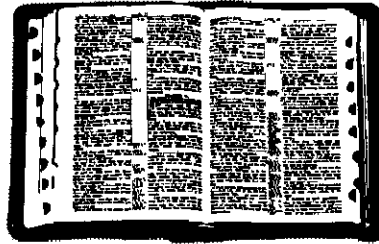


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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 XXV

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NUMBER 10

THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

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Lutz, FL 33549



JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD

The world of unbelief has one great impossible task to overcome before it can take a second step in destroying the life and work of Jesus Christ. That first problem for atheists and modernists of every class and degree is the deity of Jesus Christ. He is either God or he is an impostor. Since the atheist, agnostic and modernist charge that Christ is not divine, it falls their responsibility to prove the charge "beyond reasonable doubt." The defense is ready with undeniable evidence.

The first thing one would have to do in denying the evidence of the defense is to discredit the Bible, and through the centuries man has utterly failed to do this. The word of God lives and abides while generation after generation has passed away after trying to destroy this indestructible Book.

The denial of the deity of Christ must center upon the fact that he is the Son of God. One must believe in his Sonship to be saved (John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30; Romans 10:9,10; 1 John 4:15). If it can be established that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God, then he is divine and modernism in every form goes down in total defeat.

1. PROPHECY—Prophecy was spoken hundreds of years before Christ was born concerning his birth, life, death and resurrection. It began with the promise of the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15. A promise to bless all nations in the seed of Abraham was made in Genesis 12:3; 22:18; to Isaac in Genesis 21:12; and continued to the close of the Old Testament. Someone has said there are 332 direct prophecies made and fulfilled concerning Christ. It would be impossible for this number of state-

ments to be made of a person hundreds of years before he was born and not one of them fail to come to pass unless God guided the prophets concerning His Son. Again and again in the New Testament it is said: "that it might be fulfilled" concerning something said of Christ in the Old Testament. It all goes on to include the present reign of Christ at the right hand of God. Modernism cannot successfully explain away prophecy as it relates to Christ as the Son of God.

2. THE VIRGIN BIRTH—Among the prophecies concerning Christ is that in Isaiah 7:14 which said the sign given would be that a child was to be born of a virgin. Luke 1:26-35 and Matthew 1:18-23 make Isaiah 7:14 apply to Christ.

Jesus asked his enemies, the Pharisees, what they thought of Christ and "whose son is he?" and they answered, "The son of David" (Matthew 22:41-46). He then asked how David called him Lord as he spoke by the Spirit. Do you know how they answered Christ? "**And no man was able to answer him a word.**" If he were not divine why did they not answer him?

3. TESTIMONY THAT HE WAS THE SON OF GOD—Various ones in the New Testament plainly called Christ the Son of God. God Himself did (Hebrews 1:1, 5; Matthew 3:17; 17:5). John the Baptist did (John 1:33). The apostles who had seen, heard and handled him testified that he was the Son of God (John 6:69; Matthew 16:16; Acts 9:20). The devils declared him to be the Son of God (Matthew 8:29). Jesus said himself that he was the Son of God (John 9:35-37; 4:26).

Discounting the proof of prophecy and the virgin birth, how would one go about setting aside the testimony of all these witnesses? What procedure of cross-examination would one employ to discredit all the witnesses to the fact that Christ is the Son of God?

4. THE MIRACLES—It is easy to simply say that these miracles did not happen as they are recorded in the New Testament. But explain why the enemies of Christ did not expose him while he lived and they were present when he did these mighty works? These miracles served to bear witness that he came from God and was the Son of God (John 10:24, 25; 3:2; 5:36).

When Peter and John healed the lame man at the gate to the temple "in the name of Jesus Christ," it created

quite a stir among the people. Many believed, but the priests and chief rulers with the high priests, Sadducees and Pharisees laid hands on them and put them in prison until the next day. Now, when they tried to discredit this work and beheld the "man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it" (Acts 4:14). Verse 16 says: "What shall we do to these men, for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it." But along comes a modernist and denies it all with a single statement; no proof at all! These who were there could not deny it!

5. THE RESURRECTION—Christ was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection (Romans 1:4). God raised him from the dead (Acts 2:32; Romans 10:9,10), and God would not have raised an impostor. The resurrection of Christ is one fact that cannot be disputed, and it declares him to be the Son of God.

The evidence can be enlarged in every area listed above, and other areas of proof can be given, but these are sufficient to give an irrefutable argument for the deity of Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God. That fact is the foundation to all authority in spiritual and religious matters today, and it will be overriding factor in the judgment of God. Our salvation from sins rests upon the fact that Christ is the Son of God. Our eternal destiny depends upon the fact that he is the Son of God.

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Editorial

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A SHORT COURSE IN PREMILLENNIALISM

The subject of this article is intimidating to many. Many could not possibly spell it, some cannot pronounce it and many have not the faintest notion what it involves. Yet, a large portion of religious society is caught up in this "ism" in one way or another.

What Is It?

The prefix "pre" means before. "Millennium" means one thousand years. "Ism" means that a doctrine has been crystallized around the idea that we are living before the 1,000 years. The whole idea begins with a misunderstanding of Rev. 20:1-6 where the victory scene is painted for the souls martyred for the cause of Christ in the first century. There God assured them that Satan's allies would be defeated and their cause would triumph. That grand assurance was symbolized by Satan being bound "for a thousand years."

