

SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XII

FEBRUARY, 1971

NUMBER 2

IMPOSSIBLE APOSTASY?

No. 3

H. E. Phillips

The advocates of the doctrine of Eternal Security of the Believers will always go to I John 3:9 and wave aside every passage that contains a warning to the children of God against apostasy. The passage says: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." If this passage teaches what they claim for it, this entire epistle of John is a mess and does not contain the truth. They make John contradict himself and all the other writers of the New Testament. This is how simple the matter is: If I John 3:9 means that whosoever is born of God cannot possibly commit a single sin — it is physically and mentally impossible for him to engage in one single sin — and cannot possibly be lost even if he could commit every sin in the book, it must follow that John was so mixed up that he forgot what he said before and after this verse.

Any reasonable study of this verse in context must consider three questions: (1) Who is born of God? (2) What does "cannot commit sin" — "cannot sin" mean? (3) What does "for his seed remaineth in him" have to do with "he cannot sin?" I believe a scriptural answer to these questions is essential to understand this verse in the light of all the revelation of God.

The word "born" is from "gennao" which means to bring forth and is used of both the physical birth and a spiritual birth. W. E. Vine says of this word: "It is used metaphorically (a) in the writings of the Apostle John, of the gracious act of God in conferring upon those who believe the nature and disposition of 'children,' imparting to them spiritual life, John 3:3, 5, 7; I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18;..."

This word is used of the physical birth of Christ. To Mary the angel said: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be **born** of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). In Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus the word is used eight times in John 3:3-8. It is used

in reference to physical birth and the new birth of water and Spirit. This birth to enter into the kingdom must be of water and of the Spirit. It cannot refer to anything more or less than the one who "has been born of God" in I John 3:9.

Kenneth Wuest in his **Greek New Testament** said of I John 2:29 — "'Born' is from the perfect participle of gennao. The perfect tense speaks of a past completed action having present results. The expanded translation reads, 'having been born with the present result that you are a child (of God) by birth.'"

There are six passages in I John that speak of "born of God" or "born from God" and all from the same term. Combining all these will give the full sense of the expression.

I John 2:29 — "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." As we know absolutely that God is righteous, we perceive that everyone who does righteousness has been born of God. In the first chapter "walking in darkness" is in contrast with "walking in the light." To work righteousness is to do the truth or "walk in the light," which is the same thing.

Righteousness means to do or be right. To do right is to follow the standard that is right. "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness" (Psalms 119:172). Israel had a zeal for God, "but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:2,3). God's righteousness is to be obeyed, and this means to submit to His commandments. One who establishes his own righteousness, which means to do his own will, cannot obey God's righteousness while doing his own righteousness.

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe (Rom. 1:16). "For therein" (in the gospel of Christ) "is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). The righteousness (commandments) of God are revealed in the gospel of Christ.

When Peter came to the house of Cornelius and learned why he had been sent for, he opened his mouth and said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34,35).

The "righteousness" may not always be toward the same goal. God's righteousness is in order to receive the remission of sins. This the alien sinner must obey. But the "righteousness" of I John 2:29 is that done as a result of "having been born from God." It is the fruit of the birth rather than in order to be born of God. Look at it: If we know absolutely that God is righteous, we must logically understand that all who do righteousness (obey the commandments of God) have been born of Him because He is the source of all righteousness. Righteousness of God indicates that the one is of God who does it.

Who is born of God? I John 2:29 says that everyone that does righteousness is born of God — "has been born from God." Righteousness means the commandments of God (Psa. 119:172). To work righteousness is to do the commandments of God. One who has been born of God does the commandments of God. The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel (Rom. 1:17). The fruit, therefore, of having been born of God is to obey the commandments of God as revealed in the gospel, and these are accepted with him (Acts 10:34,35).

What does this have to do with the passage in I John 3:9? It shows that the one who has been born of God does righteousness, therefore, he does not commit sin when he is doing righteousness. The one born of God "doth not commit sin" because he "doeth righteousness."

I John 4:7 says: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." This love is not just any love. The love is for "one another." We are responsible for what we love because God tells us to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44-46), which is not easy to do. We are told not to love the world (I John 2:15,16). This loving one another is not to make us children of God, but it is the fruit of having been born of God.

The one who does not love his brother is in darkness: does not love God (I John 1:6; 4:20,21). He does not the truth (I John 1:6), but the one who has been born from God "doeth righteousness." "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments" (I John 5:2). "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (I John 3:22,23). "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (I John 2:9-11). "He that hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I John 3:15). "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his

Searching The Scriptures

Published Monthly At
TAMPA, FLORIDA

Second Class Postage paid at Tampa, Florida

H. E. PHILLIPS, Editor

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$4.00 per year in advance

Club:

Three for \$10.00 per year

Bundles to one address:

25 for \$5.00

60 for \$10.00

Group subscriptions:

20 for \$5.00 per month

50 for \$10.00 per month

Sign for the AUTOMATIC RENEWAL PLAN whereby you will have your subscription automatically renewed each year and we will bill you when it comes due. You may cancel at any time you wish.

Address subscriptions and correspondence to:

P. O. Box 17244

Tampa, Florida 33612

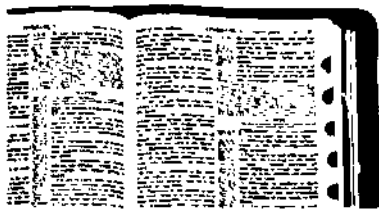
brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also" (I John 4:20, 21).

These passages from I John show that loving our brother is a commandment of God, that we cannot love God and not love our brother, that we are liars if we say we love God and hate our brother — and all liars will have their part in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8) — that we are murderers and have not eternal life abiding in us if we love not our brother, and that we are in darkness and do not the truth if we love not our brother. This is talking about loving a brother, hence, the relationship in Christ is under consideration in I John. I John 4:7 teaches that one who has been born from God loves his brother; this is the fruit of being born of God. It is not given as a condition here for becoming a child of God. The one who hates his brother must have been a child of God, else he would not have a brother to hate or love. The meaning is that the one who has been born from God does not hate his brother, therefore, he does not keep on sinning as stated in I John 3:9.

