

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"

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

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WHEN WAS THE KINGDOM ESTABLISHED ON EARTH?

When was the kingdom of the Old Testament prophets established? Some think that it began in the days of Abraham when God made His promises to him. This is obviously not true because the prophecies concerning the kingdom had not been made and a King had not been designated to receive a kingdom.

Some theologians teach that the kingdom was established during the days that John the Baptist was upon earth. This could not be true because Jesus made the statement that none was greater than John the Baptist, "notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11: 11). This is to say that John was not in the kingdom. He lived and died before the kingdom was established.

Besides this, John the Baptist preached, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3: 1, 2). After John was put in prison, he was never released (Matt. 14: 3-12). Jesus came preaching, "the kingdom of God is at hand..." (Mark 1: 14, 15). The kingdom had not come when John was beheaded. John was dead before the church or kingdom was established.

The kingdom or church could not begin before the death, burial, resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ. In fact, the death, burial and resurrection must have occurred before Christ could receive a kingdom, according to prophecy. Daniel prophesied of Christ ascending to the Father to receive his kingdom: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came

to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7: 13, 14).

The promise was made of Messiah who would save the people.: "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4: 4, 5). Jesus came at the right time for a definite purpose. The blood of the lamb of God had to be shed in order to make both Jew and Gentile one in Christ (Eph. 2: 13-16). By his blood, Christ reconciled all unto God in ONE body "by the cross." The one body is the church (Eph. 1: 22, 23; Col. 1: 18, 24). Our redemption, the forgiveness of sins, is through his blood (Eph. 1: 7). The church is purchased with his blood (Acts 20: 28). The church could not have been established before Christ gave his blood on the cross.

The kingdom could not have been established before Christ ascended to the Father to receive the kingdom of prophecy. He could not ascend until he was raised from the dead. He gave his life in fulfillment of the eternal purpose of God, and he must be raised from the dead before he could ascend to the Father and receive the power he now has.

Christ told the twelve just before he ascended into heaven that they should tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high (Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 8, 9). After he said this he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. Daniel saw night visions in which "one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him" (Dan. 7: 13).

The kingdom or church could not be established until the power came. Jesus said unto the people and his disciples, that there were some of them standing there, "Which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9: 1). If we can know exactly when the power came, we know exactly when the kingdom came. Just before his Ascension, Jesus told his apostles to "tarry ye in the city

of Jerusalem, until ye be endured with power from on high" (Luke 24: 49).

Luke was the inspired writer of both Luke and Acts. He addressed both to "most excellent Theophilus" (Luke 1: 3; Acts 1: 1). Acts begins where Luke leaves off. "The former treatise" Most surely refers to Luke (Acts 1: 1). Christ commands the eleven not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father (Acts 1: 4). Verse 6 gives the account of the eleven asking Jesus if he was now ready to "restore again the kingdom to Israel." He replied, in effect, that it was not any of their business what the Father put in His own power. Then he adds, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8).

We have the right PLACE and the right TIME: Jerusalem and Pentecost. That is where the power came and when the power came. That is where and when the kingdom of Christ began upon earth according to prophecy and fulfillment. That is the time when and place where the church had its beginning. Acts 2 is the account of that power beginning its work and in the last verse we read, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2: 47).

There is one undeniable fact that is proved by this: any church that began anytime before or after Pentecost, and at any place other than Jerusalem is not the church the prophets spoke of, and is not the one Christ promised to build in Matthew 16: 18. Since the "church" and "kingdom" are but two terms for the same body of people over whom Christ reigns, the kingdom of Christ began on earth in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost following the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

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" QUOTE

**"When regard for truth has been
broken down or even slightly
weakened, all things
will remain doubtful."**

—St. Augustine

UNQUOTE "

Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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MAGIC AIDS FORNICATION

"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6: 18-20). This simple approach to sexuality is seldom heard on the modern scene. While the passage is addressed to Christians (for they are bought with the price of the shed blood of Christ), the practice of the principles set forth here would solve many problems in society at large.

If more would understand that human bodies were made by God and intended to become instruments of righteousness in which God is to be glorified, it would change what people decide to do with their bodies. If more would flee fornication, it would cut way down on the divorce epidemic. It would reduce the number of murders, for many lives are taken by betrayed mates. It would slow down teenage pregnancies. It would drastically cut down on the number of abortions, for many of these grow out of fornication. And, it would greatly reduce the problem of Aids and other diseases directly related to ungodly behaviour.

For sometime now, efforts have been made to solve the problem of AIDS. The public has been lectured about loving those with this disease. We are told that they need to be hugged. Some large cities have given out clean needles to dope addicts to help curb this scourge. High school students in New York (and soon other cities plan to do the same) have been given condoms. A recent front-page newspaper article appeared with a picture of two high school students (a fifteen year old boy and his thirteen year old girl friend) holding this birth control device which they had received at school. One teenage boy told me sometime ago that his sex education class at school was mainly a course in how to commit fornication without getting pregnant or contracting a disease.

With all the money spent on AIDS (and I certainly don't begrudge medical attention to anyone who is ill), far more people in this country are fighting cancer, heart disease and other serious ailments from which many people die every year — far more than from the AIDS virus. If you paid attention to the news media, you might get the impression that AIDS is about the only newsworthy malady in our nation.

But none of this has compared to the frenzy generated by the announcement by basketball super-star, Magic Johnson, that he now has the HIV virus and that he was retiring from professional basketball. He has been praised by the media, by entertainers and by politicians as a great hero. How did he get this virus? He admits to sexual encounters with women. Wilt Chamberlain, another basketball great boasted in a recent book about his promiscuity with many women. I am sorry Magic Johnson has the HIV virus. Further, I am sorry for his sinful lifestyle which exposed him to it. Now he is going to "help" young people by telling them how to have "safe sex." His emphasis will be on using protection. In one anemic statement, he acknowledged the criticism he has received for his sinful contact by saying he would say something about the choice of abstinence. Which choice do you think immature and sexually active young people will hear from him. Abstinence, or protection? And does anyone seriously believe that young people who are given birth control equipment will not commit fornication?

It is argued by some that "everyone is doing this" so we might as well protect ourselves. Well, not everyone is committing fornication, thank the Lord, but all too many are. Two people are too many.

What is "safe sex"? Would you listen to divine wisdom? "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency" (1 Cor. 7: 2-5).

Again, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as other Gentiles which know not God" (1 Thes. 4: 3-5).

And again, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13: 4). These passages define the limits of "safe sex." God ordained marriage to be honorable for all people and the marriage bed is "undefiled." Fornication is to be avoided for it is sinful. God will judge those who practice it. Each one is responsible for keeping his "vessel" pure. Husbands and wives have privileges with each others bodies which are not to be denied. Each is to render to the other what is their "due." In marriage it is safe, honorable, designed for pleasure for both husband and wife, and provides a preventive to fornication.

Now, what will become of fornicators, including homosexuals and lesbians? "Whoremongers" shall have their part "in the lake of fire" (Rev. 21: 8), whether we are talking about Magic Johnson, Wilt Chamberlain or Jimmy Swaggart. He told his congregation it was "none of their business" if he consorted with prostitutes. But

according to John, it is indeed God's business. Jesus taught that out of an evil heart proceed fornications, murders, and other evils, and added "All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mk. 7:21-23). Paul listed fornication as a work of the flesh and said "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21). My friends, what fornicators need is not protection but a penitent heart which results in a changed life which respects God's law on sexuality. But then, you would not hear that on the network news, would you?

I am personally outraged that our President has put Magic Johnson on a commission to work with young people and offer them advice. Unless there has been some change from what I have seen out of Magic, his principle advice will be how to commit fornication and not get caught. As long as that prevails then it will be true that Magic aids fornication.

A PERSONAL NOTE TO READERS

It is a joy to be back at my desk putting together an issue of STS. Therapy is still going on with my back, and I still have some restrictions for a few more weeks, but it is a relief to feel that I am back at my post. Words cannot fully express to Donnie V. Rader my heartfelt appreciation for his able and faithful work in editing the paper for the past seven months. His three months for the summer turned into seven and I am much in his debt and so are the readers. Why not take a moment and drop him a note of gratitude.

The fall meetings are now behind us and we are into our winter classes at Manslick Road in Louisville. We appreciate your prayers and other encouragements.