Many teach that Christ will come in the clouds, catch up the righteous with him in what they call "the rapture" and that while they are in that state, great tribulation will take place here on earth. Some associate that with the "battle of Armageddon", the re-gathering of the Jews to Palestine and related things. Then, after all the conflict is over and the earth has been cleansed, Jesus will come with his saints back to the earth, set up headquarters in Jerusalem and reign there for a literal 1,000 years. At the end of that time, the wicked dead will be raised, the general judgment will take place and the wicked and righteous will be separated for eternity. The worst thing wrong with the whole theory is that it just is not so! The word of God does not teach it.

Events of the Second Coming Rule It Out

(1) Matt. 25:1-13 teaches us that when the master of the house returns, the door will be shut. **The time of preparation** will be over. Premillennialists want to leave the door cracked open wide enough to give the unbelieving Jews another chance. This violates the principle that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10: 34-35).

(2) His coming will be the **end of the world**. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10). This passage deals with "the promise of his coming (verse 4) and that also concerns the facts that the

world is "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment" (Verse 7). This passage is sufficient reason to argue that the Lord will not set foot on this earth again, for at his coming it will be burned up and every element in it will melt with fervent heat. He left in clouds, will come in clouds, we will meet him in the clouds, and this earth will be no more. Whatever the "new heavens and earth" will be, they will not be this present order as we know it. This earth, including Palestine and Jerusalem, is going out of business at his coming and that thwarts the whole scheme.

(3) At his coming all the **dead will be raised**. Jesus said "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jno. 5:28-29). Note that the same "hour" the righteous come forth from their graves is the same "hour" when the wicked rise from their graves. There is no 1,000 years in between. But what about 1 Thes. 4:13-18? Well what about it? There Paul answered a question which the brethren asked about the righteous dead as opposed to the righteous living at the time the Lord comes. They did not ask about the wicked dead and he did not deal with that. But Jesus did in John 5:28-29!

(4) At his coming the **judgment** will occur. Matt. 25:31-46 shows that when he comes he will sit on the throne of his glory and will separate the wicked from the righteous. Note the order of the passage. He comes in glory, then he shall sit upon his throne, before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them. This leaves no room for a thousand years between his coming and the judgment.

(5) When he comes he shall **deliver up the kingdom to the Father**. "But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. **Then cometh the end**, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:23-24). He shall not take up rule when he comes, he shall deliver it to the Father. He shall put it down. If you can tell the difference in "take it up" and "put it down" then you know what is wrong with Premillennial-ism. This agrees with the prophetic vision of Daniel who foresaw the coronation of Christ. He said, "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). Daniel said that in his vision it was when this one "like the Son of man" came to the Ancient of Days that there was given him "dominion, glory and a kingdom." Premillennial folks argue that he will take up his kingdom and begin to reign when he comes from the Ancient of days. Whether you ever learn to spell the word, or even pronounce it, you can refute Premillennialism if you know the difference

between to and from.

What Harm Is It?

But is not this just an innocent theory? What harm does it do? It does great harm. The consequences of denying the present existence of the kingdom of Christ are serious.

(1) In Jno. 3:5 Jesus taught that the new birth puts one into the kingdom. But if the kingdom is not in existence, then none are in it, and if none are in it, then none are "born again." Premillennialism robs us of the new birth.

(2) Matt. 18:3 teaches that conversion puts one into the kingdom. But if the kingdom is not in existence, then none are in it, and if none are in it, then none are now converted, nor can they be. This would make evangelism useless. Premillennialism militates against evangelism. Oh yes, they preach. But for what? To convert men? That will put them in the kingdom and you can't have that with no kingdom to put them into.

(3) Col. 1:13 teaches that those outside the kingdom are "under the power of darkness" and therefore lost. If the kingdom is not in existence, then all the world is lost under the power of darkness, including every premillennialist, and will remain so until the "millennium" commences.

(4) Luke 22:29-30 teaches that the Lord's Supper was to be eaten in the kingdom. Notice he set his "table" that they might eat and drink "at my table in my kingdom." If the kingdom is not now in existence, then nobody on earth has a right to eat the Lord's Supper and every premillennialist on earth who does so is guilty of presumptuous sin when he eats it. If we do not have the kingdom in existence now, then we can't have a table, converts, or anything else in what does not exist. It won't do to argue that the church is the "vestibule" of the kingdom. Jesus said nothing about putting his table "in the vestibule." He said it would be "in the kingdom." If the kingdom is not here yet, then we are deprived of the right to eat and drink at his table in his kingdom. Do you still think this is just a harmless speculation?

(5) Zech. 6:13 says, in prophesying about the Messiah, "and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne." The same time he sits and rules on his throne is the same time he serves as priest. Since we offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God by him who is declared to be our high priest, then he is either sitting as king and priest now or else we act presumptuously when we pray, and present our bodies a living sacrifice acceptable to God by him. Is he our high priest now? If so, then he is king now. If he is not king now, then neither is he priest now and we are robbed of prayer through him. Innocent theory? No, far from it.

Premillennialism is a grave error which perverts prophecy, makes God unfaithful to his word, robs us of the new birth, conversion, holds us in the power of darkness, denies us the right to eat the Lord's Supper and bereaves us of our high priest when we pray. Such a system is gravely in error. We must continue to oppose it with all our might.