But that we may clearly see that the love of a brother refers to brethren in Christ and not brethren in some other sense, we look at some other passages relating to the subject.

"Let brotherly love continue" (Heb. 13:1). The whole context shows this to mean brethren in Christ. "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing: knowing that ye are thereunto **called**, that ye should inherit a blessing" (I Pet. 3:8,9). We who are brethren are called to inherit a blessing. We are called by the gospel (II Thess. 2:14); we are partakers of the heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1); we must walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called (Eph. 4:1). All this proves that brotherly love under consideration in these verses is in Christ, which would mean that they are children of God. A child of God can hate his brother and be under the condemnation as stated in I John. It must follow that "born of God" in I John 3:9 does not mean a state wherein one cannot possibly commit sin.

SOWING THE SEED of the KINGDOM



J. T. Smith, 1320 Gardiner Lane, Louisville, Kentucky 40213

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE IN CHRIST

In our last article, we noted that baptism puts one into Christ, and Paul said, "if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). In the next article or two, we are going to involve ourselves with showing what it means to be "in Christ."

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

The expression (or its equivalent) "in Christ" occurs over one hundred and thirty times in the New Testament. Not only does Paul point out that we are "new creatures" in Christ, but Christ says that we do not have life unless we abide "in Him." In John 15:4, you will recall, Jesus said, "Abide in me, and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye abide in me." There is no life without Christ, and it is not enough to just know **about** him, we must enter that spiritual relationship that puts us **in** Christ that we might have life. For without him, we can do nothing.

CHRIST IS THE SPHERE OF THIS NEW LIFE

I would like to think of this new life in Christ as a sphere rather than a circle drawn on the ground that we might stand in. For, the circle would not encompass us as would a sphere. The reason for this is because of what the Bible teaches us about the

new life in Christ. In our new life in Christ we are in a position of having protection from the forces of evil that would "cast darts" at the Christian. Paul tells us that we, as Christians, have an armour that God provides us with to "ward off" the thrusts of the evil one. In Eph. 6:11 we are told, "Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." He then gives those who are "in Christ" instructions concerning the armour provided. That with which we are to gird our loins is **truth**, our breastplate is **righteousness**, our shoes representative of a readiness of mind that comes from the **gospel of Christ**, taking the shield of faith — the confidence we have in the **promises of God**, the helmet of salvation — or the **hope of salvation** which will defend you from the **fear of death**, and the sword of the Spirit (the rest being defensive armour — but this offensive) the word of God. Thus, in Christ we are in a position of being protected by that which Christ gives us and also being able to make our attacks on the foes that we engage in battle.

For those who are "in Christ," Paul said, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13).

Also, those who are in this "sphere" are recipients of whatever is contained inside. Paul said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:" (Eph. 1:3).

JUSTIFICATION "IN CHRIST"

One of the spiritual blessings that we have "in Christ" is justification. The word justification, as it is used in Romans 4:25 means, "The act of God's declaring men free from guilt and acceptable to him; adjudging to be righteous" (Thayer, P. 151, column two, from the word **dikiosis**). Paul points out in the above passage that the basis for our justification was the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Hence, "in Christ" there is reconciliation of man to God by way of justification — "out of Christ" there is alienation. "In Christ" there is life — "out of Christ" there is death. "In Christ" there is peace — "out of Christ" there is enmity with God.

TWO UNIQUE DECLARATIONS

There are at least two unique declarations set forth in Christianity that is not made by any other religion, whether it be Buddhism, Hinduism, etc. First, no declaration was ever made that anyone who founded such religion was a sinless man and also became sin for his followers that he might take away sin, as did Jesus. Secondly, that Christ a dead and buried man, was made alive — and is life. Both of these are inseparably connected with the facts of the gospel — the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Christ became the Justifier, Reconciler, and Savior. According to Isaiah, he suffered in our stead, not because **he** deserved it, but because we deserved it. Our life was purchased by his death. We do not have to ask the same question that Job asked, "If

a man die, shall he live again?" We know that Paul promised that those who are "in Christ," and faithful, will be received unto the Lord himself and ever be with him (I Thess. 4:13-17).

CONCLUSION

To be in Christ is more than mere pardon and reconciliation — it includes being counted as just, and put on the same standing as Christ, before God. If you are not a Christian, "in Christ" you are alienated, at enmity with God, and dead spiritually. Why not believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, repent of your sins and be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins in order to have reconciliation, life, and peace "in Christ" where all spiritual blessings are found.

WORD STUDIES
in the Greek
New Testament



E. V. Srygley, Jr., Route 6, Box 420, Tampa, Florida 33610

MORE THOUGHTS ON JAMES 1:27

In the October 1970 issue of this journal I wrote an article on the Greek reflexive pronoun **heauton**. In the December 1970 issue of this journal there appeared what purported to be a reply to my article.

For the most part, the so-called reply to my article is utter and sheer nonsense; and is only dignified by a response. Were it not for several outright and absolute misrepresentations, I would not bother to make any response whatsoever.

"He denied that HEAUTON can be both singular and plural in number."

In the "reply" to my article, this statement is written: "He denied that HEAUTON can be both singular and plural in number." Now, this is an outright falsehood! What I wrote was this: "The word **heauton**, 'himself,' in James 1:27 is not plural in the passage." I affirmed in my article, and I still affirm, that **heuton** is not plural in James 1:27. Of course, any student of Greek knows very well that **heuton** has a plural form; but the plain fact is that the plural does not occur in James 1:27. Some people seem to think that heuton can be **either** singular or plural at the same time. This is nothing but sheer nonsense, and any student of Greek knows that it is nonsense. Some people insist on calling **heauton** an indefinite pronoun when this is an outright mistake. The word **heauton** is simply **not** an indefinite pronoun; it is a **reflexive** pronoun.

