small account," Jesus says, it is worth more than all the world. "What shall a man give" presumes man has sold himself, what will he give to regain? No answer. Jesus brings man face to face with the value of his own personality, his soul.

The second discovery of Job we are able to establish in this study is his discovery of God. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: and now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (42: 5-6). After coming to a consciousness of himself by comparison with creation, the God of the universe, Job concludes he is of small account. The Lord continues in what has been referred to as the second movement of this scene (40: 7). The reminder once more, Job you are a man, act like a man. With this approach the Lord pays compliment to the dignity of humanity. It is as though He reminds him of the creation statement, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1: 27). In Job, by God's estimate, is one greater than all creation.

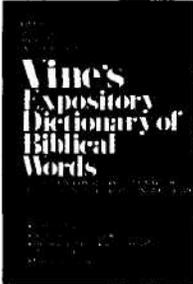
In this address of God we are able to identify the one thing in which Job was foolish. It emerges in, "Wilt thou

also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous" (40: 8)? Job had not charged God foolishly. He had, however, questioned the justice, government and wisdom of God. Now he is asked, can you disannul my judgment? Do you intend to condemn God in order to justify self? As he calls upon Job to assume government of the universe, we are treated to satire as gentle as a mother's kiss as she laughs at her child. God does not attempt to explain his methods only to establish confidence in them, despite the mystery to human minds.

Job is challenged with the question of his ability to rule in the moral realm. His own incapability toward solution implies God's way must be allowed its course and that even here solution will be forthcoming. It will work according to His purposes. Job is compelled to face his incompetence in God's realm.

Now he is heard to say, "I have heard thee" and "mine eye seeth thee," indicative of a new consciousness of God. This brought two conclusions on the part of Job. "Thou canst do all things" and "No purpose of Thine can be restrained" causing Job to understand that no purpose of God can be frustrated. With this new consciousness he gives expression to complete submission in "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (42: 6).

Only as we are brought to the reality of Job's discoveries will we fully appreciate and apply the gospel of Christ to make the blessings of the kingdom ours. Entrance into this relationship with the Lord includes all Job said, the relegating of self to impotence respecting spiritual need and the elevating of the Lord in his eternal purpose. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2: 20). Men brought face to face with God and the guilt of sin, like Job have to say, I disappear and am filled with sorrow, I repent in dust and ashes. Such, God lifts up by grace through submission to his will. The sense of peace and longing, so illusive to human spirits, now fills the soul as result. The wonder of all wonders, thank God.



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Most of us remember being told when we were Children, "act your age." This rebuke usually meant that we were acting like children much younger than we really were. Now, as we are growing older it isn't a bit unusual to hear someone say, "Well, you don't weigh too much for someone YOUR AGE"; or "a little gray in the hair doesn't hurt anything AT YOUR AGE." All in all it seems to me that these things suggest that at whatever age we may be in life certain things are expected, either in behavior and character, or in physical development or decay. But the same thought is often used in the scriptures in the spiritual sense. There is a very real need to ACT YOUR AGE in spiritual things, or to understand how you should have progressed and developed spiritually AT YOUR AGE.

The Hebrew writer put it this way: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrew 5: 12-14). These Hebrew Christians had been Christians long enough now that they should ACT THEIR AGE; they should by now have grown and developed and be able to teach others.

One of the saddest things about preaching the gospel is to see people who long ago obeyed the gospel, at least in a sense, but who have apparently never really been serious about being a Christian. Its almost as though being a Christian was somehow similar to membership in a club, but one without any activities for its members to participate in. Most of us who are parents are very thankful to God to have had healthy children who grew up normally in the physical sense. If they had not made proper growth at the right times we would have anxiously taken them to the doctor to see what was wrong. I'm sure our father in heaven already knows what's wrong when some of His children fail to grow up; fail to develop the way they should.

What is the reason that some fail to grow? I can only give my opinion about this, but I believe that many who fail to grow do so because they just aren't interested all that much in spiritual things. They knew they ought to be baptized, and no one but God knows their hearts, so

we can't judge what they did or why they did it. But for some reason, right now, their interest in spiritual things, in being with the brethren, in being at a Bible study and perhaps picking up some new thought from God's word that will help them live better, in offering thanksgiving and praise to the father, is very low. I often wish I could say just the right thing to stir up these people, or perhaps grab them and shake them really good. But I know that I can't. I remember an older gospel preacher who used to say that some people need to have their "WANT TO'S" fixed.