● * * * * *

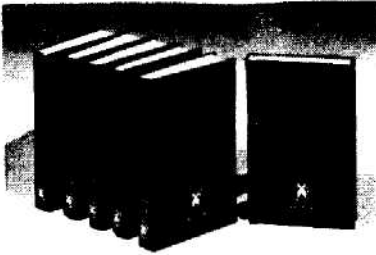
● **FLOYD THOMPSON CHANGES WORLDS**

It is with personal sadness that we take note of the death on Sunday, August 26, of Floyd Thompson of Santa Ana, California. This brother preached the gospel for over 45 years and was known and respected throughout the nation. He worked for many years with the Fairview church in Garden Grove, California. He was a source of stability and godly influence not only in southern California but wherever he preached. He was a great encouragement to young preachers. A large crowd was present to pay final respects and to hear the gospel preached. My own associations with him were limited but always pleasant and profitable. His name and influence for good is virtually a legend in the west. He helped to plan the August Fairview Lectures which closed two days before his death to cancer. I was one of the speakers (along with Paul Earnhart) and my five morning sermons dealing with shepherds and sheep were suggested by him as were the evening sermons by Paul Earnhart.

The passing of such men leaves a void in the ranks of gospel preachers. Younger men must lift the torch and carry it forward without faltering. Our deepest love and concern is expressed for his beloved wife, Ruth Thompson who also provides a most worthy example to teach the young women. If you wish to drop her a note of encouragement, her address is 429 Eastside Ave., Santa Ana, California 92701.

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EXPOSITION: TEXT and CONTEXT

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WE HAVE BECOME STOIC

One of the chief characteristics of the ancient Stoics (Acts 17:18) was *ataraxia* which is a word meaning "freedom from emotions." The word, "Stoic," itself, means "not easily excited; unmoved by joy or grief." The Stoics strove to master their feelings in order that they would not be affected by any event, even personal tragedies in their lives. They presumed that peace could only be realized by total indifference or apathy toward all things. Their personalities, therefore, were cold and lifeless.

In over-reacting to emotionalism, some of us have taken on the spirit of stoicism. This is obvious as reflected in the atmosphere of our worship in many places. In every act of worship there is a dispirited participation. No feeling is reflected! From beginning to end it is bland, stereotyped and formal, with the environment of a morgue. Worship should be a joyous occasion where the spirit is lifted up and the heart is satisfied. Like David, we should be able to say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psa. 122:1).

Look at the typical, lethargic church in the exercise of its worship. There is a call to order by the song-leader announcing the number of a song. There is no introduction to worship, but simply, "number 200" ringing out through the auditorium. Again, you might hear, "number 2-0-0, number 200," as people begin to settle down.

Stoical Singing

The leader stands like a statue, head buried in the songbook, dragging along with the pitch an octave too high, and, a song that has been worn out by over-exposure. The singing is atrocious! But they finally work their way through the first song and the second one goes about the same way, except this time the song may be off key and way too low. After the singing of two songs (this has been the routine for 20 years), it is time to stand for prayer.

The third song has an "Amen" at the close of it, but no, you cannot sing that as it would show some emotion to say, "Amen," or it is too sectarian. I do not know what we are going to do with all of the "Amens" in the Bible. Well, anyway, the song is finished and the leader retreats to the back of the auditorium where he sits till the invitation hymn, and when that is ready, he makes his way up the aisle with a fifteen-second lull between the time the preacher stops and the song begins.

Brethren, song-leaders can make or break a service. How rich and uplifting is the worship when there is good singing—songs that warm the heart and brighten our hope. We need to use the best we have and train those who are inexperienced. But for some reason brethren will put anybody up to lead singing, frequently dressed in untidy clothes, and we wonder why people are getting turned off and quitting the church.

In a gospel meeting, brethren feel compelled to use a different song-leader each night, and some of them are not ready to conduct the singing. Brethren will send hundreds of miles for a preacher, spending 700 to 800 dollars for the meeting, and then greatly hinder it by not having the best man available to lead the singing. Preachers of years past brought song-leaders with them. They had great singing. Some places would be wise in bringing in a song-leader for gospel meetings and have a songfest each night for 25 or 30 minutes before preaching. What great meetings we would have if such were done.

Another thing, look at our faces when we sing. Some of us have a countenance that resembles a Missouri mule—long and forlorn. Certainly, there are sad songs, but many songs have a message of salvation and joy. Why cannot we reflect in our faces and actions such wonderful words? Is this another sign of stoicism?

Stoical Prayers

Sometimes prayers are uttered in rote—just empty sayings. Jesus had somewhat to say about vain repetition (Matt. 6:7). Spontaneity is lacking! The phrases used are the same expressions over and over. We need to ask, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Lk. 11:1). The model prayer of Jesus (Matt. 6:9-15) serves as an excellent foundation and guideline for prayer. We all could profit by studying the prayers of Paul (Phil. 1:9-11; Col 1:9-12) and pray in like-manner.

The brother leading the prayer should speak loudly enough to be heard by the entire assembly and when he finishes, there should be some "Amens." Paul said an "Amen" is in order at the giving of thanks, providing we understand what the brother said (I Cor. 14:16). We generally understand what is spoken but the "Amens" are rather scarce. Most of the time there is just the "Amen" of the brother leading the prayer. Again, an indication of stoicism. We might ought to do like the black brother in a white congregation when he closed his prayer. He said, "Now, let us all say, 'Amen.'" There was an overwhelming response.