"Our Brother says that no Lexicographer defines HEAUTON as being plural."

In the "reply" to my article, this statement is written: "Our brother says that no Lexicographer defines HEAUTON as being plural." Now, this is another outright falsehood! What I wrote was this: "Liberal brethren find the plural form of the word in Thayer's lexicon and then cry out, 'Plural!' as if Thayer is saying that the word is plural in James 1:27. Thayer is saying no such thing; nor does any other lexicographer." I affirmed in my article, and I still affirm, that no lexicographer says that **heauton** is plural in James 1:27. Obviously, all lexicographers **know** that **heauton** has a plural form; but they know very well that the plural form does not occur in James 1:27.

"The pronoun 'US' is a collective plurality of three."

In the "reply" to my article, these statements are written: "Gen 1:26, 'Let US make man ___ The pro-

NEEDHAM-THOMAS DEBATE

James P. Needham & C. B. Thomas
Russell Springs, Kentucky
April 21, 22, 1966

TWO NIGHTS: Discussion of women teaching and asking and answering questions in the assembly.

TWO REELS — \$8.00

JOHNSON-WILSON DEBATE

James H. Johnson & Gordon Wilson
(Discussion with an Atheist)
San Diego, California
June 28, 29, 1966

FIRST NIGHT: Existence of God is a reality.

SECOND NIGHT: All religions are false and not beneficial to man.

TWO REELS — \$8.00

SPEARS-WADE DEBATE

Dudley Ross Spears & Ronnie F. Wade
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
July 12 - 15, 1965

FIRST TWO NIGHTS: A discussion of one cup (container) for the fruit of the vine in communion.

LAST TWO NIGHTS: A discussion of classes and women teachers.

FOUR REELS — \$16.00

DODGE-WILSON DEBATE

Charles C. Dodge & John W. Wilson
(Debate with Jehovah's Witnesses)
Payette, Idaho
January 30 - February 2, 1967

FIRST TWO NIGHTS: The Kingdom of God was established in 1914 A.D.

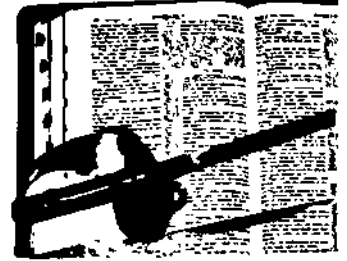
LAST TWO NIGHTS: Man has a soul or spirit which is immortal.

FOUR REELS — \$16.00

noun 'US' is a collective plurality of three." Now, this is another bit of grammatical nonsense. Obviously, the word "us" is a plural pronoun; but to refer to it as a "collective plurality" is ungrammatical both in English and in Greek. There are at least eight different kinds of pronoun, but there is not a collective pronoun. There are collective nouns, but not collective pronouns. The very fact that "us" is plural in form indicates that it is not collective; inasmuch as the very distinguishing mark of collective nouns is that they represent a plurality in a singular form.

o

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT



Eugene Britnell, 8909 Mayflower Road, Little Rock, Ark 72205

DOES HE STILL NOT UNDERSTAND THE ISSUE?

In the November 8, 1970 issue of THE INFORMER, bulletin of the Garfield Heights church in Indianapolis, brother W. L. Totty wrote an article entitled "Visiting Orphans is a Generic Command." He began by saying:

"The blight of anti-ism which has plagued the church and divided congregations for about twenty years has just about gone with the wind."

In the first place, his use of the ambiguous term "anti" doesn't accomplish anything. Everyone is opposed to or anti something. Even brother Totty would qualify, for, if nothing else, I'm sure he is anti-antis! And if the movement of which he speaks has "gone with the wind," why do they continue to write and preach so much about it? You have heard of whistling past the graveyard, haven't you?

After some further comment about the champions who will no longer defend what they believe (so he says), brother Totty said:

"There is another side to the question; that is, the sin that those people committed when they caused division among brethren. The Bible says God hates the man who sows discord among brethren (Prov. 6:16-19). . . . The division was not caused by those who had been supporting the orphan homes since 1846. We did not say others must support the children in this manner. But the division was caused by that faction's saying that it could not be done in that manner. If the Bible had said it is wrong to support the homes, those brethren would have been right; but the Bible doesn't say how to support needy children; it just says to do it. And since a home of some sort is necessary; therefore, the home is scriptural, for anything necessary to obeying a command of God is inherent in the command, whether mentioned or not. That principle is clearly taught in Christ's commission to go and preach the gospel to every creature. The gospel is the thing to be preached, and we must go to preach it. The method of going is not stated; therefore, we may walk, drive an automobile, fly a plane or use any other method available to us; but we must go and preach the gospel. The same principle applies to care of orphans. Every congregation may do that as it thinks best, but it must be done."

After many years of writing, reading and debating this issue, does he still not understand what the issue is? Does he not know the difference between organizations and methods? Does he not know how to establish scriptural authority?

He thinks the principle is the same in preaching

THE
LIVING VOICE  CUSTOM
SOUND
RECORDING
A DIVISION OF PHILLIPS PUBLICATIONS

THE NEW TESTAMENT

King James Version

"EVERY TAPE FULLY GUARANTEED"

A fresh new reading of the New Testament (King James Version) read by an experienced Shakespearean actor under careful supervision to produce the finest ever produced. Over two thousand hours have gone into the recording, editing and production of this complete New Testament: accurately, reverently, and expressively read. There is absolutely no comment or modification of the text in any way.

TAPE-A-MONTH CLUB

A convenient and easy way to obtain the entire Living Voice New Testament is to purchase a TAPE-A-MONTH. You may want to purchase two tapes each month until you have the entire New Testament.