THE NATURE OF CHRIST (3)

Hoyt Houchen

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JOHN 1: 1-3, 14

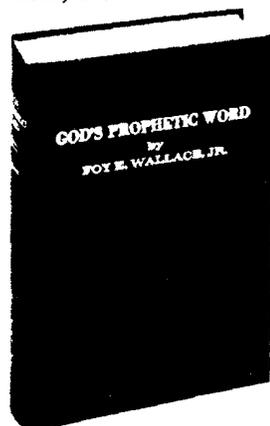
In the prologue (perhaps better stated as the epilogue) of John's gospel, he wrote: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (1: 1). The "Word" is translated from the Greek word *logos*. The "Word" (*logos*) here is "the personal manifestation, not of a part of the divine nature, but of the whole Deity" (W. E. Vine, op. cit. Vol. 4, p. 230). B. F. Westcott says of the "logos" that "no idea of inferiority of nature is suggested by the form of expression, which simply affirms the true deity of the Word. " He further states: "Thus we are led to conceive that the divine nature is essentially in the Son, and at the same time that the Son can be regarded, according to that which is His peculiar characteristic, in relation to God as God. He is the "image of God" and not simply of the Father" (*The Gospel According to John*, p. 3). Christ (the eternal Word, the *logos*) is said to be "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Col. 1: 15). The word "image" (Gr. *eikon*) is defined by Thayer: "an image, figure, likeness: (op. cit. p. 175). Philip requested of Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. " Jesus replied: "Have I been so long time with you, and doest thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me has seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father?" (Jno. 14: 8, 9). Westcott comments on the expression has seen the Father": "hath seen not God in His absolute being (1: 18), but God in this relation" (Ibid., p. 203). He explains this relation in his comment on John 1: 18. "It is impossible, so far as our experience goes, for man to have direct knowledge of God as God. He can come to know Him only through One who shares both the human and divine natures, and who is in vital fellowship both with God and with man. In Christ this condition is satisfied" (Ibid., p. 14). C. E. W. Dorris also makes the meaning of John 1: 18 clear. "Natural eyes cannot behold God who is a 'Spirit' no more than they can see the soul of man. Man 'cannot see God and live, ' but he can see and understand 'God manifested in the flesh. ' Christ was not an ambassador from God but 'Immanuel, God with us, ' the 'Godhead in bodily form'" (*A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, p. 223).

We now consider John 1: 14, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us... " The verb "dwelt" is from the Greek word *skeeno*, literally, "tabernacled. " We are not to suppose that because the Word "became" flesh that the Word itself was different from what He was

GOD'S PROPHETIC WORD

By Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

A compendium on the Abrahamic Promises and the Mosaic, major and minor Davidic Prophecies, consisting of a complete exposure and refutation of the multiple theories of premillennialism, including a review of the claims of British Anglo-Israelism, and the Judaistic system of Seventh Day Adventism.



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before the Incarnation.

How was Christ "made" flesh (KJV), or how did He "become" flesh (ASV)? Jesus was made or became incarnate. Webster defines "incarnate," "invested with a bodily and human nature" (*Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, p. 608). Westcott says, "He was with God; and 'He tabernacled among us: 'the divine existence is brought into a vital and historical connection with human life... The mode of the Lord's existence on earth was truly human, and subject to all the conditions of human existence; but He never ceased to be God... The Lord's human and divine natures were united in one Person" (op. cit. p. 10).

How was Christ made, or how did he become incarnate? He was born of a virgin (Matt. 1: 18-21). To deny the virgin birth of Jesus Christ is to call in question the sacred historians and to doubt the honor and purity of Mary. Someone has said: "He was born from a virgin womb and when He died he was placed in a virgin tomb. " He was God in the flesh (1 Tim. 3: 16, KJV). Whether or not there is sufficient evidence for the King James translation "God," the fact remains that other scriptures sustain the idea. The eternal Word (*logos*) was made, became flesh. He was born of a woman (Gal. 4: 4). He was made like His brethren in all things "That he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God" (Heb. 2: 17). He became "perfect" (Heb. 5: 9). The word "perfect" here does not denote sinlessness. He was already sinless — He lived a sinless life. The word "perfect" in this verse is the first aorist passive participle of *teleioo* and is defined by A. T. Robertson as "the completion of the process of training mentioned by this same verb in 2: 10 'by means of sufferings' (op. cit. Vol. 5, p. 370). Robertson also makes a worthwhile observation on Hebrews 2: 10, "perfect through sufferings. " He says: "If one recoils at the idea of God making Christ perfect, he should bear in mind that it is the humanity of Jesus that is under discussion. The writer does not say that Jesus was sinful (see the opposite in 4: 15), but simply that 'by means of sufferings' God perfected His Son in his human life and death for his task as Redeemer and Saviour" (op. cit. Vol. 5, p. 347). In Hebrews 10: 5, the inspired writer says of Christ, "... but a body didst thou prepare for me. " The context denotes that the body was to be for an offering, an offering for sin. Please notice that "a body didst thou prepare for me. " Who is the ME? The ME existed before the body. The body was prepared for the ME. The virgin Mary became the mother of the human body of Jesus. She is not the mother of God, as the Catholics claim. The ME already existed. The ME, or God, is eternal. H. Leo Boles has well expressed it: "Jesus was as human as his mother Mary, and as divine as his father God" (*Commentary on Matthew*, p. 25).

Existing in the flesh (incarnate) Jesus accomplished all that He came to earth to do. He prayed to the Father, "I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do" (Jno. 17: 4). There can be no reason for God the Son (Christ) to again take a bodily form and return to earth. He finished the work of redemption, and His kingdom was established on the

first Pentecost after His resurrection from the dead. He presently is at the right hand of His Father where He is "far above all rule and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1: 21). He rules in the hearts of, and over the lives of His subjects in His spiritual kingdom. He will reign until the last enemy is destroyed — death (1 Cor. 15: 26). The Bible is silent upon a future bodily reign of Christ.

Our finite minds cannot comprehend how Jesus was both God and man upon the earth. This comes in the realm of the supernatural which we must accept by faith. Neither do we understand, nor are we able to explain, the miracles which Jesus performed; but we believe that He did them (Jno. 20: 30, 31). We accept them by faith (Rom. 10: 17).

Jesus Was More Than A Man

When Jesus was upon earth He was human yet divine. He became thirsty; yet it was He who said: "if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink (Jno. 7: 37). He became hungry, but He was able to feed about five thousand men besides women and children with five loaves and two fishes (Matt. 14: 19-21). He became weary, yet He offered Himself to all who were weary and heavy laden (Matt. 11: 28-30).

It is contended by some that Jesus could not have been God on earth because He was tempted in all points as we are (Heb. 4: 15), but God cannot be tempted with evil (Jas. 1: 13). So, the argument is that the devil is the epitome of evil; therefore, since Jesus was tempted with evil, He could not have been God. It is true that the divine nature of Jesus could not be tempted (as God he could not be tempted with evil), but His human nature (like other men) faced temptation and experienced the full force of it. As God, He was sinless; and as a human being he was sinless (1 Pet. 2: 21-23).

When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to a son, he said of this son, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High..." (Lk. 1: 32). In this announcement, the angel also referred to the child to be born as "the holy thing" and he would be called "the Son of God" (vs. 35). Could such statements be made of a mere human infant? When Mary visited Elizabeth, she said, to Mary, "and whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?" (vs. 43). Such could not have been said of just an ordinary child.

Jesus was worshipped while upon the earth. He was worshipped by the wise men who had come from the east. they came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we saw the star in the east, and are come to worship him" (Matt. 2: 1, 2). In verse 9 it is stated that "they fell down and worshipped him. " The word "worship" is translated from the Greek word *proskuneo* and denotes an act of reverence whether paid to creature or to the Creator (see footnote on Matt. 2: 2 in ASV). The word is applied to Jesus "who is to be revered and worshipped as Messianic King and Divine Helper: Mt. 2: 2, 8, 11. — 8: 2; 9: 18; 14: 33, 15: 25; Jno. 9: 38 — Mt. 20: 20" (Amdt and Gingrich, op. cit. p. 724). This word is used in several instances in the New Testament. Jesus

said to Satan in Matthew 4: 10: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. " The Samaritan leper whom Jesus had healed, fell upon his face at his feet, giving him thanks (Lk. 17: 16). But when Cornelius fell down at the feet of Peter and worshipped him, Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up; I MYSELF ALSO AM A MAN" (Acts 10: 25, 26, Emphasis mine, H. H.). Never did Jesus ever give this command to anyone who bowed or kneeled at His feet. Neither did He ever command anyone, saying, "Stand up; I also am a man. " Interestingly Peter would not allow Cornelius to fall down at his feet and worship him; but Peter "fell down at Jesus' knees saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O LORD" (Lk. 5: 8, Emphasis mine, H. H.). Women took hold of the feet of the risen Jesus and worshipped Him (Matt. 28: 9). After the apostle Thomas had probed the wounds of Jesus, he said unto him. "My Lord and my God" (Jno. 20: 28). (More to follow).