Stoical Observance of the Lord's Supper

In the observance of the Lord's Supper, nothing is said, whatsoever to focus our minds upon the suffering and death of our Lord. At a given moment in the worship, perhaps after the third song, or after the invitation song, men come from all directions and line up at the table. A brother, without any explanation, begins giving thanks, and the bread is passed among the worshipers. The fruit of the vine is treated in the same manner. After the Lord's Supper is concluded, they grab the collection plates, also without explanation, and start down the aisles. By habit the members know what

is happening in sequence, but the visitors learn as it takes place and are somewhat unprepared.

Brethren, the greatness of Jesus and His unspeakable love demonstrated at Calvary deserves more from us than a hurry-up, frigid and petrified appearance at the Lord's Table. How refreshing to hear a brother give a brief talk that shows a feeling of gratitude for Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf. Then, when the Supper is finished and the contribution is ready to be taken, someone can talk about the privilege of giving and what God has done for us in a material way.

Stoical Preaching

Preaching, with not a few, has become "talks." There is not much preaching to it. The audience is asleep in about five minutes from a monotone and maybe a topic that is as irrelevant as the Pony Express. Preachers need to put some punch, "fire" and enthusiasm in their sermons instead of trying to act like a Harvard theologian. We are preaching to common people with every day common problems, hence, we need to gear our preaching to their common needs, and preach with all the vim and vitality we can "muster-up."

Have you noticed how gospel preachers are introduced, anymore? It might go something like this: "After singing of this song, George will bring us the lesson." With such exuberant (?) introduction, dull singing, and perhaps a stereotyped prayer and ritualistic communion, the audience is practically comatose by the time the preacher is ready to preach. May I add, what has happened to the affectionate designation, "brother?" Too, has the word, "sermon," become obsolete, or the expression, "preach to us," antiquated?

From the pulpit the preacher many times sees stonefaces, zombies, who sit emotionless. There is no response, no Amens, no nodding of heads, no expression of approval when the truth is preached. We have become too austere! Hearing Christ preached should excite us with jubilation and joy. It will show on those who are elated. It cannot be concealed.

Stoical Announcements

Finally, we do not want to overlook the announcements. They generally come at the end of the service. They are so abrupt without any continuity of worship. There is no mention how good it was to have been in the service, the blessings enjoyed, the sermon preached, etc., but far removed from the events that transpired, the brother starts with reading cold, hard facts. Warmth is missing.

The announcer proceeds to the sick and announces that "Bob Jones had surgery and is in room 240 at the local hospital." Brother Jones may be in critical condition, but there is no statement of concern, or request for prayers on his behalf. No feeling is expressed to his faithful family in the audience. This should not be. Some of us have gotten to the place where we cannot show emotions, shed tears of joy or sorrow and offer sympathy. Brethren, we MUST change!

On the other hand, thank God for vibrant churches and vigorous Christians who can sing "Sweet By and By" with tears of happiness, who pray with fervency,

who are touched with gratitude, and express it, every time the Lord's Supper is eaten and who appreciate gospel preaching and show it.

Those who have drifted into lethargy and coldness, need to be revived. Give us live, active, caring, Spirit-filled (Eph. 5:18) churches and Christians everywhere as we endeavor to serve the Lord in a world of sin.

The Mystery of Iniquity

Eugene Britnell

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Little Rock, Arkansas 72215



CATHOLICISM AND IDOLATRY

God has always forbidden idolatry, yet it is one of the oldest and most common practices on earth. Man has a propensity toward worshipping that which he can make, feel, see and serve. It seems difficult for him to appreciate or relate to a God that is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent—the true God of heaven.

The first two of the ten commandments deal with idolatry. God said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God. . ." (Exodus 20:3-5.) God meant what He said!

The passages of scripture dealing with idolatry are too numerous for us to mention in this study. We shall expect the reader to do some reading from the Bible.

In Psalm 115, we are given a vivid description of idols that are "the work of men's hands." The inspired writer says, "They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they but they see not (nor can they cry, E.B.): They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like them; so is every one that trusteth in them."

In Isaiah 44:10 we read, "Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing?" Remember now that an idol is profitable for nothing—any idol any place and any time! Then in verses 13 through 20 we have an interesting and incredible scene. The writer discusses a man who goes to the forest and cuts down a tree. With one part of it he kindles a fire to warm himself. With another part of the tree he kindles a fire to bake his food. We have all seen or experienced these uses of wood. But the use of the third part of the tree is difficult for us to understand. With that he

makes a god, a graven image, which he worships and calls on for deliverance. Remember that the idol is made of the same tree which was used for heating and cooking. It is hard for normal people to see any sense in that, isn't it? But wait now. Before you reject and criticize such a stupid practice, consider a more recent one.



Associated Press

Photograph shows alleged tears on statue's chin

This picture appeared in many of the nation's newspapers in June of this year, along with an article by the Associated Press from Chicago, headed, "Catholics Investigate Crying Statue." We quote from the article:

"A statue of the Virgin Mary that worshipers claim sheds tears has prompted an investigation by the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, as hundreds of the devout and the curious flock to the church.

"The investigation to determine whether there is a natural cause for the reported phenomenon at St. John of God Catholic Church began Friday at the request of Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, the archdiocese announced.

"The Rev. Ron Lewinski, head of the arch-diocesan office of divine worship said the Catholic Church is 'extremely cautious' in trying to determine the cause of such events and that it is 'extremely rare' for them to be declared miracles.