Paul told the Corinthians. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Cor. 13: 5). And he wrote to the Roman brethren to say, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. 13: 11). If I do wake out of my sleep and realize that eternity is much nearer, what do I do? In the following verses Paul told them to put off the works of darkness, to put on the armor of light, and to walk honestly as in the day. Then in verse 14 he wrote: "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." How many of us are Christians, but have not really put on Christ in our lives? How many of us are Christians, at least in name, but we regularly put ourselves in a place where it would be easy to give in and sin?

Dear brother and sister in Christ: If you find yourself not too much interested in spiritual things, please consider how near indeed eternity may be, and start getting serious about being a Christian and going to heaven. It is indeed time to ACT YOUR AGE. It is indeed time to develop and grow to be what God would have you to be AT YOUR AGE.



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SATANISM

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Satan worship is alive and well, a very sad statement, but nevertheless true. People across America recently were shocked by the realization of an active satanic cult across the southern border in Matamoros, Mexico. It is sickening to hear of the horrific rituals that take place, the recovery of mutilated bodies and buckets of human brains and entrails. With total disbelief we hear of the devotee claims that the slow torture and blood-letting of human sacrifice strengthens the soul of the cult member and secures protection from his enemies, such as the police (Dave Miller, *The Matamoros Monstrosity*, "Gospel Advocate, July 1989, p. 60).

Few things seem to surprise us anymore and yet we think we have heard it all when something even more sickening hits the news media. It is no different today than it was back in the days of Noah, "when the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6: 5). No matter how bizarre, immoral, sick, decadent or evil, someone somewhere will do it. The moral framework depicted in the Bible, when embraced by the majority of the people of any given society, enables that society to achieve a measure of stability (Psa. 33: 12; Isa. 60: 12). Once that society begins to abandon it's heavenward gaze and overturn it's moral foundation, it is just a matter of time before that society comes apart at the seams and destroys itself by it's "detestable practices" (Ezek. 9: 11). Every nation throughout history has followed this inevitable course.

There has been a widespread movement throughout the world to battle for the minds of men. A deluge of doctrines have been introduced in an all-out effort to eradicate the God of heaven from society's consciousness. In it's place, a conception of reality has been promoted that allows for the sanctioning of virtually any and every belief and practice, no matter how deviant from previous moral norms.

Of course Satan worship is more common than we would like to admit. Maybe we should have anticipated that this force of evil would emerge into what it is today, when the 1960's re-introduced us to astrology and witch-craft. The film "The Exorcist" simply was the first in a flood of decadent movies that enhance society's toleration of and desensitized our opposition to the occult and satanic worship ritual. Checking one's horoscope has become a commonplace practice in our society. The Satanists simply were taking astrology and belief in demons to their logical conclusion.

Methods of Promoting Satan Worship

One of the most subtle tools for promoting Satan worship is rock-n-roll music. The rhythmic beat is used to stimulate group excitement and emotional release (William Sargant, *Battle For The Mind*, p. 114). The lyrics are designed to indoctrinate the hearers into the practice that the particular band performing, wishes to promote. For example the song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" by the Beatles stands for the drug LSD. In the song "Bridge over Troubled Waters" by Simon and Garfunkel, (the song goes "like a bridge over troubled water, I will ease your mind, ") is the promotion of drugs by falsely declaring it to be the worlds answer to all of it's problems, hence the appeal to ease the mind. So skilled have these performers become that they have developed a technique known as "back masking." Back masking is wording a lyric such, that when it is played backwards, it has a very audible message. This technique is subliminal and is unvoluntarily passed through all the compartments of the brain until it reaches the compartment that stores information and lies there dormant until some activity calls it to memory. The band "Queen" are the fore-runners in this technique, and they promote drug taking, homosexuality and Satan worship in their back masking messages. One of their songs when played backwards, very audibly says "Satan is worthy to be worshipped." Drugs such as LSD are promoted because they are mind altering, and to this day these drugs are still referred to as "tools for transformation" (M. Basileu Schlink, *New Age from a Biblical Viewpoint*, p. 16). It's no wonder that our society is becoming so decadent with drugs, homosexuality and Satan worship on the increase.

Ingredients For Satanic Worship

In 1978 Charles Walker who was investigating various mysterious happenings in Clapham Wood, in England, received a telephone call, inviting him to the woods that night. When he arrived at the meeting place, the callers voice rang from behind him "don't attempt to look for me! For your safety and mine it is imperative you do not see who I am." The man claimed to be an initiate of a secret group formed in Sussex. "The nearest I can describe our activities to you is that we are followers of Satanism. At every meeting we hold we sacrifice some animal or other, usually a dog or other domestic or farm animal depending on what is available at the time." He ended, warning: "We will stop at nothing to ensure the safety of our cult" (Toyne Newton, *The Demonic Connection*, p. 11, 12, 28).