**A Review Of Jerry Bassett's
Rethinking Marriage, Divorce
& Remarriage (No. 1)**



Donnie V. Rader

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WHAT LAW?

In the late fall of 1990, Jerry F. Bassett of Eugene, Or published a book (*Rethinking Marriage, Divorce & Remarriage*) which advocates the views that he has been circulating in the Coburg Rd. bulletin and in his exchanges with Weldon Warnock (*Guardian Of Truth*) and Ken Leach (*Sentry*).

The editor of this paper has asked that I write a review of Jerry's material in a series of four or five articles

What The Book Says

Brother Bassett's book (consisting of twelve chapters — 149 pages) makes about seven major points:

1. Matt. 5: 32 and Matt. 19: 9 are explanations of the law of Moses (Chapters II, III, IV, V).
2. He affirms that *marriage* and the *bond* are the same. Thus, he concludes that those who are divorced (unscripturally) are unmarried and not bound (VI).
3. The term "adultery" refers to unscriptural divorce and remarriage and not to unlawful sexual activity. Brother Bassett affirms that when a couple "commit adultery" that it refers to their unlawful dissolving of a previous marriage and entering another. He tells us that committing adultery is not continuous action (Chapter VII).
4. I Cor. 7: 15 teaches that the believer (who has been divorced by the unbeliever) is not under the marriage bond and is thus free to remarry (Chapter VIII).
5. God does not require that those who have committed adultery (by unlawful divorce and remarriage) to separate (dissolve the marriage). God does require repentance for adultery. However, the couple repent of the unlawful divorce and remarriage and continue to live together (Chapter IX).
6. The guilty party can remarry (Chapter X).
7. Divorce and remarriage is a matter of individual difference. Thus, it is not a question over which to dissolve fellowship (Chapters XI, XII).

The Articles In Review

We plan to examine the above points in a series of five articles:

1. "What Law?"
2. "Marriage, Bond And Adultery. "
3. "1 Cor. 7: 15 — Is The Believer Free To Remarry?"
4. "Must Those Who Have Committed Adultery Separate?"
5. "May The Guilty Party Remarry? Divorce, Remarriage And Fellowship. "

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Divine Law and Human Responsibility

The above line is the title of Bassett's first chapter which doesn't directly address divorce and remarriage. His point is that God's law for man is twofold: (1) love God and (2) love man. This is couched in man's nature — being in the image of God. The Gentiles and aliens today sin because they violate one of these two principles (Bassett, pp. 4-6). We are told that after the gospel was effective, the Gentiles were convicted of sin by pointing back to the two principles above rather than a violation of the gospel (Bassett, p. 4, 6).

From these principles Jerry concludes: 1. That all men are under Gen. 2: 24. It is a sin for any (including Gentiles and aliens today) to violate it (Bassett, p. 7, 9). 2. The solution for this sin or any other is to obey the gospel (Bassett, pp. 10-12). 3. "Thus, the gospel of Christ, the New Covenant, may warn the world of the consequences of sin, but it is not the means by which those of the world are made sinners" (Bassett, p. 12).

At first, it may not appear that this first chapter has much to do with the divorce and remarriage issue. But, as one wades deeper into the book, he can see where the author is headed. His point is that the Gentiles were not under the gospel. The aliens are not under the gospel. The gospel does not condemn the alien's marriage, but shows him the remedy (repent and be forgiven and continue in that same marriage).

The Gentiles

Even a casual study will reveal that the Gentiles have been under the law of Christ since its beginning. Thus, we conclude that the same principle is true concerning the alien sinner.

1. *Jesus has universal authority.* He has "power over all flesh" (John 17: 2). He claimed, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth..." (Matt. 28: 18). Jesus will judge the world (which includes the Gentiles and alien sinners (Acts 17: 30-31).

2. *If the Gentiles are amenable to part of the law, then they are amenable to all of the law (as a whole).* Both the Old and New Testaments come as package deals (Gal. 5: 3; Jas. 2: 10). Thus, if the Gentiles and the aliens are subject to the part of the law that deals with faith, repentance, confession and baptism (Rom. 8: 2), then he is subject to the rest of the law of Christ.

3. *How could the Gentiles (and aliens) have been guilty of adultery if they were not under the law of Christ on marriage?* Paul stated that the Corinthians had been guilty of adultery and fornication *prior* to their becoming children of God (1 Cor. 6: 9-11). It will not do to argue as Bassett does that they were under the twofold law (1. Love God; 2. Love man). Neither of those principles within themselves tell us about what is lawful or not with regard to marriage.

4. *God has one body of laws for the Christian and the alien sinner.* There is not one set of laws for the Christian and another for the alien. The set of laws given to one is the same as given to the other.

The *gospel* is for the alien (Mark 16: 15) and the Christian (Rom. 1: 7, 15). The *doctrine* is for the alien (Acts 5: 27) as well as the children of God (2 Jno. 9).

The "Law In The Heart" — Rom. 2

Jerry argues that the Gentiles were still under the "work of the law written in their hearts" (Rom. 2: 15) some "twenty-five years after the gospel was preached in Jerusalem" (Bassett, p. 6).

First of all, it was the "work of the law" and not the law itself that was written in their hearts (Rom. 2: 15). Secondly, the law was the law that was not given to the Gentiles (vs. 12-15) — the law of Moses. Though the Gentiles did not receive the law itself, they did adopt some of the moral principles that were found therein. Thus, they had the work of the law written in their hearts.

If Paul's description of the Jews being "in the law" is a reference to their state before the law was taken away and the law of Christ became effective (Rom. 2: 12), then his description of the Gentiles being "without the law" and having the "work of the law written in their hearts" must also refer to their state before the law was taken away and the gospel of Christ was effective. If not, why not?

If the Gentiles were still under the "work of the law written in the heart" some "twenty-five years after the gospel was first preached in Jerusalem," then the Jews were still "in the law" at the same time!

Matt. 5: 32 and Matt. 19: 9

Chapters 2-6 of Bassett's book are devoted to saying that Matt. 5: 32 and Matt. 19: 9 are not presentations of the law of Christ, but explanations of the law of Moses.

Bassett puts the whole Sermon on the Mount within the framework of the law of Moses. He says, "Twentieth Century folk tend to read the words of Jesus recorded at Matthew 5: 13-16 while visualizing him speaking to an audience of Christians... Jesus spoke in the Sermon on the Mount to Jews who still lived under the Law of Moses... Clearly, Jesus was reminding these Jews of what God intended for them to be as God's covenant people within the framework of the Mosaic law... they knew he was teaching them to be obedient to the law under which they yet lived, the Law of Moses" (Bassett, pp. 18, 20).

In contrast, the text says that what Jesus was preaching was the "gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4: 23).

Bassett insists that in the Sermon on the Mount and in Matt. 19: 9 Jesus was *not contrasting* the old law with his law (pp. 22-24). In these texts, Jesus was not "introducing new legislation" (Bassett, p. 24). What he was doing, Jerry says, is contrasting the false notions of the Scribes and Pharisees with what the law actually taught (Bassett, p. 23).

Listen to what Bassett says specifically about our texts under consideration.

Matt. 5: 32 — "If we can see this, then the conclusion is unavoidable that Jesus' words at Matthew 5: 32 were his statement as to what the Law of Moses really taught" (p. 30). "... his statement at Matthew 5: 32 was not new legislation peculiar to the gospel. Instead, it was his statement of what Moses had actually said per Deuteronomy 24: 1-4" (p. 33).

Matt. 19: 9 — "Were it not for these facts, virtually no one would have even the least difficulty seeing that

Jesus' conversation with the Pharisees fits the same pattern as his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount" (p. 35). This passage is also an explanation of Deut. 24: 1-4 (p. 53).

1. *To reject Matt. 5: 32 and Matt. 19: 9 as a part of the New Testament, will lead to rejecting much more.* If these passages are not a part of the New Covenant, then neither is the whole book of Matthew. If that is true we must reject the other "gospels" as well.

2. *There are definite contrasts to the law of Moses in Matt. 5 and 19.* In both texts, Jesus puts his teaching in contrast to the law of Moses. In Matt. 5 he would begin by saying "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time..." and then in contrast, he would say, "But I say unto you..." This is done at least six times in the chapter (vs. 21-22; 27-28; 31-32; 33-34; 38-39; 43-44). Yes, it is true that Jesus deals with the misinterpretations of the law in this chapter, however, there are definite contrasts to the law of Moses. In Matt. 19 the Pharisees saw a contrast in what Jesus was saying and in what Moses had said.

3. *A law can be written or stated before it becomes effective.* Mark 16: 16 is one example. If Matt. 5: 32 and 19: 9 are an explanation of the law of Moses because that was the law in effect at the time they were spoken, then I wonder about Matt. 18: 17; Jno 3: 5; Matt. 7: 21; Jno. 14: 6; Luke 22: 30; Matt. 28: 18-19 and many other passages.