"The church isn't saying it's impossible. But before you present anything or anyone as an object of devotion, you better make sure it's worthy,' he said. Only the Vatican has the power to pronounce an event a miracle, he said.

"The statute was delivered to the church May 12 after having been carved in Italy. It depicts the Virgin Mary adorned with three carved roses.

"Thousands of people visited the church to see the figure, and at least one person said he saw it weep.

"The tear came down her cheek from her right eye,' said Richard Sopys of Chicago. 'You can't explain it, but it was there.'

" 'She's crying because she wants peace, and the world is full of sinners,' said Catherine Metlow. 'I believe in her if she cries or not.' "

That good lady really has the power of perception. Not only can she see the statue cry, but she can tell what it is thinking about! And in answer to Lewinski we ask: How can "anything or anyone" ever be a worthy object of our devotion?

The Catholic Church allows things like this to be reported through the years. One television network report observed that the contributions to that congregation had increased considerably following the report. But what we don't understand is how thousands of sensible people can believe that a piece of wood can cry! Could the same wood cry if it has been for fire wood or stove wood? Then why would it have the power to cry by being carved into a statute? It would have to be because God has given it life and approval, but we thought He had said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." How could He approve that which He has forbidden?

We do not believe the report—not a word of it!

Catholicism is a system of idolatry. Go around any of their buildings—schools, hospitals, church buildings—and you will see statues everywhere. You even see them in their automobiles. Does any automobile insurance company believe that they have the power to prevent accidents?

They sometimes argue that they do not worship the statues. But do they believe that they have any power or spiritual or miraculous significance? If they do not so believe, then why have them? What good are they? And if they do worship or reverence them in any way and to any degree, they are guilty of idolatry.

When you see thousands of people march by that cold, dead, dumb statue and believe that they see it crying, you can understand why it is so difficult to teach them that it is wrong to sprinkle water on a baby, count beads, call men by such titles as "Father," believe in the infallibility of the pope, and many like things. They believe what they have been taught to believe and want to believe, "if she cries or not."

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (I John 5:21). Why? "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

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ATTITUDE AND CONTINUAL CLEANSING

QUESTION: Does 1 John 1:7 teach continual cleansing of sins of ignorance for the Christian whose attitude of heart is right? I recently heard a preacher offer 2 Tim. 1:18 as proof of such forgiveness as saying that this verse shows that we, like Onesiphorus, will stand in judgment guilty of sins of which we are not aware and for which we will need the mercy of the Lord "in that day"—EP

ANSWER: 1 John 1:7 reads as follows:

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

2 Tim. 1:18 should be read in the light of its context:

"The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well" (2 Tim. 1:16-18).

From my study of the Bible, I have found only two laws of pardon—one for the alien and one for the saint. Both involve more than the right attitude of heart. For the alien the law is hear, believe, repent, and be baptized (Rom. 10:17; Mk. 16; 15,16; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:27; 2:38). For the saint the law is repent, confess, and pray (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9).

I stand amazed at the somewhat desperate efforts of some to find a third law of pardon—one for the saint who sins ignorantly. Obviously, one cannot repent of some sin of which he is not aware, i.e., he has no knowledge that such is sin. He may have knowledge that certain things are sin and be conscious of guilt in such matters without recalling the particular time, place, circumstances—even the number of times the sin was committed—still, the knowledge he has enables him to repent. However, the one who sins not knowing that what he does is sin cannot repent nor confess his sin as per the requirement of 1 Jno. 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to

cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It should be observed that this verse is in the context of 1 Jno. 1:7 and accordingly is part of "walking in the Tight." This requires more than "the right attitude of heart."

Furthermore, there is a contradiction in the position set forth in the question submitted by the querist. If, in this life, one is continually cleansed of sins of ignorance on the basis of the right attitude of heart, he will not need mercy in the day of judgment for another cleaning of the same sins. One making this argument should make up his mind as to whether he is cleansed by mercy in this life or in the day of judgment—one does not prove the other.

Besides all this, the "mercy" of 2 Tim. 1:18 has no reference to forgiveness of sins "in that day." If so, the Catholic doctrine of praying for the dead is established. Yet, gospel preachers have refuted this doctrine of Catholicism through the years by pointing out that there is no proof that Onesiphorus was dead at the time Paul wrote. Paul's mention of the household of Onesiphorus and not Onesiphorus personally was done possibly because Onesiphorus was away from home and Paul knew it, or possibly Onesiphorus was dead, or possibly because of other reasons one might give, none of which can be established necessarily. Furthermore, the Scriptures teach that forgiveness of sins must take place in this life. The reward is based on "deeds done in the body" (2 Cor. 5:10). There was no hope for the rich man or his brothers beyond this life (Lk. 16:19-31). However, if "mercy" refers to the forgiveness of sins "in that day," then praying for the dead is very much in order (according to this example) because all will have died before standing in judgment (Heb. 9:27).

To what does the word "mercy" refer? Concerning this phrase in question, Adam Clark says, "It is probably only a Hebraism for, God grant that he may here be so saved by Divine grace, that in the great day he may receive the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

I am persuaded that the word "mercy" refers to the eternal reward, the basis of which is the mercy of the Lord and not our own merit. It is not uncommon for both "grace" and "mercy" to be used in such a way as to include particulars not mentioned specifically. This makes "mercy" a metonymical expression whereby the basis of the reward is put for the reward itself. Even if "mercy" refers to forgiveness of sins "in that day," it is used by metonymy—"mercy," the basis of forgiveness, being put for the forgiveness itself. There is Scripture for the former, none for the latter.