REEL-TO-REEL COMPLETE NEW TESTAMENT

10 reels — 7" or 5"

Reels 1 through 9 at \$5.25 per month
Then reel 10 FREE

CASSETTE COMPLETE NEW TESTAMENT

20 Cassettes: 1 through 18 at \$5.45
then cassettes 19 & 20 FREE

8 TRACK CARTRIDGE COMPLETE NEW TESTAMENT

20 Cartridges: 1 through 18 at \$5.75
then Cartridges 19 & 20 FREE

USE YOUR MASTER CHARGE TO PURCHASE THE ENTIRE LIVING VOICE NEW TESTAMENT AND PAY IN SMALL MONTHLY PAYMENTS.

the gospel and relieving the needy — and I agree. If I were defending a missionary society, I certainly would appreciate his arguments. Remember, he is not trying to justify a home (we all know that a home is necessary) but rather a benevolent society which provides a home. He carefully avoids the distinction, but it is there nevertheless. To show that his reasoning will justify a missionary society, I'll take one of his statements and simply substitute evangelistic terms where he uses benevolent terms. It would read like this:

If the Bible had said it is wrong to support the missionary society, those brethren would have been right; but the Bible doesn't say how to support the preaching of the gospel; it just says do it. And since a gospel meeting of some sort is necessary, therefore, the missionary society is scriptural, for anything necessary to obeying a command of God is inherent in the command, whether mentioned or not.

See what I mean? That sounds exactly like the arguments of J. B. Briney in his defense of the missionary society. The fact that Christ did not tell us (the church or the individual) how to preach the gospel does not justify a missionary society. Likewise, the fact that Christ did not tell us (the church or the individual) how to care for the needy does not justify a benevolent society. If the failure to specify the means and methods to be employed by the church will justify another organization (which must use its own methods) in one case, it will do the same in another. If not, why not?

Brother Totty says that they have never told us that we must support children in the manner which he defends. Well, let's see about that. In the benevolent work of the church (and that's what we are discussing; not the individual) he and the Gospel Advocate contend that elders, acting as elders, **cannot** oversee the care of the needy. They say that such work **must** be under a board. Is that not right? We are the ones who have not prescribed the manner! We contend that the church is free to use any means or methods necessary in any of its work. Or, to use his own words, "every congregation may do that as it thinks best." But that does not authorize it to build or work through another organization which acts "as it thinks best."

His charge that we caused the division is an old and familiar tactic to evade responsibility. It reminds me of what the little boy said about the cat. His mother heard the cat squall and shouted, "Stop pulling that cat's tail." The boy replied, "I'm not pulling it. I'm just standing on it and she is doing the pulling." We are simply contending for the sufficiency of the church in overseeing, financing and doing all of its work, and we oppose any organization which seeks to displace the church. Those who depart from this scriptural principle are guilty of causing any division which may result.

Many religious issues are caused by a misuse of letters. The sectarians are bad at that. When James says that salvation is N-O-T by faith only, they change the T to a W; when they get over to Peter's statement that baptism does N-O-W save us, they change the W to a T. That's not much difference, but it makes a lot of difference. When discussing the church and organizations, some brethren say that the issue is H-O-W the work is to be done, but they

have the W on the wrong end of the word. It is not H-O-W, but rather W-H-O. If they'll just remember to move the W from the last to the first, they'll have it right. Do you suppose they can do that? We shall see.

Yes, visiting orphans is a generic command — and so is preaching the gospel. But building organizations other than the church is not a command — generic or otherwise.

————— o —————

THE CHILD UNTIMELY BORN

L. A. Mott, Jr.

An old misinterpretation of I Cor. 15:8, still repeated among our brethren, ought to be corrected. The verse reads, "... and last of all, as to the (child) untimely born, he appeared to me also." The KJV has, "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

The being as one "untimely born" does not refer to the time when the Lord appeared to Paul. No reference is made to the fact that Paul saw Jesus only after the ascension.

The KJV marginal note, "**Or an abortive,**" gets at the meaning. The Greek noun is **ektroma** which is derived from the verb meaning **to miscarry**. The noun means "**an abortion, abortive birth, an untimely birth**" (Grim-Thayer, *Lex.*, 200), "**untimely birth, miscarriage**" (Arndt-Girgrich, *Lex.*, 246). The idea in "born out of due time" is not born late, but the very opposite, born too early.

Job 3:16, Psalm 58:8, and Eccl. 6:3-5 indicate the meaning of **an untimely birth** — namely, the birth of a still-born child, one that never sees the light.

Paul's comparison of himself to an abortive birth points to his inferiority as an apostle — at least his **feeling** of inferiority and unworthiness. The very next verse explains what he means: "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

Some notable scholars have seen the point. **Thus H. A. W. Meyer:** "What Paul meant to indicate in a figurative way by **to ektroma** is clearly manifest from ver. 9, **namely, that he was inferior to, and less worthy than, the rest of the apostles, in the proportion in which the abortive child stands behind that born mature.**"

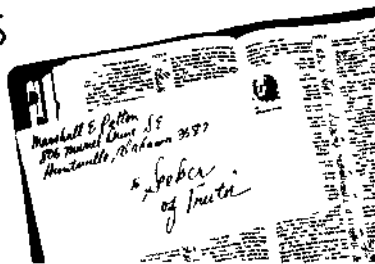
Thus Grimm, in Grimm-Thayer's *Lexicon:* "... Paul likens himself to an **ektroma**, and in vs. 9 explains in that same sense: that he is as inferior to the rest of the apostles as an immature birth comes short of a mature one, and is no more worthy of the name of an apostle than an abortion is of the name of a child."

P. O. Box 155
Romulus, Michigan 48174

————— o —————

SEND A CLUB TODAY!
Three Subscriptions For \$10.00

ANSWERS for our hope



Send Bible questions to

Marshall E. Patton, 806 Muriel Dr., S.E., Huntsville, Ala. 35802

QUESTION: I have not been in the church long and I am puzzled over one question which I am unable to answer for myself. In I Tim. 2:11 it says for the women to learn in silence and in the next verse it says for the woman not to teach nor to usurp authority over the man. This is my question, Can a woman teach ladies classes in church? If so, give me Scriptural answers, for I have not found in the Bible where the woman was teaching at all in the church, only her children at home. — M.E.S.