4. *Matt. 5 and 19 are not explanations of Deut. 24.* What Jesus taught in Matt. 19: 9 was in harmony with God's law at the beginning (vs. 4-5). He showed, however, that what Moses allowed (tolerated) was contrary to that (v. 8). The disciples' reaction (vs. 10-12) shows that what Jesus taught (v. 9) was more rigid than what Moses tolerated. Thus, they are not the same. Also, in v. 12, Jesus' teaching included a reference to being an eunuch for the *kingdom's* sake. That doesn't sound like an explanation of the old law.

If Deut. 24 meant that God approved of divorce for fornication (which is what Bassett argues), then what was allowed was not for the hardness of the Jew's heart.

In Deut. 24, one could not put away with approval. It was not for fornication, for the fornicator was to be stone (Deut. 22). Furthermore the one who remarried would be defiled. Yet, in Matt. 5 and 19 one could put away his/her mate for fornication with God's approval. The one who put away his/her mate for this cause could remarry. This does not harmonize with Deut. 24.

5. *Bassett manages to make Matt. 5: 32; 19: 9 applicable to us anyway.* He says that since the Jews were covenant people then the same principle applies to covenant people today (Bassett, p. 62). I wonder why that wouldn't work on all that was said to the Jews.

THE NEW MAN

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POPPING THE QUESTION

Jack was a retired business man I met on the first tee one afternoon. I had gone alone to the golf course for a little fresh air and sunshine, and Jack, also about to tee off without a partner, asked me if I'd like to play with him. I said yes, silently promising myself to ask him, no later than the third hole, if he would let me come to his home to study the Bible.

His first drive sailed admirably down the middle of the fairway. Mine did not. On the way to look for my ball we exchanged the usual pleasantries, inquiring into one another's work, families, etc. When he offered the standard comment that being a preacher must be "interesting" work, I knew the door would never be more open, so I forged ahead.

"You attend church much?"

"No, not very often. "

"Know anything about the 'Church of Christ?'"

"No, not really. "

"Well, to tell you the truth, those of us who designate ourselves as churches of Christ occupy somewhat of a unique position in the religious world. I meet a good many people who have a fairly mixed up idea of what we are all about. "

"Really?"

"Tell you what. If I promised it wouldn't take more than forty-five minutes, would you let me come to your home some evening and try to make our case from the Bible for what we honestly think is a distinctive viewpoint on what Christianity is supposed to be. "

"Oh, I don't know. I'm really not a religious person. No offense, but I guess I probably wouldn't be interested. "

"That's okay. I'm not trying to 'hustle' you or anything! But seriously, if you ever want to talk, give me a call. I think there are some interesting things in the Bible that a lot of folks have just never looked at very carefully. "

At this point, having found my ball, I scared it with an 8 iron into a greenside bunker and the conversation turned to other, less pleasant, considerations. But I had asked this fellow for a study, and though he had declined I felt good about having asked. There are any number of other approaches that might have been taken, obviously. Some are preferable to the one I happened to use on that occasion. But the important thing is that I got the question asked. And I did it before the third hole!

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

Granted it is not always possible to ask a total stranger so quickly if he would like to study the Bible. Even when it is, it may not be expedient. What wisdom is always urging us to look for is the *optimum* moment to bring up the subject of Bible study with those we meet. We want to broach the matter at the very best time possible: the time at which all things considered, there is the best possible chance of meeting with a positive response. The point I want to make, however, is that the optimum moment often comes *earlier*, rather than later, in our association with people.

Of course, I did not merely "let it go at that" when Jack declined my rather abrupt request. At the end of the round, after having come much better acquainted, I handed Jack my card and tried (now in the context of a rudimentary "relationship" with the fellow) to restate that if he ever wanted to talk about the Bible, I would be happy to get together. I will probably call him at some point in the future and see at least one more time if he wants to study. Who knows what will come of it? What I have done with this man up front does not rule out my developing a friendship with him and being in an even better position to teach him later. But that may not happen. If it does not, I know that I have already asked him the question that needed to be asked. And my conscience feels good about it.

In our various deliberations about personal evangelism, it seems to me that we are losing, rather than gaining, ground with our insistence that we must "build a relationship" with people before we ask them for a home study. Whether we build a relationship with folks or not, sooner or later we are going to have to "pop the question" and simply *ask* them if we can study the Bible with them. And my observation is that the farther we go into a relationship with somebody, generally the **less** likely we are to ask them. The reason is simple: the more involved the relationship, the more reluctant we are to jeopardize it by bringing up the touchy subject of religion. Perhaps my experience is simply unique, but I have found the quicker I get to the point with a new acquaintance, the easier it is.

Admittedly, popping the question is not easy. Ask any young man who has had to get up the courage to ask a young lady to marry him. He dreads the very idea. He gets sweaty palms just thinking when and how he is going to do it. It is entirely possible that he will stumble awkwardly when he finally does get around to it. But make no mistake, get around to it he **will** — because he **loves** her!

Similarly, when we need to ask someone to study God's word, delaying the inevitable (all the while telling ourselves we are "building a relationship") only makes us more miserable. What is more, it risks the possibility of some unexpected misfortune ending that person's opportunity to obey the gospel before we have talked with them about it. Is there not much to be said for going ahead and promptly asking folks if they will study with us? With home studies it may be as James says it is with the Lord's blessings generally: "You do not have because you do **not** ask" (Jas. 4: 2). **But** whether we ask up front

(Continued on bottom of next column)

SINCERE WORDS

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

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THE SINFULNESS OF THE "ONE NATION UNDER GOD" CAMPAIGN

The Sycamore church in Cookeville, Tennessee, decided to "meet the challenge" of raising \$17 million to mail out a brochure to every home in the U. S., purchase ads in some leading publications, and conduct a TV program. When it became obvious they weren't going to get \$ 17 million they went back to the drawing board and decided they could do essentially the same thing for only \$10 million. They were about to waste \$7 million of the "brotherhood's" money before they realized this. The thing that kept them from it is that the "brotherhood" didn't send it. Would you consider it a good risk as an investor in a \$17 million project with me if I cut the price nearly in half when I realized I couldn't get the full amount?

The Sycamore church is donating about 2% of the total, so did they meet the challenge or did they meet only 2% of the challenge?

From The Mail-Outs

Numerous high quality, three-color mail-outs have repeatedly been sent to thousands of churches begging funds. Add to that video tapes, postage, salary and travel expense for the promoters. It would be safe to say that approximately \$1 million was spent on begging. Note what these mail-outs have had to say.

1. THE PLAN — "*Brethren offer \$17 million to evangelize the nation. Elders of the Sycamore Church Of Christ accept oversight of the project.*" That's not quite the way it happened. It did not happen in that order (Brethren offer, Sycamore accepts). The brethren didn't offer \$17 million. They didn't even offer \$10 million so the Sycamore church had to mortgage their building and continue to beg (See *The Update*, July 1991).

If Sycamore "accepted" the oversight, who told them they could have it? Where did those who gave it to them get that right? Who were these people? Who had the

(Continued from previous column)

or wait until we have gotten to know someone better, **ask** we must. Love for a lost soul will move us — somehow, someway — to pop the question. And when we learn to do that simple thing, we may be surprised at how many doors the Lord opens for His word!

right to make plans for "the brotherhood?" In August, 1989 (before the oversight was assumed by Sycamore) there were *"Brainstorming meetings with brethren experienced in evangelistic outreach, seeking advice and counsel."* The only officer in the universal church is Jesus. He did not ordain "brotherhood" elders (1 Pet. 5: 2). Such authority was usurped. They didn't "accept" oversight, they seized it! They assumed more than God assigned. And there was no authority for these "Brainstorming Meetings" (which originated outside any local eldership) to decide anything for the "brotherhood" (actually, a "churchhood").

2. A MESSAGE FROM THE ELDERS — *"Never before (that we know of) has there been a realistic plan for national and world evangelism."* They should read more of the Scriptures than the manual on denominational schemes. Paul said the gospel had been "preached to every creature under heaven" during his lifetime (Col. 1: 23). Is that not realistic enough? How did they do it? Jesus gave the Great Commission to the apostles and told them to teach others "to teach others" (Mt. 28: 19, 20). Paul taught the same (2 Tim. 2: 2). He taught that the local church is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3: 15). Local churches "sounded forth the word of the Lord" (1 Thess. 1: 7, 8). This was how they did it. No mention is made of a sponsoring church or brotherhood eldership. Even if they had never heard of a "realistic plan" it would not justify an unscriptural project.