Please Renew Promptly

TRENDS IN TRANSLATIONS

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For some time I have considered writing an article on the subject of modern translations, or versions, of the Bible. I have procrastinated for a couple of reasons. First, I hoped that the activity in this field was a fad which may excite the world, but not affect the church adversely. Second, when I saw that the church was being influenced by these literary efforts, I hoped that someone better qualified than I would give attention to this blight. While some may be doing so, I think more needs to be said, so I will address the subject in a general way.

Trends

Anyone, with a reasonable amount of experience, knowledge, and perception, can recognize a trend, whether that trend be in politics, the environment, or religion. We have seen trends in discipline, marriage, dress codes, and in many other areas. In religion we have seen the trend away from spiritual emphasis, toward man's social and material well-being. Not much else was to be expected from religions which were conceived in the minds of uninspired men, and which have been perpetuated by the doctrines and commandments of men (Mt. 15:8-14). But, some trends have adversely affected the Lord's people, from Old Testament times until now.

There have always been those who did not think it proper to criticize a doctrine or a practice while it was in the trend stage, i.e., before it was full-grown, or before it bore fruit. Yet, others recognized the dangerous trends which began to surface in many areas, and properly sounded the trumpet of warning (Jer. 6:17), in spite of such labels as "antis" and "watchdogs of orthodoxy." The Bible teaches that everything brings forth after its own kind (Gen. 1:11ff; Jas. 3:11, 12), and Jesus said, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Mt. 7:20). I don't have to wait until a coconut hits me on the head before telling myself not to stand under a coconut tree during a wind storm!

The Translations

Again, I will leave the detailed examination of these pseudo translations, or versions, to others. But, any man, "whose eyes are opened" (Num. 24:3), can see problems and dangers resulting from the emphasis some have placed on these modern versions.

There may be at least two reasons for the popularity of new versions, and I strongly suspicion that there may be a third reason on the part of those who use such

versions. First, any publisher is going to sell as many of his Bibles as he can. Those who manufacture shirts and ties are not going to be satisfied if you are satisfied with your present shirt and tie. They will change the style of the shirt collar, or the tie, so you will be persuaded to buy new ones, and also a tie pin to match. The publisher of Bibles is likewise going to try to sell you a new Bible. If your old King James or American Standard translation is still in good condition (and some Bibles don't suffer from much wear), you are not a very good prospect for a new Bible. So, the publisher has to convince you that a new "version" is just the thing you need.

Second, there may be some subversive efforts on the part of atheists, agnostics, evolutionists, or other enemies of the Bible to alter the true text of the Bible. And, I know that some religious groups have produced versions which are more favorable to their own peculiar doctrines and practices.

While the aforementioned reasons may account for the production of said versions, I cannot account for the use of such versions in the church, unless a third reason for the popularity of such versions is considered, namely, the desire to impress others, or "be in style." I would like to think that many are sincerely seeking a more understandable text, as far as the teaching of the Bible is concerned, but I cannot reconcile this position with the facts.

The Results

Most preachers and teachers in the church will agree that thousands have learned, taught, and preached the truth from the King James and American Standard texts of the Bible. I'm not saying that these are the only faithful translations of the Bible, but their popularity in the past is unquestioned. And, while some may prefer the latter over the former, my observation is that the King James Version is going to be around for many years to come. I keep a copy of the American Standard and Revised Standard Versions on my desk for easy reference, and sometimes refer to them in my preaching. But, I learned to quote from the King James, and any attempt to change at this stage of the game would only confuse me and the audience as well. Which fact brings up another matter.

What is the result (fruits), of the emphasis given to these modern versions? Can preachers preach better? Do people understand better? I have seen young preachers attempt to read or quote from several of these new versions, and some cannot get one verse read or quoted correctly. The result is a mixture of several different versions, and both they and the audience appear to be confused. "How is it then brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor. 14:26, KJV). Let me suggest also that when a preacher thinks it necessary to refer to different versions, even those about which there is no controversy, let those in the audience, both members and non-members know what you are doing. Otherwise, after the audience has recovered from its initial surprise, you may get one yourself!

Brethren, we have some able and knowledgeable young preachers in the Lord's church today—let us not neutralize that condition by an Ashdodian attempt to "intrude into unseen things and new gimmicks, vainly infatuated by worldly knowledge and efforts to be profound" (Mixture of KJV, PJC, on Col. 2:18).

BREAD OF LIFE

"I am the bread of life. . . so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Jno. 6:35, 57.

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RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

In the 5/19/84 Huntsville Times, there was a column by Michael J. McManus entitled "Are Religion Leaders Intolerant Of Other Faiths?". The Article deals with the complaint that religious people are at each other's throat all over the world. The religious conflicts in the Middle East, Ireland, and the Iraq-Iran War are listed as examples of religious conflict behind political and military clashes. Because of this, many have concluded that religion, rather than being "Bread of Life" is "Bread of Destruction".

Robert Muller, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, when asked "Why has religion had such negative impact?", said "Each religion is so convinced that it has the ultimate truth, that they are willing to die for that truth."