Church leaders in the area were forced to take strong action because the magical practices and pagan rituals exerted a strong power over the people. Among the things rigidly banned were:

1. Idolatry and worship of demons.
2. Cult of the dead.
3. Worship of nature such as trees, wells, stones, fire, etc.
4. Pagan calendar customs and festivals.
5. Witchcraft and sorcery.
6. Augury (to predict) and divination.
7. Astrology (Toyne Newton, *Ibid*, p. 66).

These activities were obviously practiced by the Satanists. Other activities that Satanists perform are spiritualism, voodoo and black magic (Dave Miller, Op. Cit.).

God told the Jews as they were about to enter into the land of Canaan "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever (all inclusive) does these things is detestable to the Lord; and because of these detestable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you" (Deut. 18: 10-22). Those who do practice these things will not only be excluded from the kingdom of God, (Gal. 5: 19-21) but will be cast into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (Rev. 21: 8).

Each year many young people in Britain go to London in search of success. Some realize their potential in fulfillment of their dreams and aspirations while the others slip into the background. In time these young people just literally disappear. Over 600 annually in London alone are never heard of again. What happens to them? Are they merely victims of their own naivety of the lure of the big city, or are there more sinister reasons for their disappearance? How many of them fall into the hands of the Satanic cults?

In this respect, Paul Sturgess, General Secretary of the Christian Exorcism Study Group, says that some Satanic groups will sacrifice a human being if they possibly can; often these victims are unwanted babies or tramps taken from the streets at night. He also describes a typical initiation ceremony at which the initiate would firstly be drugged, either by injection or orally, and a doctor or nurse would take a blood sample from them. This sample is mixed with the blood of a sacrificed animal and drained into a chalice containing urine provided by the male priests of the Satanic "temple" and the whole concoction drunk by the initiate as well as by the other members. The initiate is then made to undergo a bizarre stamina test to see how well he or she submits to the will of the group leader, and finally sexual intercourse takes place on a black altar. The initiate is totally unaware that the whole event is being secretly videoed, and it is this video tape which becomes the Satanic group's protection, the threat of its being shown to the initiate's family or employers ensuring his or her continued loyalty to the group (Toyne Newton, Op. Cit. p. 153).

Christians have a message that Satanists do not have, and that is one of hope, for without Christ there is no hope. "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Col. 1: 27) The preaching of the cross has never been more needed than it is right now. Sataism offers no hope, to the contrary it offers doom, despair and damnation. There is nothing to compare with "standing in the way, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and you shall find rest for your souls (Jer. 6: 16) The old paths? Yes, God is eternal but Sataism had a beginning and it will end. (Matt. 15: 13).

THE SCRIPTURES AND THEIR AUTHORITY

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From time to time, the plea "Give us something relevant and practical" arises and is brought to the attention of preachers for consideration in their selection of preaching material. When that plea is made, it is often from an individual (or individuals) who are not content with plain and simple book, chapter, and verse preaching. When such a plea is made, any brother who preaches has to honestly consider this question: "What is the most practical and relevant topic that I could preach on?" Frankly, I know of no topic more relevant and practical than a study of the Scriptures and their authority. That is so because the Scriptures are for our day to day living, and are relevant to situations that Christians must deal with. Therefore, it is my prayer that you will study the material contained herein and may it be to God's glory.

The Authority Of The Scriptures Established

In order for the authority of the Scriptures to be properly established, we need to determine the source of the Scriptures. Are the Scriptures the product of man or a product of the mind of God? If they are the product of man's wisdom, then we need not be really concerned with what they say, for on that basis, one man's opinions are just as good as another's. But, if they are the product of God (and I affirm here that they are), then we must follow what they teach! That the Scriptures are the product of God's wisdom (and not man's) can be seen from the following passages.

From beginning to end, the Bible teaches that God has indeed spoken to man throughout the ages. Not only did He Himself speak, but He also spoke through the prophets in past ages, and in these "last days" (Christian dispensation), He speaks through His Son who has "all authority" (Heb. 1: 1-2; Matt. 28: 18-20).

Of the Son, God said, "... hear Him" (Matt. 17: 5), therefore we must heed what the Son says. But, let us realize that Jesus also gave His apostles authority.