3. WHAT CHRISTIANS DESERVE. *"Christians deserve the opportunity to participate in something bigger than a budget, larger than the local work."* What did they do to deserve something the Lord didn't authorize? The Lord didn't give us anything larger than a local work so He must not have thought we deserved it. Surely his wisdom and knowledge are not so limited as not to see that we needed something larger than a local work. Why didn't he set up some centralized mechanism for doing it? Some elders have stepped beyond the role of local elders. They think such limitations are old foggy and they have "improved" upon the Lord's way. But, *"my ways are not your ways, saith Jehovah"* (Isa. 55: 8). Yet all oversight, flock-feeding, worship, discipline, and evangelism was done by each local church (1 Pet. 5: 2; Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 11: 17-34; 16: 1, 2; 14: 16, etc.).

4. THE GREAT PRIVILEGE. *"It allows the individual to feel that he is an integral part of the congregation."* You mean he wasn't allowed this before the campaign? That is what is implied. When each member functions in the body as he should (whether he is an "eye," an "ear," a "foot," or a "hand," 1 Cor. 12: 15-25), he is an integral part. He was allowed to do this before the "One Nation Under God" Campaign was ever heard of. It was not a privilege that was not allowed when he was functioning in the local church before this churchhood project came along (something larger than a local church).

5. GRAND CLAIMS. *"Here at the end, is your opportunity to be part of the greatest, most successful evangelistic effort in our brotherhood's history."* This was said even before all the brochures were mailed out and the results were known. Is it greater than what happened in Jerusalem beginning on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 5,

9, 41; 4: 4)? Is it more successful than when Paul stated "the gospel... was preached to every creature under heaven" in his lifetime (Col. 1: 23)? Our "Brotherhood's history" goes back to when it began. Promoters are careless to make grand claims (before the facts are known) when they want your money.

6. SOMETHING LARGER AND SOMETHING SMALLER THAN A LOCAL WORK. When elders assume oversight of a multi-church project they take on a dual role. They may still be over their local congregation, but they are something more than local elders when they put themselves in charge of a churchhood (misnamed "Brotherhood") project. They are making decisions over something *other than and more than their local work* (1 Pet. 5: 2).

Also, Bible classes are taking collections and forming their own treasuries and taking action under the oversight of someone in the class. Someone also acts as treasurer. "-----and he 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade class have set a goal of \$50 to contribute to the 'One Nation Under God' Campaign." (Other similar quotes appear in the mail-outs). Regardless of good intentions, there is no authority for a functioning organization larger or smaller than a local church.

7. AIMED AT THE "UNCHURCHED." "The brochure briefly mentions personal problems such as drugs, materialism, divorce, pornography, but says nothing about the sin of denominationalism, a sin which is causing billions of people to be lost eternally. Concerning their TV talk-show we are told that it is *"aimed at 45% of the United States population which believes in God, but is not part of any organized denominational group."*

8. BROTHERHOOD THINKING. *"As a brotherhood, we will give an answer as to why we have neglected the Lord's command to take the Gospel to every creature..."* As an individual I must give account for everything I have done or left undone (2 Cor. 5: 10; Mt. 25). Where does the Bible teach we will be judged *"as a brotherhood?"* No where! If so, a few bad apples in the brotherhood could cause the whole brotherhood to be lost. Our individual salvation would be dependent on what others had left undone. The judgment will be on a personal basis, whether your own name is written in the book of life (Heb. 9: 27; Rev. 20: 13-15).

"Anxiously, we await news from the brotherhood that the funds are forthcoming." There are numerous references to the "brotherhood." It seems some "local" elders can think on no other plan. They think "churchhood" when they say brotherhood. A brotherhood is made up of brothers, not churches. And then they refer to churches as "sister" congregations! Boy, try making sense out of that! They have drunk too much from the polluted waters of denominationalism and are engaged in the language of Ashdod.

A churchhood is a "hood" of churches. Christ did not authorize a churchhood. Churches are not tied together but are local, independent and autonomous. The only oversight is local. A brotherhood is a "hood" of brothers. Christ is the only officer in the brotherhood and he gave it no function *as a brotherhood*. It is only mentioned one

time in the New Testament and the extent of brotherhood responsibility is specified. "Love the brotherhood" (1 Pet. 2: 17). That's it! The way some Sponsoring Elders speak and think for the brotherhood you would think it was mentioned on every page of the Bible and in the margin.

9. "WHY YOUR CONGREGATION DESERVES A SPECIAL COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY" FOR THE CAMPAIGN. "They get to participate in something Biblical, like the ancient Christians. "But they were able to do this long before any "Sponsoring Church" project was ever heard from or thought of. Perhaps this has reference to the times when congregations sent relief to Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2). But consider:

a. Jerusalem was a destitute church. Sycamore is not. They contributed over \$200, 000 to the campaign.

b. The Jerusalem church did not launch a 10-year program of being destitute. Sycamore launched a 10- year program of begging the "brotherhood" for their churchhood project.

c. Jerusalem did not launch a massive campaign to solicit funds. Sycamore spent huge sums to beg more money.

d. Jerusalem's want was in benevolence. Sycamore's is not. Sycamore wants, but they are not "in want. "

e. Jerusalem's want was peculiarly theirs. Sycamore's "want" is no more theirs than it is any other congregation's. God has not assigned world obligations to one congregation alone. We all have identical and equal duty according to our ability.

f. Jerusalem's case is in the Bible. Sycamore's is not. So where is the parallel?

CONCLUSION: The Sycamore elders have allowed themselves to be influenced by "brotherhood" planners — the "Brainstormers. " They seized the oversight of a churchhood project. In doing so, they took more authority than God gave them and involved the congregation in error. The contributing churches have become partakers of their sin. We must strive lawfully and follow the pattern. The great Commission does not give us a blank check to do anything we want. We cannot "do evil that good may come" (Rom. 3: 8). We plead with the Sycamore elders to give up their project for the sake of the Scriptures and unity or else have the courage to defend it in public debate.

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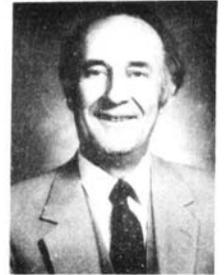
WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

Send all questions to:

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HELPING THE NEEDY

QUESTION: *Would you explain Acts 6: 1-6 about helping the needy widows? Our preacher says it means to help saints in emergencies (one time and not ongoing). What constitutes a need where the church should take care of it out of the treasury?*

ANSWER: The passage, Acts 6: 1-6, is self-explanatory in regard to the obligation of the church's relieving needy widows. Here is an explicit example of the Jerusalem church taking care of its own. We must do no less. Of course, we deduce that these widows had no children to provide for them because the apostle Paul stated, "if any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed" (1 Tim. 5: 16). Sometimes children don't have the resources to help, or they are too scoundrelly to assist, and under such circumstances the church must help.

Certainly, the plight of the widows in Acts 6 was an emergency, but an emergency may result into a persistent thing. Webster defines *emergency* as "an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action. " There could be a widow, or any other saint, who may need permanent help. For instance, if a young woman was widowed with little children, she might need continual aid from the treasury of the church for several months or longer. It would be unconscionable to deny this sister ongoing support with no family to assist.

We are asked what constitutes a need? A need is when a person is in "want of the means of subsistence. " The word *subsistence* suggests "the minimum as of food and shelter) necessary to support life" (Webster). A needy saint is not a brother or sister who no longer can afford an affluent life-style and thereby needs financial support in order to keep his new car, elaborate home and runabout pleasure boat. Those can be sold and he or she can live a less fashionable and luxurious life.

However, I don't see that a person has to become impoverished, totally destitute, and ready for the poor house, before a congregation may provide some relief in a temporary crisis. He may not be able to obtain a loan. His need is real. A situation of this kind has to be evaluated and a prudent judgment made on the facts of the matter.

More On Helping The Needy

QUESTION: A few years ago a destitute sister asked the church for help and the brethren told her "no" because she lived with an unfaithful relative, and they were afraid he might benefit from it. Do you think their fear was justified to deny the sister assistance?

ANSWER: According to the querist's description it seems to me the brethren should have been more concerned about the welfare of the woman than whether the relative would benefit from the assistance. I don't know all the circumstances of the case, but if the sister was staying in the home of the unfaithful relative, she would have some obligation for room and board, unless it was gratis. The church would, therefore, not be giving direct benefit to the relative. It would simply be providing for the needs of a worthy saint. Since we are not told what the request was for, we have no way of knowing. It might have been for clothes or medical bills. We assume it was a legitimate request.

Maybe the sister was easily influenced by the relative and the brethren realized the money would most likely fall into his hands. Of course, there would be a way to avoid this by the brethren finding out what she needed and arranging for the purchase of them.