ANSWER: I do not know the religious background of our querist, but, usually, when one is converted from denominationalism, he is so accustomed to women participating in public worship on a plane of equality in relation to men that he does not become concerned with the limitations mentioned above until a good while thereafter. It is good that our querist, even as a young convert, has learned that there are divine limitations in the matter under study and has a desire to respect them. However, caution must be exercised. One must be careful to determine just what truth is, then observe only restrictions that are divinely authorized and not those arbitrarily imposed by men.

There are several passages that authorize women to teach. One is found in Titus 2:3-5: "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." In this passage women are told what to teach, but nothing is said about **where** the teaching is to be done. I do not know of any Scripture that restricts her teaching to "only her children at home." The church is in need of women teachers today who can and will teach what is here authorized. This teaching, however, must be done in harmony with divine limitations. These limitations are perhaps best set forth in the following verses:

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (I Cor. 14:34,35). "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first

formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (I Tim. 2:11-14).

These verses involve a **fundamental principle** governing the relationship of men and women. A careful examination of this principle as set forth in these verses should clarify the issue.

While the Corinthian passage applied directly to a general assembly in which saints benefited by exercising themselves in spiritual gifts, the like of which we do not have today, since the passing of the age of miracles, it, nevertheless, sets forth the fundamental principle under consideration. Notice that Paul commanded the woman to "keep silence in the churches" (assemblies) and "not to speak in the church" (assembly), and then added, "as also saith the law." This means that the principle applied here is the same principle that applied under the law. It applied under the law; it applied in this assembly, and it applies today — and for the same reason! That is why it does not fully meet the issue to say this passage applies only to an assembly wherein spiritual gifts prevailed or to the age of miracles. But what is the **reason** for the restriction or what is the **principle**? Paul makes it clear in verse thirty-four when he says concerning women, "they are commanded to be under obedience." This is what the law required. Furthermore, Paul referred to this law in the First Timothy passage when he said, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Again, the law said, ". . . and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. 3:16). Thus, the fundamental principle is for the woman in relation to man to be **under obedience, in subjection — not usurping authority over man.**

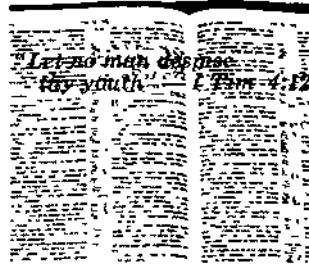
These verses, however, do not forbid a woman to speak or teach under any condition — even in the church (assembly). If so, then she cannot sing (Col. 3:16) or confess either Christ or her sins in the assembly. The Greek word "hesuchia" translated "silence," according to Thayer, does not mean making no sound at all, but rather "quietness: descriptive of the life of one who stays home doing his own work, and does not officiously meddle with the affairs of others." Thus, these verses only forbid her to speak or teach whenever and wherever she usurps authority over man. This is the fundamental principle she must always observe. This is why she cannot teach a class of men, even though she can teach a class of women or children. This is why she cannot be a public proclaimer of the word. The evangelist must "speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority (Gr. "epitage") — (Titus 2:15). The woman, however, must be under authority (Gr. "hupotage") — (I Tim. 2:11).

There is a parallel in the grammatical construction of I Tim. 2:12 and Acts 4:18 which should throw more light on the matter. Notice the latter: "And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." This restriction did not forbid Peter and John speaking and teaching at all, but rather only such speaking and teaching as was in the name of Jesus. So it is in I Tim. 2:12. The woman is not forbidden to teach or to usurp authority under any condition, but rather only such teaching and exercising of authority as is over man. This is

the fundamental principle that has governed woman from creation.

○

LESSONS FROM YOUNG PREACHERS



THE CHRISTIAN AND MILITANCY

Michael Grushon, Hobart, Ind.

Militancy as a way of life is becoming more prevalent on the American scene. Almost every cause can either boast or deplore its militant factions. There are black militants, militant anarchists, student militants, and woman's liberation militants; all of whom are capturing their share of the headlines.

The actions of militants are largely viewed as radical lawlessness. With such a view I am willing to concur. However, we need to realize that militancy of and in itself is not always bad. There are some causes which justify a form of militancy. Perhaps if we have the definition of militancy before us it will make such an admission possible for all. Webster's New World Dictionary defines "militant" as, "to serve as a soldier; fighting, ready and willing to fight; warlike; combative." Thus, for some causes militancy would win the approval of all or most of the members of our society.

There is a need for teaching concerning militancy in the church today. Not just the negative approach which condemns the illegal and lawless activities of the majority of the notorious militants of today, but sound, firm teaching of the New Testament that Christians are expected to be militant. That is right, your eyes are not deceiving you, the New Testament teaches that the Christian is to be a militant. In this article we will examine some of the language used by the inspired writers which indicate that such an assertion must be so.

The first such indication of the militant nature of Christianity that we would like to cite is Paul's admonition to Timothy in II Timothy 2:2. It reads, "Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No soldier on service entangleth himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him who hath enrolled him to be a soldier." We all recognize the militant nature of a soldier's occupation. Paul used this figure thus emphasizing the similarities between a soldier in the military and a soldier of Christ. Both must be able to endure hardship and both must have a dedication to the fight which is before them.

No government enlists the aid of a soldier and then sends him out without any method to protect

himself, in order to fight an enemy which has never been identified. Such would be folly, resulting in the defeat of all the soldier's efforts. Neither does God act in such an unwise way for we find Paul saying in Ephesians 6:11-17, "Put on the whole **armour of God**, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Thus, God does expect his servants to be militant because he provides us with a perfect set of armour, points us towards the most awesome adversary any army ever had, and orders us to stand fast. To do so in the face of the onslaughts hurled by Satan takes tenacity that would be admired and desired in any army.