Just before His departure from the apostles to return to Heaven, Jesus promised the Holy Spirit as a guide for them (John 14: 25-26; 16: 12-13). It would do one well to note the context of these verses. After spending some three years with His chosen ones, Jesus was now going to leave them. He would no longer be there to lead and guide them. Therefore, He promised the Holy Spirit as a Comforter to them after His departure. The Holy Spirit came just as Jesus promised (Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 5-8), on Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-4). With the promise of the Holy Spirit being fulfilled, what we must now recognize is that the apostles wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and

not just merely their own ideas about various matters (cf. 1 Cor. 2: 12-13; Eph. 3: 3-5). Summarized, all of this shows that God spoke through His Son, Jesus Christ, who in turn promised the Holy Spirit to His chosen apostles. Upon reception of the Holy Spirit, the apostles taught and wrote what was delivered to them of the Holy Spirit which was sent by the Father (John 14: 26). Yes, the Scriptures are from God!

Now that we have established that the Scriptures are from God and not man, we must consider two further points which will help us to recognize the authority of the Scriptures. First of all, the Scriptures are **complete**, that is they furnish us with everything we need pertaining to our relationship to God, brethren, and the world. We do not need to look to other sources for revelation as to how to live, and neither should we doubt if we have all of God's revelation on a matter. There are passages which show that the Holy Spirit would reveal "all truth," that He would reveal all we need to be "complete," that He would give us "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (see John 14: 26; 16: 13; 2 Tim. 3: 16-17; 2 Pet. 1: 3). There-fore, we do not have to wonder, as some do, whether or not we have enough given in the Scriptures to under-stand God's will on any given subject. We do—the Scriptures are complete! Furthermore, not only are the Scriptures complete, they are **final**. They were "once for all delivered" according to Jude 3. That simply means that there will be no further revelation from God other than that which we have in the Bible! When the New Testament was revealed, that would be all that God would give us pertaining to revelation of His will. New Testament dictionaries and lexicons will concur in what has been said here. Also, when one considers the fact that the Scriptures are complete (a point previously discussed), there is no need for fur-ther revelation.

What Is My Attitude Toward The Scriptures?

Now that we have established that the Scriptures are from God, that they are complete, and they are final, we need to concern ourselves with the question, "What is my attitude toward the authority of the Scriptures?" In asking this question, under consideration is the question of whether or not we should follow the Scriptures strictly. Which should it be—am I to deal loosely with the Scriptures or am I to follow them closely? In light of several passages, I have no other choice but to follow them closely! Take the time to carefully read passages like 1 Cor. 4: 6, Gal. 1: 6-9, 2 Thes. 2: 15, 2 Tim. 1: 13, Jas. 1: 25, 1 Pet. 4: 11, 2 John 9, Jude 3, and Rev. 22: 17-18. I realize that this list is rather lengthy to be included in an article, but upon honest and careful consideration of such passages, we can come to no other conclusion but that we cannot depart from the teaching of Scripture and still be pleasing to God! These passages require us to go back to the Scriptures, which is where we need to be to begin with.

The Authority Of The Scriptures Applied

Brethren, we have now come to the point where we are to take the Scriptures and apply them to everyday

life. It does not matter what we are talking about nor the problems we are facing, we still have to stick to the Scriptures. I want to consider various areas of application because recognition of the authority of the Scriptures without application of them does us no good.

We must apply what the Scriptures teach about the **plan of salvation**. For an alien sinner to become a child of God, he must hear the gospel, believe it, repent of his sins, confess his faith in Christ as God's Son, and be baptized for the remission of sins (Rom. 10: 17; Heb. 11: 6; Acts 17: 30; Rom. 10: 9-10; Acts 2: 37; etc.). If you leave any one of those out, one is not a child of God. Why? Because that is what the Scriptures teach! The erring Christian must repent of his sins, confess those sins to God (and to brethren's if needs be) (Acts 8: 22-24; Jas. 5: 19-20; 1 John 1: 9). To do anything less results in unforgiven sins!

We must apply what the Scriptures teach about **the church**. The local church does have organization (see Phil. 1: 1), no matter what Charles Holt and his colleagues of Truth and Freedom Ministry would have us to believe. Passages such as 1 Tim. 3: 1 show that the elders under consideration are more than just older men (or women). Note that those men must meet certain qualifications to be appointed. 1 Tim. 3: 2 and Titus 1: 7 both say, "a bishop **must be...**" which shows that there is more than just age under consideration. The work of the church is three-fold according to Eph. 4: 12—edification, benevolence, and evangelism. To include the church in politics, business, entertainment, social events, etc. perverts the work of the church. One who wishes to involve the church in such things either does not understand the authority of the Scriptures or is not concerned with the authority of the Scriptures.