To deny a worthy saint provisions of life because of fear of the possibility that it may indirectly benefit some unbeliever is to close our hearts to compassion. Should we sit back and allow a brother or sister to go hungry because, for example, his/her unbelieving spouse will also eat of the food provided? Little children may at times be involved. The church is taking care of its own under such conditions and the Christian in turn is providing for his/her own responsibilities.

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AN ABRIDGED RESPONSE TO: "OF WHAT DID JESUS EMPTY HIMSELF?"

Wayne Greeson

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In the October 1991 issue of *Searching The Scriptures*, Vol. 32, no. 10, pp. 4-5 (508-509), an article by brother Robert L. McDonald appears entitled, "Of What Did Jesus Empty Himself?" This same article had appeared at least four months earlier in *Preceptor* (June 1991, Vol. 40, no. 6, pp. 2-4 (158-159)). The editor of the *Preceptor*, brother Danny Brown, graciously provided me space to respond and brother McDonald a reply to my response (*Preceptor*, September, 1991, Vol. 40, no. 9, pp. 254-257). Although brother Connie Adams knew of my original response to McDonald's article before it was printed in *Searching The Scriptures*, he chose not to contact me about printing my response, nor remove reference to my name in the article. I knew that brother Adams had published articles on "continuous cleansing" only upon the condition that the names of those quoted were removed and I thought that this was his "editorial policy." So I contacted him and asked why those promoting "continuous cleansing" had not been named in the paper while he left my name in an article that misrepresented me. He told me that on "continuous cleansing" he did not want to get into the "blood bath" going on in Arkansas and lose a couple of his Arkansas writers, but McDonald's article was different.

So I asked brother Adams for an opportunity to respond in *Searching The Scriptures*, as I had in the *Preceptor*, so that readers who do not get *Preceptor* could read both sides of the discussion. Brother Adams did not agree to publish my original full response (and brother McDonald's reply), but he did say he would "think about" printing a shorter response. (For those who will not have the opportunity to read the full response and reply in *Searching The Scriptures*, contact me and I will send you a copy.)

Brother McDonald's article suggests that I wrote that Christ emptied himself of his deity and that I denied the deity of Christ. In support of this allegation, brother McDonald takes brief quotes from an article I wrote entitled "Did He 'Empty Himself Or Not?'" (*Faith and Facts*, Oct. 1990, Vol. 18, no. 4, p. 76-94 (376-394)). I never have said nor written that Christ emptied himself of his deity, nor have I written denying the deity of Christ. What did I write concerning the deity of Christ?

The "Second" member of the Godhead, identified by the apostle John as "Word," was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn. 1: 1). The Word has always been and always will be the person of God, for he cannot deny himself (2 Tim. 2: 13). When "the Word became

flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1; 14) he did not cease to be the very person of God. I do not know how to say this any plainer. For anyone to accuse me of denying that Jesus was God in the flesh would be a deliberate misrepresentation. (Wayne Greeson, "Did He 'Empty Himself Or Not?", pp. 77-76).

My position on the deity of Christ could not be any plainer. If brother McDonald still has problems with this statement, I want to personally invite him to attend a debate I have scheduled with a Oneness Pentecostal preacher for December 1991, in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, in which I will be affirming the deity of Christ under the proposition that there are three persons in the Godhead. Will brother McDonald come and stand with me and defend the truth of the scriptures? I made this offer and asked this question in the *Preceptor* and brother McDonald has yet to respond.

In brother McDonald's article as it appeared in the *Preceptor*, I was misquoted. Brother Adams informed me that brother McDonald had corrected his inaccurate quotes for *Searching The Scriptures*. While brother McDonald's quotations have gotten closer to the original, he still managed to miss quoting from my article faithfully and accurately. Why did he omit the quotation marks from the Bible language and the Bible references from my quotes? Brother McDonald quotes twice from my article and both times fails to put in quotation marks the apostle Paul's language or supply the Bible references **as I did in the original**. Paul wrote concerning Christ that "he emptied himself in Philippians 2: 7, not Wayne Greeson. I wrote, "when the Word became flesh" (Jn. 1: 14), "he emptied himself (Phil. 2: 7) of certain of the attributes of powers of God for "in all things he had to be made like his brethren" (Heb. 2: 17), and he "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4: 15). (Wayne Greeson, "Did He 'Empty Himself Or Not?", pp. 78-79).

I am sure most readers will be glad to know that actually brother McDonald and I are very close in agreement on this subject. The only objection brother McDonald has to what I wrote is my choice of the word "attribute." On the one hand he vigorously denies that Christ "emptied himself of any of the attributes of God, while on the other hand, he affirms that Christ "divested Himself of the **form of God**" (emphasis in the original) and "He did not jealously **seek to retain His equality with God** but was willing **to divest Himself** so as to appear to sinful man" (emphasis added).

An "attribute" of God is "something attributed as belonging; a quality, character, characteristic, or property" of God (*Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*, p. 96). The "form of God" and "equality with God" are both clearly attributed of God. These are qualities or characteristics that belong to God. Brother McDonald strongly argues that Christ "divested

Himself of these two attributes of Deity, while taking me to task for saying Christ "emptied himself of certain attributes of God!

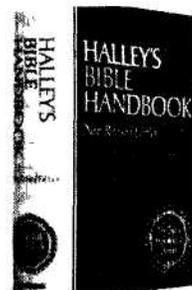
Isn't it time for this preacher's wrangle over words, this "blood bath" in which venomous name-calling has replaced sincere Bible study to end? I hope that my brother in Christ will stand with me upon the revealed truth of God's Word. Together we must preach the good news to lost souls of the love of God that was so great "he emptied himself to become flesh, and then "he humbled himself to die a cruel death. And he did all this for you and me. (**Editor's note:** We are glad to let brother Greeson speak for himself since his name was mentioned in brother McDonald's article. We still are persuaded that brother McDonald correctly dealt with the text of Phil. 2: 5-8 which is critical in this present controversy. As to the closing statement in brother Greeson's article, I say a hearty "Amen." Now if he can get that message across to the editor and a few of his fellow-writers for FAITH AND FACTS we may be able to make some progress in that direction. I certainly hope that anonymous "Louisvillian" reads these words and takes them to heart.)

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H. H. Halley

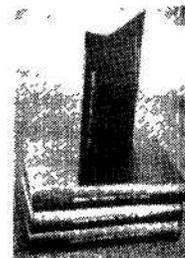
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"PREACH THE WORD"

The charge to "Preach the word" is made "before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, " and in view of the coming judgment. And, the word is to be preached to offset the digressive tendencies of those who "will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4: 1-4).

But if some "turn away their ears from the truth" even when the word is preached, how much more when those claiming to be evangelists fail to preach that word?

The Condition

For a quarter of a century, the preacher had preached mainly topical sermons, and the congregation had tolerated those dry, boring sermons. The preacher resorted to personal opinion-giving and "cute" stories, and members of the congregation usually closed their Bibles after the Scripture lesson was read from the pulpit.

The preacher used familiar phrasings and thought-concepts, and scouted around in a tired brain for some new brainstorm or some clever innovation "to keep the people awake for another service. " Like other preachers, he panicked when Sunday drew near, because he had no message burning on the stove. He had run out of sermon themes.

Then came the temptation to substitute entertainment to replace the sermons, and fill up the worship time with rites in order to use up the time allotted for the message. But these continued diets of "the preacher's wise opinions" were not sufficient for the congregation's spiritual growth, and neither were the "constant 'specials'—visiting musical groups, gospel films and the like. " The preacher was "caught up in other things" community meetings driving about town on errands, talking on the phone, arranging the weekly newsletter and bulletin. "

The Cure

After a quarter of a century of famine, for both the preacher and his audience, a cure was finally found: expository preaching from the Bible.

The Result

Now, the members "keep their Bibles open throughout the entire message. " The preacher himself has discovered the adventures of exploring the inspired text. "The Bible has been elevated to a lofty place within the worship itself, " and criticism must be directed toward the Bible instead of the preacher.

The preacher now feels that "he is dealing with eternal material which begs for the telling. "

The Surprise

The foregoing example could fit any number of preachers and congregations among churches of Christ. Actually, the information came from a sectarian publication called **Pulpit Helps** (April, 1991). The article was written by J. Grant Swank, Jr., and was a reprint from **Preaching** (July/ August, 1990).

Topical Or Expository?

Actually, the Bible is filled with both topical and expository preaching, in both Old and New Testaments. The same sermon can consist of both types of preaching, e. g., The resurrection (1 Cor. 15). "The Mystery of Godliness" is as good a topical sermon as a preacher can find, and if he can't divide his topic into six separate but related points, he is in the wrong business.