Another good indication that God intended for Christians to be militant is the words that are used to exhort Christians to action. Jude 3 says, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly **contend** for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Contend means, "To strive in combat, struggle." Jude says that he felt it necessary to exhort his readers to contend for the faith. Hence we are to wage combat and struggle with those who would overthrow the faith. Paul told Timothy to "Fight the good fight of faith." If we ever expect to lay hold on eternal life it will be after a life dedicated to the defense of the gospel.

The final indication that the New Testament teaches that Christians should be militant which we will consider in this article is the meaning of the term which is used to indicate the objective of living the Christian life. In Romans 12:21 Paul instructs us, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." The word which is translated overcome in this passage also can be translated **conquer**. Thus Paul is saying that we should conquer the evil in this life by the good which we can do. The apostle John used the same word when he said, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" Thus John says that the key to the Christian's conquest is his faith in Jesus, but important to our present consideration is the fact that we are expected to conquer.

The usage that the New Testament makes of such militant terms establishes that the Christian should have a militant attitude concerning his life as a Christian. Of course, we realize that our form of militancy is not the bomb throwing, building burning type so spectacularly carried out by the modern militant, but we are to be militant, carrying forth a spiritual battle to the enemies of the gospel.



ARROWS OF TRUTH for denominational error

Ward Hogland, Post Office Box 166, Greenville, Texas 75402

"STAY OUT OF THE WATER"

Ben M. Bogard, prominent Baptist debater of a by gone decade, had what he thought was a humorous dodge to I Peter 3:21. When presented with the statement, "Baptism doth also now save us" he would reply with a smile, "Why, Noah wasn't saved by getting into the water, he was saved by staying out of it." This seemed to satisfy most Baptists.

In our study this month I would like to take up this passage for close observation. Peter says, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." One of the evasions of this great text is a play on the word "figure." Baptist debaters are good at figures! It is obvious to any student of the Bible that the figure is a comparison between Noah's salvation and ours.

The word "antitupon" according to Lexicographers means "A striking back, metaphorically, resisting, adverse; then in a passive sense, struck back; in the N.T. Metaphorically, corresponding to a copy of an archetype, etc." Thus it can be observed that the figure of this text is a comparison between Noah's salvation and ours. Baptist preachers try their best to make the text say "we are saved by baptism figuratively." If we are saved by baptism only in a figurative sense then Noah was only saved from the flood figuratively. If this be so we might as well turn infidel and deny all the Bible. Sectarian preachers can throw this word figure around so much that it will confuse the less informed and cause many to be lost.

Several years ago brother A. W. Young wrote a poem and called it BAPTIST FIGURATIVE FOOLISHNESS. It is my opinion that he should have left out the word saphead; but the rest of it is fitting. I would like to give it now:

"The Bible teaches us of God,
A being that's supreme;
Creator of each particle
Of his universal scheme.
It teaches us of Jesus,
Known as the Son of man; The
founder of the Christian faith,
The Author of its plan.
It teaches of the Spirit,
Who gave to us the word
That reveals in all his glory

Our Christ, the risen Lord.
It says His death and burial
And resurrection from the grave
Is, in fact the true foundation
Of God's own plan to save.
These facts God calls the gospel,
His own appointed way; A
form of which comprises
What sinners must obey.
By faith, which comes by hearing,
They are dipped beneath the wave;
And thus obey the gospel,
God's appointed way to save.
But we have on earth a people,
And "Baptist" is their name,
Who do not believe the word of God,
And hence reject the same.
They have a figurative God
And a figurative Son,
A figurative Spirit;
And the figure's just begun.
Their figurative Lord
Has a figurative plan
To save within a figure
A figurative man.
With a figurative gospel,
Preached in a figure, too,
They get a figurative mourner,
And figure him right through.
He then tells a figurative story
Of blessings figured in,
Of figurative deliverance
From figurative sin.
Then the Baptists take a vote,
On the figurative plan,
To decide upon the status
Of this figurative man.
They baptize him, in a figure,
In a literal mudhole,
If they decide he has salvation
In his figurative soul.
Thus by a figure, in a figure,
And figuring with a vim,
They figure on a saphead,
And make a Baptist out of him.
And when they are done figuring,
He's figured there to stay;
He's figured to a finish,
And cannot fall away.
But the real old devil,
In his literal lively hell, Is
figuring on this figuring,
And it suits him very well.
For his agents — they are figuring
Upon poor, fallen man;
And in his place and by his grace
They carry out his plan.
Then never let a Baptist Church
Begin to figure on your soul;
But trust in the Lord Jesus,
And he will make you whole.
If you'll submit yourself to him
And his commands obey,

You'll surely go to heaven,
Because he is the Way."

Any student of the Bible knows that Noah was saved by water. However, the Bible does not teach that Noah was saved by water exactly as we are today. Noah was saved by WATER in that God caused the ark to float, thus allowing the water to serve as a line of separation between Noah and a sinful world. He saves the sinner today by water (baptism) in that it (baptism) is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Also it saves in that it puts one into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27).

It is true that Noah was saved by staying out of the water. However, we must remember that the Bible says he was saved by water! All people who go to heaven will be saved by the blood of Christ. But not all people are saved by his blood the same way. For example, we who live in this age must obey the gospel (Rom. 1:16; Rom. 6:3-4), but the people of the Mosaic age did not have to obey the gospel of Christ. They had to observe the ordinances which Jehovah had given to them at that time. Yes, we are saved by the blood, but not in the same way. We are also saved by water but not in the same way.

The last dodge on this text is on "the filth of the flesh." Some few Baptist debaters will try to argue that "filth" means sin. Thus, they insist that baptism does not take away sins. However, just a little study will show one that filth in this text means dirt on the body. All lexicographers are agreed on this point. In other words, baptism is not a mere bath to wash dirt off the body. The word translated filth does not mean sin!

Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone would take the Bible for what it says rather than wresting it to their own destruction?

WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE?