We must apply what the Scriptures teach when it comes to **daily Christian living**. While the Christian has to be in the world, he is not to be "of the world" (John 17: 14-16). That means that the Christian's life will be one of transformation rather than conformation (Rom. 12: 1-2). Therefore, the Christian is not to engage the sins and allurements of this world (Col. 3: 5-11). Rather than being entangled in the affairs of this life (2 Tim. 2: 4), he sets his mind on heavenly things and strives to please the Father in heaven (Col. 3: 1-2).

This is just a brief list of the various ways that the Scriptures are relevant to how we should live while here on Earth, but I believe these will suffice to show that we can and are to follow the Scriptures. Whether we will or not depends on how strongly we desire to please God.

Conclusion

Let us all realize that there is nothing more practical and relevant for us than an understanding of the authority of the Scriptures. May we always remember that the Scriptures are from the mind and infinite wisdom of God, and as such, they are complete and final. Furthermore, may we be impressed with the responsibility that is ours to follow them closely. It takes courage to apply what the Scriptures teach without fear or favor. Let us all pray for that kind of courage (cf. Heb. 4: 16).

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THE GREEK PREPOSITION "EIS" (UNTO, INTO, IN) — ACTS 2:38

Luther W. Martin

707 Salem Avenue
 Rolla, MO 65401

Why bother to study an obscure (?) Greek preposition? Because it has been a battleground between gospel preachers and Baptist preachers! Because Baptist preachers usually teach that one is "saved" prior to baptism! And, because the Scriptures teach that one receives remission of past sins followed faith, repentance, confession of Christ, and baptism!

**American Baptist Pub. Society
 Commentary on Acts
 (Horatio B. Hackett, Newton
 Theological Institution)**

"And Peter said unto them, *Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" (Acts 2: 38 Emphasis mine — LWM). The Baptist author then comments:

"**In order to the forgiveness of sins** (Matt. 26: 28; Luke 3: 3) we connect naturally with both the preceding verbs. This clause states the motive or object which should induce them to repent and be baptized. It enforces the entire exhortation, not one part to the exclusion of the other." (Page 53). Note that in the text of Acts 2: 38, the word "unto" is translated from "eis" and that in the comments, the Baptist author stipulates that **both** repentance **and** baptism serve as an inducement toward the object: *i. e.*, the forgiveness of sins.

**American Baptist Pub. Society
 Commentary on Acts
 (Alvah Hovey, Editor of Revised Edition)**

Another Baptist Editor then writes:

"... (2) That repentance and the prescribed expression of it by baptism are closely united. Peter did not feel it necessary to provide for exceptional cases in this address to the people. He saw that the inward change and the ritual confession of it were so knit together by nature that it was enough for him to state them in their proper order and sequence. Repentance and the first fruits of repentance were generally inseparable. The former could not be genuine without manifesting itself in the latter. And in the circumstances of that day a willingness to be baptized was no slight evidence of a new heart." (Page. 53).

**Northern Baptist Theological Seminary
 (J. R. MANTEY — Dept. of New Testament)**

In a personal letter to me, dated December 10, 1942, Dr. Mantey wrote:

"Acts 2: 38 reads as follows in the Greek: 'And Peter (said) to them, Repent and be baptized (=be immersed) each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "

Dr. Mantey's letter then continued: "The remission of sins is conditioned by one's repentance, turning from sin, and by one's identifying himself completely with Christ, as baptism implied. Thus the believer turns from sin to Christ and all that Christ wants him to be and do. "When one does this sincerely and genuinely, he is promised the presence of God's Spirit in his life, to aid him in every way that he needs help. "

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

"And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be immersed each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto remission of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" (Underscoring mine — LWM).

Harvard University Divinity School (Professor Henry J. Cadbury)

In a personal note, Dr. Cadbury penned the following: "But Peter [said] to them: 'Repent, and let each one of you be baptized at* the name of Jesus Christ to [the] forgiving of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. '" *Important early MSS read here in. **University of Chicago Divinity School (Baptist)**

(Allen Wikgren, of the Divinity School)

In a personal note, Allen Wikgren stated: "A literal translation (of Acts 2: 38) would be as follows:

"And Peter [said] to them, 'Repent [plural] and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for [literally "to"] the forgiveness [or "remission"] of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. '" (Westcott and Hort text).