Some preachers may be more suited to one method of teaching than they are to another, but a well-rounded diet of spiritual food is an absolute necessity, both for the preacher and the congregation. Even private studies can be fruitful by using both the topical and expository methods of teaching.

And if you teach the Bible, there are times when you can't help but do a little, or a good bit of both.

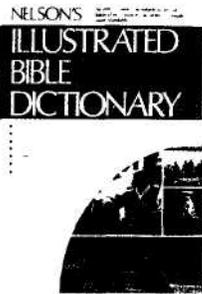
A Sad Commentary

It is a sad commentary on some papers and bulletins published by members of the church of Christ, when you can get more Bible from some sectarian publications than you can from those written by the brethren.

And, with some of our pulpits characterized by the very conditions set forth in the beginning of this article, it wouldn't take much Bible preaching by a Methodist or a Baptist to outdo some preachers in the church of Christ.

Some sectarian congregations have to take whatever preacher their "conference" sends them, do without, or leave their particular denomination. Or a denominational preacher may have to leave his denomination in order to "preach the word. " But given the Bible doctrine of congregational autonomy, no church of Christ should have to endure a preacher who will not "preach the word. "

And given the charge before God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and in view of the coming judgment to "preach the word, " no preacher should want to do otherwise.



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PATRICK ANDREWS, 1780 Mooreland Rd., Clarksville, TN 37040 — After four and a half years with the South Clarksville church, 111 be moving to work with the Chena Small Tracts church in Fairbanks, Alaska. During our stay at Clarksville, we baptized more than two dozen, many were restored and we withdrew from over half a dozen. We also appointed three mature, qualified men to serve as elders. I can only say good things about this church. The church at Fairbanks is small with about 25 in attendance. The closest sound church is 450 miles south, over the mountains, in Anchorage. We will be isolated from other brethren by at least a day by car. The cost of living in Alaska is 34% higher than in the lower 48 states. The church in Fairbanks will supply me with housing but I must raise the rest. My wife and seven children are willing and eager to help me. They will sell off what they own except what will fit in three small trunks, and go live 130 miles from the Artie Circle. If you can help us it would be appreciated.

CLARENCE R. JOHNSON, 819 E. Commerce, Mexia, TX 76667 — After seven and a half years in Exton, Pennsylvania, I am moving to begin work with the Shiloh church in Mexia, Texas. Much progress has been made by the Exton church during our time together. We turned back all outside support, built a new worship auditorium, and more than doubled our average attendance. Twenty-nine have been baptized and three former members have gone to preach the gospel in other areas (Dale Garrison, Leo Rodrigue and Edward Smith). On November 3, elders were appointed to oversee the Exton work. They are Jerry Carson, (215) 793-2441; and Phil Smith, (717) 768-3714.

ED WARREN NEEDHAM, 1325 Overlook Terrace, Titusville, FL 32796 — I worked with the church in Dunedin, FL since March 1, 1982. I had made an agreement to work with the church in St. Cloud, FL, but while making preparation to move was visited again with heart blockage. I entered Tampa General Hospital on December 11, 1990 for open heart surgery. After surgery and on Dec. 17, I experienced severe pain in my eyes and ended up with a blood clot lodging in my brain, causing a stroke, I am blinded in my right eye and lost the ability to read for a few months. My eyesight has not come back but I am able to read some, but at a low level. I had to cancel the move to the work at St. Cloud. We are moving back to Titusville where our only daughter lives and where we have a house from our former work there.

WALLACE H. LITTLE, 357 Honey Cove, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548 — We at Northside just closed our fall meeting on the theme of Bible Authority. Sam C. Hastings, Bobby Witherington, Sam Binkley, Don Meredith, Frank Timmennan and Aubrey Belue spoke. We had visitors from faithful churches, liberals and local walk-ins. Some new families came. They were "looking for the right church." The lessons strengthened all and opened the eyes of several who had not heard these things. I am to be in the Philippines from December 14-February 15. God willing, I will take benevolence to needy saints there, victims of the disastrous flood on the island of Leyte. Pray for them and me.

EUGENE BRITNELL, P. O. Box 505, Athens, AL 35611—Near the first of the year, we moved from Russellville to Athens. We have built a house here and are near our sons and their families. After 37 years in Arkansas, we had enjoyed three and a half years with the Eastside church in Russellville where Johnny Richardson is now preaching. We are enjoying Athens and the area. I am preaching full-time for the Hays Mill church meeting five miles north of Athens. It is a pleasant and peaceful work. I also teach Bible daily in Athens Bible School. After 36 years, the SOWER continues to have a good circulation and influence. If you do not receive it, write for a sample copy. Brethren, let us endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit' and 'work while it is day.'

OBITUARIES

RAY E. CORNS of Gibsonburg, Ohio passed away within the last few weeks. He had preached for many years in northeastern and northwestern Ohio and supported himself the last several years of his preaching work by working for the railroad. I have stayed in his home in meetings two or three times. He did much good work and will be missed. Ray was a joy to know. He always sent me a letter each year to tell me when "Baptist Hog Day" would be in West Virginia, a practice dating back to the area where he grew up. He was a good friend and helped to introduce this paper to many people, paying for a number of subscriptions as long as he was able. Our sympathy to his lovely wife, Marge.

DON DUKE of Baytown, Texas also recently left this world for a better place. He served for many years as an elder with the good Pruett and Lobit church in Baytown, Texas. His life was a blessing to all who knew him. Our best wishes are extended to sister Duke and the children.

WARNING

STEVE HUDGINS, 2922 S. E. 7th St., Ocala, FL 32671 — Brethren who support men in the Philippines need to be aware of unscrupulous characters who may be able to tap into your checking account in your local bank without your knowledge. It seem there are some expert forgers who can see a signature and reproduce it so the individual who signed the check could not tell it from his own. This happened to the church here in Ocala. This church is very small but we have been helping support brethren as we were able and from time to time have helped in various emergencies. Recently our bank received a request for a wire transfer of 70% of our bank account to be sent to the savings account of a woman we have never heard of and a request for a statement of the balance of our account to the hospital where our treasurer was supposedly a patient and this to take care of his hospital bills. The letter was signed with a perfect signature of this brother who has never been out of the USA. The bank upon comparing the signature with the signature card at the bank immediately wired the money without calling us. They did notify us after the fact. We were able to get a stop payment before the check cleared. I don't think this woman has any connection with the church but she must have seen a check we sent and forged this name or had it done. I have notified the hospital figuring she may be an employee.

Several steps may be taken to avoid such a thing happening to anyone else. (1) Make certain the signature card at the bank lists the telephone number of those authorized to sign checks. (2) make sure the bank is informed to make no wire transfers without calling or talking directly to the one whose signature appears on such a request. (3) Send money with a bank check or some other way than with a personal signature. Should such a thing happen, call the corresponding bank immediately as well as notifying the local bank. It is unfortunate that something like this happened and we don't intend to allow this to keep us from helping those we feel need and deserve help.

SPANISH WORK IN MIAMI, FLORIDA

TERRY PARTAIN, 6060 18th Ave., N., St. Petersburg, FL 33710 — As of the beginning of 1992, I have switched my energies to full-time Spanish work. The faithful Hispanic brethren in Miami have welcomed me with their typical warmth and charm. They will be my collaborators, tutors and family in this work. As a child, I heard my father preaching the gospel to small Hispanic churches. I still remember the song we sang, the sights, the sounds, and the smells that were part of my childhood. During the twenty years that I have preached in English, my heart has never been very far from the Spanish work. In the late 70's I worked in the Miami area surrounded by Cubans and discovered a growing interest in my heart. I have never been able to forget the vastness of that barely touched field.

The complexion of the Hispanic community has changed dramatically since 1979. Wave upon wave of immigrants have come from Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador as well as Columbia, Venezuela and most of the countries of South America. The Anglo community has dropped by one-fourth but the Latin Community has increased by two-thirds so that now they are half of the population numbering about one million in Dade County alone. "Balseros" are floating ashore daily... 1300 last year. Whole communities are 70 to 90 % Hispanic.

These people often have relatives in Central and South America with which they are in close contact. Miami is the hub of the wheel of the Americas extending to New York and Chicago northward, and to Chile and Argentina southward. Like Ephesus in Asia in the New Testament, this is a strategic place from which to spread the Word to all of Latin America. A young Guatemalan told me on my last visit to Miami that the gospel had changed his way of thinking and that when he goes to visit his family, he is going as a brother in Christ.

This is a fertile field. Walk down the streets and you can hear radios tuned to religious programs. There are four Spanish stations that carry such programs and their rates are cheap by American standards (\$125/hour). They read. They are not uneducated. Gospel teaching in the mass media has a better reception among the Hispanics, I believe, than among the Anglo population.