Edward Fudge

When John wrote, "We love Him because He first loved us" (I John 4:19), he was reminding us of a first principle of true religion. He was saying — as one teacher put it — that we can never love God as He loved us, because He loved us FIRST! He loved us while we were in opposition to Him, while we were sinners (Rom. 5:8).

The religion of the Bible is unique among world religions, not only because it alone is true, but with respect to its divine teaching concerning God. It is a God-centered religion. The Father is "above all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:6). "Of Him, and through Him and to Him are all things" (Rom. 11:36). In the Bible, God always makes the first move toward man. Man's obligations consist (in one way or another) of responding to God's gracious acts of salvation, as to a sovereign God.

The Old Testament begins with God acting — and His work was "very good" (Gen. 1:31). The story of the Jewish people — from Abraham, through Moses and the prophets, to Christ — is a COVENANT story. Again God is seen moving toward His

creatures to save them; He is calling man, leading man, giving His divine Word to man — requiring man to respond to divine grace by submissive and trusting obedience. Psalms 105, 135 and 136 (among others) sum up this story in beautiful poetry. These psalms must have been sung frequently in Old Testament worship and perhaps in early Christian worship as well (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). The God of the Old Testament is a God who acts to save His people, then calls on them to respond in faithfulness.

Such psalms as we have just noticed formed the background for the birth of John the Immerser (Luke 1:67-69) and of Messiah Jesus (Luke 1:46-55). Jesus claimed to be fulfilling the Old Testament law, prophets and psalms (Luke 24:44-48), and began His personal ministry — by just such a statement of identification and purpose (Luke 4:16-21; Matt. 4:12-17). He was telling those who listened that He, Jesus of Nazareth, was sent by the God of their fathers — once more, but finally and completely — to save man.

The apostolic preaching recorded in the book of Acts may be regarded as typical of the rest of the preaching of the apostles. In these sermons of Spirit-filled men, the same themes are stressed which we have seen already from Genesis to Jesus — God acting to save His people, and these people required to respond in faith and obedience. This is especially true of Stephen's sermon before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7) and Paul's synagogue sermon at Pisidian Antioch (13:14-41), but may be said fairly of Peter's sermons at Pentecost (2:14-40), at the Temple (3:12-26), before the Council (4:8-12) and at Cornelius' house (10:34-43). The same may be said of Paul's sermon to the Athenians (17:22-31).

THE POINT FOR US

The point is the same for us today. By our own sins we have become alienated from the true God, who is absolutely holy and just. We can never please Him by ourselves, nor can we alone appease Him. Man is forever weak through the flesh. We can not be GOOD enough, or DO enough, or PERFORM enough to make ourselves right with God — after we have once sinned and rebelled against Him.

But God has acted FIRST — to save us! His Son became a man. He lived a perfect life, in OUR stead. He died — for OUR sins. He rose — for OUR justification. Because of the life He lived, then gave in death, God can accept US — rebellious sinners though we were. "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:7). We are counted righteous in union with Christ (I Cor. 1:29-31; II Cor. 5:21).

As has always been the case, man must respond to God's grace. He must believe that Jesus is God's Son — with a committing, trusting faith. He must repent of his sins — turn the other way in his mind. He must confess that faith before men — by word of mouth and by action. And he must be identified with Christ in water baptism, being buried and raised with Him — through faith in the working of God (Col. 2:12; Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21, 22).

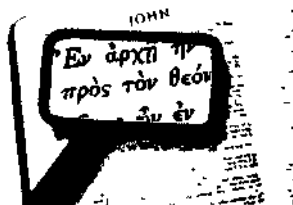
The same faith that led to this obedience must continue through all the believer's life — still believing, still trusting, still obeying. Are you "set right" with God? If not, turn to Him this very day in penitent and sincere faith, demonstrated by com-

plete and trusting obedience. Do not reject God's love and grace! His righteous wrath is the only alternative. God has already acted to save you. What is your response?

944 South Geyer Road
Kirkwood, Mo. 63122

WORD STUDIES

in the Greek
New Testament



E. V. Srygley, Jr., Route 6, Box 420, Tampa, Florida 33610

IS THE CHURCH INDISPENSABLE TO CHRISTIANITY?

MACON PREACHERS

Several years ago, on a TV panel discussion originating in Macon, Georgia, several preachers discussed this question: "Is the church indispensable to Christianity?"

In this article the reader is invited to examine material pertinent to this question.

WHICH CHURCH?

The above-mentioned panel members agreed that by the term "church" they meant the "church on the corner," or, the local denomination.

Or, in other words, these men were asking whether the Baptist Church, or Methodist Church, etc., was absolutely necessary to the life of Christianity.

THE REAL ISSUE

Actually, the real issue involved here is not whether or not Christianity can live **without** these churches, but whether or not Christianity can live **with** them.

The question asked by the Macon preachers implies their assumption that all denominations have a perfect right to exist in the first place. However, this assumption is entirely unwarranted, and wholly without Bible proof. The man does not live who can justify by the Bible a division of professed Christians into different and differing churches.

To the contrary, I Cor. 1:10-13 positively condemns what we know today as denominational Christianity.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

It can be affirmed without fear of successful contradiction that the New Testament church is indispensable to the life of Christianity.

It would be impossible to have Christianity without the church simply because Christians are the church. See, in this regard, such passages as Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23; I Cor. 12:27; Heb. 3:6.

WHAT IS IT?

Someone is surely to ask, "But what is the New Testament church?"

It is odd and unfortunate that whenever the term "church" is used, the minds of most people are confused.

Why should this be true of the term "church" when it is not true of other Bible words?

If neighbors are discussing the goodness of "God" does someone come along and ask, "But which God are you talking about?"

And even if a skeptic should ask, "Which God?" the reply would be, without any indication of confusion, "The **Bible** God."

Is there any misunderstanding among believers in the Bible when people speak of the New Testament "Jesus" or of the New Testament "Spirit?"