Muller is interested in affecting some kind of union or tolerance between the religions of the world and has drafted a 10 point "Declaration Of The Oneness For The Human Family" that will be the centerpiece for dialogue by leaders of the world's six great religions; Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism, at a "Spiritual Summit" in New York and at the United Nations this Fall, beginning on Oct. 7. It is stated that these religion leaders at this Spiritual Summit will see if they can agree with the 10 principles set forth in Muller's Declaration.

Before looking at these ten principles which are thought to present a basis for peaceful coexistence of religions, let us look into the real cause for conflict.

Basis For Religious Conflict

Muller suggested the cause is that "each religion is convinced that it has the ultimate truth and they are willing to die for it". The dying here is not just giving up one's life for his faith, but causing others to die who oppose or refuse to accept this faith. This has always been a characteristic of human religions.

The first murder was the result of a religious conflict.

Cain substituted his own chosen sacrifice instead of the God-ordained one offered by his brother, Abel. When Cain's human way was rejected and he saw his brother accepted, he rose up against his brother and slew him (Gen. 4). Human wisdom (knowledge) "puffeth up" (1 Cor. 8:1) and leads to pride, envy, and strife. Human religions have never placed great value on life. Many require human sacrifices or the mutilation of the body.

True religion comes only from God. His truth has ever demanded respect for life. The command of Gen. 9:6 "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man", was to emphasize the value and worth of man. Other creations of God could be killed and consumed by man (Gen. 9:3), but not so with him who was made in the image of God. Shedding man's blood, in Hebrew, is "murder", and God does decree the death penalty to be administered by man for the murderer. Executing the murderer is killing, but not murder. God is not promoting His Cause in this, but simply assures those who would rise up against a brother and murder, in violation of God's will do so at the price of their own life.

The command in the Decalogue, "Thou shalt not kill" is literally "Thou shalt do no murder". Such has always been forbidden under the penalty of death. Under the New Covenant, the execution of the murderer has been put in the hand of civil powers (Rom. 13:4; Acts 25:11). Violence and conflict have never been the result of men following God's Will. Conflict arises when men forsake God and promote their own way, or godless men rise up against the righteous because they refuse "to run with them to the same excess of riot".

In the New Covenant, Jesus even forbids hate and malice in the heart that leads to murder (1 Jno. 3:15). When one who claims to be a Christian harbors and purposes in his heart evil, even violence, for another, he has already abandoned the cause of truth and right and may become an instigator and promoter of conflict. It is not the cause of truth that promotes the violence, but the abandonment of it, or the jealousy of truth haters.

The religious conflicts, past and present, that people point to as evidence of religion being the cause of strife, only embrace false or apostate religion and not that which is of God. The "Inquisition" of Catholic history was the result of apostasy within that system, not the practice of Christianity.

The only conflict that comes as a result of Christianity is the suffering and persecution of Christians, with no retaliation, at the hands of Christ rejectors. This is the kind of violence Jesus anticipated as the result of His coming, and the revelation of truth. He said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). He did not use the carnal sword to establish his cause for "when he suffered, he threatened not. . ." (1 Pet. 2:23). "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53:7). When Peter, a chosen apostle, sought to defend his Lord with the carnal sword, Jesus rebuked him and said, "Put up again thy sword into his

place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52).

The apostle Paul said of promoting Christianity "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5). Jesus forewarned his apostles, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord, If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (John 15:18-21).

The conflict that arises from the preaching of "truth" (Christianity) is mental, emotional, and domestic: carnal opposition from Christ rejectors and haters of truth. This, however, is lessened every time a mind is captured and Drought to the obedience of Christ.

It is not Christianity, the only God-revealed religion today, that promotes carnal resistance and retaliation; that promotes it's cause by violence to others: that leads protest marches with rock and bottle throwing and police clashes: that preaches civil disobedience: that harms people and property when they think wrong is being done.

The Only Remedy

Religious conflict exists only through human religions and apostate systems. There is no way to eliminate this through human Councils, made up of human beings filled with pride and jealousy. The only solution is complete abandonment of human systems and submission to the divine. Knowing this, God planned and divinely revealed Christianity, the only system capable of bringing about "peace on earth and good will among men". Realization of this will never be universal, but will characterize those who truly allow Christ to reign within their hearts; who become citizens of His spiritual Kingdom.

(An article to follow will look at Muller's 10 principles which he thinks presents a basis for coexistence and peace for people with different religions).

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A REPORT WE WOULD RATHER NOT HAVE TO MAKE

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It is always a sad thing to report on one who at one time has stood for truth and right but has now departed from teaching that truth; especially a fellow gospel preacher. However, be that as it may, we deem it necessary because of Romans 16:17, and because of conscience, to warn brethren about brother Darwin Chandler.

In October 1983, brother Darwin Chandler was informed by the elders of the House Street congregation in Alvin, Texas that his services as the local preacher would no longer be required. This was soon after the elders had asked Wayne Partain to come and preach on the "grace-fellowship doctrine" that is being taught by Carl Ketcherside, Arnold Hardin, R. L. Kilpatrick and others. Brother Chandler, according to the elders at House Street, had been preaching some of this "grace-fellowship doctrine" making a distinction in "gospel" and "doctrine" which the Bible does not make. It is also interesting to note that after brother Chandler was "fired" (his terminology) he told another gospel preacher that he called no less than Arnold Hardin to see if brother Hardin could help him find some support.