Bangor Theological Seminary (Alfred Morris Perry — Dept. of the New Testament)

Professor Perry sent me a letter on Jan. 11, 1943:

I should render Acts 2: 38 as follows: — "But Peter [said] unto them, 'Repent [change your minds], and let each of you be baptized [caused to be dipped?] in [by] the name of Jesus Christ unto [for the purpose or result of] forgiveness [sending away] of your sins, and you will receive the present of the Holy Spirit. "

Presbyterian Theological Seminary (Paul E. Davies, Ph. D., Professor of N. T. Greek and Exegesis)

On December 5, 1942, Dr. Davies wrote to me as follows: '

"Peter then [said] to them, 'Repent and get baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the free gift of the Holy Spirit. "

Dr. Davies then continued:

"The verb *baptistheto* translated 'get baptized' or "be baptized" is in the passive voice. There are a number of places in the New Testament where this verb is in the Greek Middle Voice (reflexive) and could be translated "baptize yourself," but here it is clearly in the Passive Voice, "Be immersed." I find it most interesting that here we have a "Ph. D." in a Presbyterian Seminary, rendering *bapistheto* as "Be immersed." To me this indicates that he is more of a Greek scholar than he is a Presbyterian!

Conclusion

In researching the use of "*eis*" in Koine Greek it is used only in the Accusative Case. This deals with **motion toward a place**; and it also denotes purpose and sometimes result. The actual meaning of "*eis*" is: **unto, into, in, and inwards**. *Eis* always looks "forward" never "backward. "

Therefore, faith, repentance and immersion is "in order to," or "unto," or "for the purpose of remitting sins." These acts are looking forward to the goal of forgiveness. In the gospel age, sins are subsequently remitted, **after** these acts of faith have been met.

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

PLEASE CONDENSE THE NEWS

When sending an item for this news column, it will be helpful if you will make it as brief as possible. Since many of the items are too long to print, it is necessary to condense them. Thanks for your help.

ALAN YEATER, 290 Warfield Blvd., Clarksville, TN 37043 — After approximately five encouraging years of growth in the Lord's kingdom here, we have said yes to a request to "come over... and help us." The Lord's church is alive and well here in Clarksville. The congregation

is blessed with two fine elders and many diligent servants. The attendance has gone from the 30's to the 80's and the contribution has nearly tripled in the last five years. The Lord has provided the increase. Mark Mayberry has agreed to come and serve as an evangelist beginning in August.

Please send any helpful information regarding military personnel (Ft. Campbell — 101st ABN), and college students (Austin Peay State University).

My family and I plan to move to Hartselle, AL the first of August, if the Lord wills. The Westview congregation in Hartselle has asked us to come and work with them. Jeff Archer, who has worked with them for the last five years is moving to Budapest, Hungary. When traveling through north Alabama stop and visit with us. We are right off I-65. The address is: Westview Church of Christ, Vaughn Bridge Rd., P. O. Box 551, Hartselle, AL 35640. We can be reached by calling (205) 773-9358.

JOHN W. PITMAN, P. O. Box 9, Louisa, KY 41230 — The church in Louisa now has 10 members since two were baptized just after a meeting with Jimmy Mickells in April. They came out of the United Baptist Church. We are in the Big Sandy River Valley. The area is growing. I need support since \$450 has been lost since Dec. 1990. I already had a low income. The only income now is \$673 Social Security check and \$150 from Franklin Rd. in Nashville. It is not possible to meet monthly expenses (\$348 house payment, \$200 car payment, insurance, etc.) with this amount. Please consider this urgent appeal. References will be given. My phone number is (606) 673-4421.

TROY ADAMS, P. O. Box 506, Ellsworth, ME 04605 — I have been in Ellsworth since starting the work here in September 1978. The work has been very slow and often discouraging. Our number has reached as high as 34 for a while, then dropped down to only my family of seven and two ladies. However, the congregation presently numbers 26. Since the last week of February 1991 we have had three baptisms. Five of our families (13 people) are military people and therefore temporary.

As most other preachers in isolated areas, securing support is always a problem. At the present time I am \$150 short of what I need monthly, and I will also be losing another \$500 per month at the end of 1991. Any help will be appreciated.