To the contrary, people grasp immediately the necessity of maintaining the concept of "God," of "Christ," and of the "Spirit," that is presented in the writings of the apostles and inspired men.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHURCH?

Therefore, since the meaning is perfectly clear when we speak of the New Testament "God," or "Jesus," or "Spirit," why can't we, with equal ease, understand what is meant by the New Testament "church?"

If the New Testament "God" means "the God presented in the Bible," then what would the New Testament "church" mean?

And if our concept of "God" must be exactly what it was in the mind of Paul, then why must not my concept of the "church" be exactly what it was in the mind of Paul?

Why will people hold today the Bible view of God and yet steadfastly refuse today the Bible view of the church?

If today we believe in the Bible "Jesus," can't we believe in, with equal vigor, the Bible "church?"

BOUND VOLUMES

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

Each bound volume is two years or 24 issues. Skillfully bound in beautiful Fabricord covering, navy blue, printed in gold, and will withstand constant use for many years. Each bound volume matches previous bound volumes. The entire two years bound in one volume is indexed for easy reference to both author and title of article.

VOLUME I-1960-1961 (out of print)

VOLUME II - 1962-1963 (only a few left)

VOLUME III - 1964-1965 (about 40 left)

VOLUME IV - 1966-1967 VOLUME V-1968-1969

EACH BOUND VOLUME

\$7.50

BAPTISM — HOLY SPIRIT OR WATER?

Voyd N. Ballard

Nothing is more inconsistent than false doctrine, unless it be the advocates of such doctrine. False teachers, in their attempts to get around the teaching of the New Testament on water baptism, usually start out by admitting that such passages as Mark 16:16, Matt. 28:18,20, Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16 teach water baptism. They take every twist and use every quibble known in an attempt to prove that these passages do not mean what they say, and usually wind up taking the position that Mark 16:16 is no part of the Word of God. Ben M. Bogard, one of the best debaters the Missionary Baptist Church has ever produced, had 237 debates before he died in May 1951.

Bogard sometimes took the position that Mark 16:16 was genuine Scripture and at other times he took the position that it was spurious, depending on how he wanted to use it. In 1910, when he was in debate with Dr. I. N. Penick, Bogard used Mark 16:16 and said it was a command of God. In 1915 in his debate with a gospel preacher, Joe S. Warlick, Bogard denied that Mark 16:16 was inspired Scripture. In 1929 in his "Waybook" on page 41 he quotes Mark 16:16 as the inspired Word of God. Again in debate with Aimee McPherson in 1934 Bogard took the position that Mark 16:16 was the inspired Word of God. But then, in his debate with N. B. Hardeman in Little Rock, Arkansas in April 1938 Bogard said, "I have never yet said that Mark 16:16 was a part of the word of God" (Hardeman-Bogard Debate, Page 273).

Such twisting and quibbling is typical of all false teachers. The truth of the matter is that any person who has enough intelligence to be accountable to God, knows that Jesus said, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," and there is no way in the world to get the necessity of baptism out of this plain statement! But someone says, "I just can't see that baptism is necessary." If you are really telling the truth when you make this statement — if after reading the plain simple statement of the Christ, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," you just cannot see that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," don't worry about your eternal condition, for only those who are capable of "hearing and learning" (John 6:45) are accountable to God anyway! If you honestly do not have enough intelligence to understand that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" you are not responsible to God. If you do have enough intelligence to understand that "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved" and you refuse to believe it, you will be damned for Christ said, "but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Many false teachers, when they see that they cannot refute the many New Testament passages that teach baptism, start telling us about how many baptisms they read about in the Bible (some say three, some say five, some say seven etc.) and then they

try to look wise and ask, "which one is Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, Rom. 6:3,4, I Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:27, etc. taking about?" When you answer this denominational quibble by showing that even if there were a dozen baptisms prior to the baptism the Apostles preached and administered under the commission of Christ commencing at Pentecost (Acts 2), the New Testament says there is now "ONE BAPTISM" (Eph. 4:5), they will many times say, "Oh, that is Holy Spirit baptism." These advocates of false doctrine will many times hasten to add, "Oh, I have been baptized in water." Well, if the New Testament passages on baptism mean Holy Spirit baptism, why were you baptized in water? And why do most of those who affirm that the baptism passages mean Holy Spirit baptism practice water baptism? Don't talk to me about three or five or seven baptisms. The Bible says there is now "ONE BAPTISM," Eph. 4:5.

Holy Spirit baptism was a promise to the Apostles, Luke 24:49-Acts 1:5, and only Christ could administer it, Matt. 3:11. I have never heard anyone claim that man was ever commanded to perform, or had the power to administer Holy Spirit baptism.

Man is authorized to and has the power to perform baptism. The baptism which Jesus says saves (Mark 16:16) is the baptism which he commanded the Apostles to perform. They were to teach all nations, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:18,20). The first preaching of the Apostles under the commission given in Matt. 28:18,20 was on Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. Here the Apostle Peter commanded those who asked what they must do to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts. 2:38). "They that gladly received his word were baptized" (verse 41). And they were baptized in water or else Peter contradicted his own preaching about ten years later when he asked, "Can any man forbid WATER, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" (Acts 10:47). "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48). All of the twisting, squirming, fuming, fussing, and quibbling of denominationalism will never get the water out of Acts 10:47,48! Remember that there is ONE BAPTISM (Eph. 4:5; and Peter dared any man to forbid WATER that it should not be performed!

The mission of the Apostles and preachers of the New Testament period was to "preach Jesus." Acts 8:26-39 is an inspired record of an inspired man preaching Jesus. We are told that Philip "preached unto him Jesus" (verse 35). This is all that he preached. "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, where in the world did you ever get the idea that you need to be baptized? My friend, you are saved by faith alone. All you have to do is just believe in Christ. True, baptism is a command of Christ, but I did not even mention baptism for anyone knows that you cannot do all of the commands, so there is no point in trying to do any of them. God is a just God and He certainly will not send anyone to Hell for not obeying Him.