I am interested also in written materials which will have a life of their own. What is available is doing a tremendous job. But more is needed. Also, I want to help train others to fight the good fight. In recent years many churches have been established or pulled out of liberalism and they cry for help. They need visits, gospel meetings, exhortations to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the faith. I want to help. Who will help me? Let me discuss this work with you. I am entering this work for the long term. My phone number is (813) 347-7572.

ROBERTO V. SPENCER, P. O. Box 98187, Lubbock, TX 79499 — In May three people were baptized who had studied for about 10 years with the Jehovah's Witnesses. We have other studies going on with J. W.'s and they are very angry. In September I preached a meeting in Chihuahua City, Mexico where Jose Lopez preaches. In November I was also in a meeting in Camargo, Chi., Mexico where Francisco Rivera preaches. This last year I lost \$400 a month support and am having some difficulty replacing it.

READER TO BE 100

On January 26, L. P. Cheek will be 100. He has lived most of his life in San Antonio and in central Kentucky. He still lives alone without a radio or T. V. but spends his time in his garden or reading his Bible. He has been a subscriber to STS for many years. He has read his Bible through 300 times. The editor would appreciate if some of you would send him a card or a note and I am sure it would thrill him. Send it to L. P. Creek, 91 Nails Lane, Radcliff, KY 40160, or Monie Mathews, 1921 Taffeta Dr., Valley Station, KY 40272.

FROM AROUND THE WORLD

SOUTH AFRICA — DAN HUDDLESTON has been invited down to Capetown for a five night meeting to respond to an attack from liberals. One of their preachers wrote a booklet entitled "Anti-ism, An Error in Elementary Hermeneutics" and has circulated it all over South Africa. Henrick Joubert has already written a reply to it and Dan will deal with it in this meeting. He also reports that a young brother from where Ray Votaw preaches was killed by a stray bullet meant for a criminal in a police shoot-out. Brother Huddleston has lost \$1000 a month of his support and has been selling personal items and household things to keep going. He is a good man, worthy of help and is doing a good work. His address is: P. O. Box 16072, Strubenvale 1570 R. O. & S. Africa.

VENEZUELA — Ruben C. Amador reports two baptized in a recent gospel meeting in Caracas. He says the work is growing and looking better in that country. He was to be in Costa Rica for preaching in December. He works with the Judiway St. church in Houston where Jamie Sloan of Klein wood was recently a guest speaker.

SOUTH AFRICA — Paul K. Williams reports two baptized in a tent meeting in Esikhawini where a small congregation meets normally in a school classroom. Gene and Betty Tope are now back in South Africa

and David and Joanne Beckley have returned to the States after 15 and 1/2 years in South Africa. Ray Votaw reports that the Beckleys had to return on credit because they did not receive enough help beforehand. Brother Votaw says "The Beckleys have had a tremendous impact for good in this multi-racial country with all races and cultures. They are truly worthy of your assistance. They will be sorely missed by so many — including yours truly. Please consider their needs. "

PHILIPPINES — a FAX from Jeff Kingry received on December 2, says that BERT ENOSTACION, able preacher not only in the Philippines but who did such good work in Hong Kong with the Kingrys, Smalls and Smelsers, was hit by a jeepney on the street and badly injured. He suffered internal injuries, many lacerations and his tongue was severed and had to be re-attached. He has been moved from a hospital to a care unit nearer his home where his wife can help nurse him. This family has lost substantial support and is in serious financial hardship. He had to stop the good paper he was publishing, called "Speaking the Truth" for lack of funds. You may reach him or his wife at: P. O. Box 9, San Fernando 2500, La Union, Philippines.

ALBERTO VIVERO AND JESUS BEJAGON both have reported from the island of Leyte where over 7, 000 died and many were left homeless from the sudden floods which swept down on Ormoc City forcing a wall of mud from surrounding hills which swept houses and people out into the sea, that there was no loss of life among brethren in the four congregations in that immediate area, but that a number of brethren lost their houses and all they had. NORMAN FULTZ, 13018 N. Oakland Ave., Kansas City, MO 64166 (along with KEITH BURNET of Russellville, KY) preached in Leyte in the spring of 1991 and are familiar with the brethren there.

REYNALDO E. CORSINO reports from the Cagayan Valley area that 13 were recently baptized there. Also in Lasam 8 were baptized.

MARCELINO G. ORTEGA, ABAS SALLAPADAN, 2818 Abra, Philippines — "Through the help of Bert Enostacion and Eusebio Cabannag in studying with me issues about institutionalism, on October 20, 1991 renounced my association with the institutional brethren. I had been a self-supporting full-time preacher for six years before some of our rice-fields were destroyed in a destructive typhoon in 1989. "

RODY GUMPAD, P. O. Box 8, Tugeuegarao, Cagayan 3500. Philippines — "The doctors tell us that our son's cancer is now under control but he will require additional chemotherapy for sometime. In October four were baptized including a Pentecostal preacher and his wife. I began teaching him in 1984. He is a well-known glossolalia speaker, the great leader of his group, he learned he was wrong and obeyed the gospel. He is now preaching the truth and baptized already five of his former colleagues at I lagan, Isabela. "

PREACHERS NEEDED

EXTON, PA — The church here, which serves the western greater Philadelphia area, needs a fulltime preacher. The congregation is 15 years old with an average attendance of 80. Elders were recently appointed. We are self-supporting. Those interested should contact Jerry Carson (215) 793-2441.

JAMESTOWN, KY — We need a fulltime preacher and can furnish full support, depending on the needs. We do not have a house. Interested parties may contact Bill O'Neal (502) 866-3863, or write to: 153 Oak St., Russell Springs. KY 42642.

CHESTER, VA — The Rivermont church in Chester, VA needs an experienced fulltime evangelist. We are located on Route 10 two miles west of Hope well and 5 1/2 miles east of I-95, Exit 6E. If interested, please write to: Rivermont Church of Christ, 2316 E. Hundred Road, Chester, VA 23832, or contact Ed Sulc (804) 458-1606.

GREEN WAY, WISCONSIN — The church which meets at 1621 Hillcrest Dr, Green Bay, WI 45313 needs a fulltime preacher. Average attendance is about 30. Partial support is available. Contact Wilmer Kirsten (715) 758-8615.



DEBATE RESPONSE

Brother JOHN WELCH, editor of FAITH AND FACTS, has responded in his paper to my proposal to debate the Deity of Christ (See October, 1991 STS), by saying that he does not think I am representative enough of the issues which he wants to link to the question of the Deity of Jesus. He issued a challenge for a debate and named Louisville as a place where such discussion would be in order. I have a letter from the elders of the Expressway church in Louisville offering to endorse me on the propositions submitted and offering their building for a discussion here on the condition that brother Welch either obtain like endorsement from a congregation in this area or agree to an exchange discussion, with one in Louisville and one in Indianapolis. He is not interested in this. Doy Moyer of the South End congregation offered over a year ago to engage him in discussion and Gene Frost also of Louisville has offered to have a written exchange. Instead brother Welch has suggested that three preachers who do not live in Louisville should be brought into the picture. This is strange reasoning. Brethren who seriously disagree with him on the Deity of Jesus (I am one of these) cannot discuss the issue with him unless we agree to debate on continuous cleansing and whether or not man has to sin. It is either agree to discuss all of those subjects or else we are not representative enough to merit his time and trouble.

Meanwhile, some irresponsible brother, who writes under the cloak of anonymity and signs himself "Louisvillian" continues to attempt to spread ill-will, make false charges, engage in speculation and innuendo about churches and preachers in the Louisville area

and the editor of FAITH AND FACTS has no better judgment than to print these unsubstantiated charges. For example, he said that several churches in the Louisville area were looking for preachers and that they would not consider one unless he agreed with Gene Frost. The only churches in Louisville within the last few months to employ new preachers were Expressway, Shivery and Kenwood and the charge is absolutely false. But this cowardly brother hides behind anonymity so he can say whatever he wishes and nobody can deal with him. Whoever Louisvillian is, and I am confident that I know who he is, he needs to repent for his unfounded and malicious attacks on gospel preachers and churches in this area. When his name comes to light (and it will in time), the congregation where he is a member ought to take disciplinary action on him unless he repents. And the same goes for those who are funneling rumors to Louisvillian.

MOTTO FOR SOME FOLKS

Those given to the views being expressed by some on marriage, divorce and remarriage might well say that they wish to "have their Kate and Edith too." (Thanks to David Baker).

HOWS THAT?

Bill McQuiston told me of a new convert's report on a congregation which had withdrawn from a brother. Said he, "they dismembered him."

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	447
RESTORATIONS	84
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	