GARY OGDEN, 2604 Robin Drive, Plant City, FL 33656 — The Lord willing, 111 be leaving June 10th to accompany Buddy Payne and other brethren on an evangelistic trip to Eastern Europe. We solicit your prayers. The Plant City church is solidly behind me. We collected \$6,000 last Sunday to defray expenses and purchase Bibles.

BOBBY HOLMES, 219 Timothy Trail, Duncanville, TX 75137 & **RON HALBROOK**, 654 Gray Street, West Columbia, TX 77486 — The Sturgis Church of Christ began in 1974 and is located near State Hwy. 12 between Sturgis and Starkville, Mississippi. A liberal church in Starkville took the oversight of the Sturgis church in 1984 when they put up a small meetinghouse. Starkville controlled Sturgis' treasury and the deed to Sturgis' property was put in the name of Starkville. When Sturgis learned the truth on local church autonomy in late 1987, they asked for their treasury and their property. Starkville returned their treasury *but not the property*.

After first offering to sell Sturgis their property for \$35,000. Starkville transferred the deed to a third church in Starkville on Hwy 82. This church now wants to sell it. In seeking counsel for the Sturgis brethren, we contacted Thomas Keenum, Sr., an elder and practicing attorney in Booneville, MS. Rather than go to court or lose the property, brother Keenum has negotiated with the Hwy 82 church and gotten the price down to \$17,000. The brethren at Sturgis are rich spiritually, but poor financially. Will you please help? Our real hope is the average person will give from \$5 to \$100. This is an individual effort. No church funds will be accepted. Please send whatever you can to the Sturgis Church of Christ Building Fund, P. O. Box 418, Booneville, MS 38829 (tax deductible).

A WORD OF CLARIFICATION

STEVE PATTON, 2325 Old Columbian Road, P. O. Box 20117, Birmingham, AL 35216 — In a recent conversation with Donnie Rader, we discussed the news report in *Searching The Scriptures* (May 1991) regarding Sakkie Pretorius in South Africa. As the preacher for the Vestavia church mentioned in the news item, I wanted to clear up a misunderstanding regarding our intentions in supporting Sakkie.

It is true that we are planning a long overdue renovation and will also expand our church building and parking lot. We wrote about this to the eight men we presently support in other places. We told them that if they had opportunity to replace the support we were providing to please take advantage of such an offer as that would help us. Some of the men misunderstood our letter and assumed we were planning to drop them at the end of 1991. That is what prompted Sakkie's letter to STS. Such is not our intention. If we can possibly complete our expansion without dropping these men, we will do so. That is our stated goal. Sakkie would be one of the last we would cut because we realize how hard it is to raise support while living abroad. The Vestavia church has consistently put 80% or better of its annual budget into evangelism.

I hope this clears up any misunderstanding concerning Vestavia's intentions. We do not put physical facilities above evangelism.

TOPES TO RETURN TO AFRICA

GENE TOPE, 1700 Prairie Lake Blvd. Ocoee, FL 34761—Betty and I have decided to return to South Africa this October to continue our work there. Workers tell us we are needed as much, or more, than ever before. We need your help once again. We are asking individuals and congregations to have fellowship with us in both one-time contributions and also monthly support. The amount need not be large. Several have already indicated they will help us.

FRANK INGRAM PASSES

On April 23, 1991 Frank Ingram succumbed to the illness that he had battled for years. He preached the gospel for forty-three years. Funeral services were conducted on April 25 at the Garden Sanctuary in Seminole, FL by Charles Murray and Ronald Drumn. You may reach his wife Elaine at 9960 37th St. Pinellas Park, FL 34666.

FROM AROUND THE WORLD

PHILIPPINES — Joy Remuner A. Notarte reports that two were baptized on March 10 in Maymana, Marilog District. Four were baptized on March 20. In Tambobon two were baptized on March 24.

Rody Gumpad reports that two were baptized in April. The number there continues to grow. Rody also reports a lack of funds due to the necessity of buying canned milk for their baby and other expenses.

Bert G. Enostacion writes about a brother in need in the church at San Fernando, La Union. His name is Ireneo Crisostomo. He is sick and cannot buy the needed medicine. If you can help, send checks via registered mail to: Ireneo Crisostomo, C/O Church of Christ, P. O. Box 09, San Fernando 2500, La Union Philippines.

Julie DA. Notarte reports that two were baptized on March 3, eleven on March 10, four on March 20 and three on March 31.

Zozimo Ely states that a new church building has been built in Tinulang, Bayabas, Toril, Davao City.

MEXICO — Ruben C. Amador (Houston, TX) reports that two were baptized and one made confession in April in Tampico, Tamps., Mexico. The church in Tampico is one of the strongest churches in Mexico.

SOUTH AMERICA— Carlos A. Capelli writes that the Jose C. Paz church in Argentina is doing well. The brethren there could use Bibles and song books in Spanish.

SOUTH AFRICA — Paul Williams reports that six were baptized in Zululand (three in Eshowe, one near Mapumulo and two in Nkandla).

Ray and Thena Votaw's oldest daughter, Celeste, died suddenly on March 26 of Leukemia.

George Harris reports of some correspondence he had with Samuel M. Hayioye, an evangelist in Nigeria over the question of institutionalism. He accepted the truth and has identified with a faithful group. He is now appealing for financial help.

SPAIN — Efrain F. Perez reports at least three baptisms recently in Spain.

ITALY — Francesco Fosci (Aprilia) writes that the Latina Church is doing fine and growing in knowledge and faith. Francesco was challenged by a private radio station to meet a Catholic priest in a debate on the Passover. However, the priest was forbidden by the bishop to debate.

Stefano Corazza (Rome) reports that he presently has two ongoing Bible classes with some who are in denominational churches. David Thomley and Kelly Cook plan to return to Italy to work in gospel.

Rodolfo Berdini says that the work at Aprilia is continuing fine.

Alessandro Corazza (Rome) reports two baptisms in Rome.

PREACHERS NEEDED

FONTANA, CALIFORNIA — The church in Fontana will be needing a preacher by July 1, 1991. We can offer \$500 a week. If the attendance is increased, the amount could be increased. Those interested call Fred R. Woelper (714) 822-7894, John McCance

(714) 822-2822 or Glen A. Rice, Jr. (714) 823-6339.

MADERA, CALIFORNIA — The Parksdale Church is in need of a preacher. They also have a small preacher's home. Attendance runs in the 40's and 50's. The area is growing. There is the prospect of a new state university near by. They are unable to provide full support. Those interested can contact Burt Bridges (209) 674-9553 or Robert Holcomb (209) 674-7814.

SALEM, OHIO — The Salem, Ohio church is looking for a full-time, experienced gospel preacher. For information call (216) 223-2055 or (216) 584-2696.

CAMERON, OHIO — The church here is seeking a full-time preacher. Cameron is located about 15 miles from New Martinsville, WV and about the same distance from Woodsfield, OH. The average attendance is about 40. Outside support will be required. We can offer \$600 per month. Contact Bill Gorrell, P. O. Box 67, Woodsfield, OH 43793 or call (614) 472-5141.

BRADNER, OHIO—The church at Bradner, located 25 miles south of Toledo, is seeking a full-time preacher. The average attendance is 25-30. Full support can be provided. Please contact George Lambrof, 629 Ordway Ave., Bowling Green, OH 43402 or call (419) 352-8842.

RIDGEWAY, VIRGINIA — The church meeting here is in need of a full-time preacher. Full support and a four bedroom house is provided. Those interested should contact Tom Knight (703) 956-3637 or Webster Ford (703) 956-3093. The church address is Rt. 1, Box 169, Ridgeway, VA 24148.

VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI—The church in Vicksburg is looking for a preacher. They have about 22 in attendance. The town of 40, 000 is a nice place to live. The church can provide \$500 per month. Call

Tom Tankersley (601) 636-1780 or **Chuck Henderson (601) 6364300.**

PISCATAWAY, NEW JERSEY — The Piscataway church is looking for a full-time preacher. The congregation consist of about 60 members. We can provide full support. Please contact Stan Persaud (908) 264-2619 or Richard Pflaum (908) 359-1928.

ROCKWOOD, TENNESSEE — The church in Rockwood, TN is in need of a full-time preacher. There is good potential for growth. We cannot provide full support. Contact Tom Lequire (615) 364-3266 or Jim Woodall (616) 354-3624.

GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN — The church at 1621 Hillcrest Dr. is looking for a full-time preacher. Our attendance is 80 and we can provide partial support. Green Bay has a couple of colleges, a prison and a population of over 100, 000. Contact Wilmer Kersten (716) 758-8615 or Nolan Glover (414) 497-0769.

PREACHER AVAILABLE

WAYNE GOFORTH, 5404 Country Dr., Nashville, TN S7211 — I will be available to work with a congregation beginning Jan. 1, 1992. I am thirty years old, married with three children. I have ten years experience. We would prefer to locate in the Western U. S. Self-supporting with elders is preferred. Call me at (615) 884-9849.



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