Brother Chandler is now preaching for the Jackson Street congregation, a liberal congregation, in Alvin. On March 25, 1984, brother Chandler preached a lesson entitled "How Did I Get Here?" in which he explains, in his own words, how he arrived where he now is.

In this article, we want to allow Darwin, in his own words, not only to tell you how he got where he now is, but also to tell you, in his own words, what he now believes. And, according to his own statements, he is where he is because, in our understanding of the Bible, he now teaches error on the Holy Spirit, and the worship and work of the church. In fact, we believe his statements are so far from the truth that only a brief explanation will be necessary on our part. We believe you will recognize immediately just how far from truth he had gone, and therefore we are simply going to quote from his speech and allow him to explain why he is where he is.

Led By The Holy Spirit

Brother Chandler tells of his seeking wisdom that he might know what the Lord would have him know, and as you will observe, no sectarian preacher could have given better testimony. Brother Chandler said, "I had believed for a considerable time, and preached, what the Bible says about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but I had never practiced it. I had never brought it out to any practical application in my life. So, for the first time on that trip home (from Odessa, TX JTS) in the fall of 1982

I said, 'Father, I believe you have given the Holy Spirit to dwell in your people for the sake of helping them to understand the scriptures, through whom you give them this wisdom if they ask, and I don't know how you do it, I don't care. All I want is this wisdom. Will you help me through the Holy Spirit? And brethren, for the first time in my life, in the fall of 1982, some things began to fit together.'

Nature Of The Church

"I learned in my studies of the nature of the church that the church is nothing more or less than the sum total of all those who have been immersed into Christ. That's all it is. That has staggering import as it relates to what we call the work of the church. Because, you see, if the church is simply the sum total of those who have been immersed into Christ, that means that the work of the church is anything that God gave as a special obligation to his people."

"... Well that immediately raised the question about the false distinction we have made for years between collective work and individual work; or individual work and local work. We would say, 'well God has given certain things to individual Christians to do, and He's given certain things to the local collective body to do, and they don't always match.' Now then, you know what I'm going to say every time I hear that? My good friend and brother will you just open the Bible and show me where that distinction is made at least just one time. (How about I Tim. 5:16 and Matt. 18:15-17, H.O.W.) You know where that came from? I didn't think you did. I don't either, even though I preached it for years. Somebody made it up. Somebody just plucked it out of the air. They said, oh, what the individual can do is not the same things as what the church can do. There's a difference between the work of the individual Christian and the work of the collective body. And I guess nobody ever said, 'prove it from the scriptures. Show that God makes that kind of distinction.' So what we did was take an opinion about that and divide the brotherhood over it. The Bible doesn't make any such distinction as that. Absolutely not. What God gave every Christian to do can be done by every Christian. Doesn't that make sense? How incredibly sensible that is. What God gave every Christian to do can be done by every Christian. And so, that makes orphan homes supported by the church legitimate because they can be supported by individual Christians. No distinction. Somebody made up the distinction and divided brethren over it. But it is not a distinction of the Bible.

"Also, there is the legitimacy of cooperative efforts. And that makes fellowship meals together legitimate. If we can meet, several families in our homes and several families on church property, or several families anywhere to eat together, we can do it as a whole body of people. They did it in Acts the second chapter, didn't they? I'll tell you something else, if we want to do it as a part of a worship service we can do it. Now I don't know how you feel about that, but you need to read I Cor. 11 and realize that what they were doing was having a worship service and either in close proximity to it or as a

part of it, they were eating a fellowship meal, and what Paul was doing was saying you've made such a mess of this thing that when it comes time in this process that you're gathered together as a church, read that, 'When ye are come together in the church' he says there are some problems here. Part of it was the way they were corrupting the fellowship meal. They had come together in the church to do that. Ask me now, ask me, 'Chandler, why couldn't you see that all those years?' Because I was blinded by legalism, that's why. I'd been told something different all my life. All I could see was what I'd been told. Somebody put those blinders on me, and I had no peripheral vision. The simple fact is, God did not tell us what to do with the money we collected in the church treasury. You don't think that's right? Well, consider the fact that in the first place in the New Testament you cannot read of a church treasury as such. Doesn't mean it's wrong. But try to read that if you like. Go on a hunting trip through the New Testament. It's scriptural, good, logical. The fact is, the only collection we can ever read about was taken up essentially by Paul and his cohorts to relieve the needy saints. Never took a collection for anything else that you can read about. What that means to me is, God doesn't much care about how we get the money. He just wanted us to get enough to do His Will. Get it how you want to, get it where you want to, and accomplish His will with it. And along with the fact that God did not tell us what to do with the money we collect, we can use it as our spiritual leaders direct. That's one reason why we have elders. To give us the wisdom, to give us some guidance in these areas where God has not specified.

"Not only that, but God did not restrict the method of doing our work, so we have an option. If we want to do it all by ourselves, we can do that. If we want to cooperate with another church, we can do that because God hasn't said how. He said here is what I want you to do. He didn't say how. He left it up to us under the leadership of spiritual men.

"I don't know how much you have thought about it brethren, but the basic difference between us and the non-cooperative brethren is that we disagree on methods of doing God's will, and they have made their method a matter of faith, and refused us as apostates because we've forsaken what they call the pattern, even though God says not one solitary syllable regarding the how of doing his will. They've found a pattern somewhere, yes. I preached the pattern. Before God I couldn't tell you what it is now. I used to know—used to think I did. They've found a pattern somewhere. Couldn't read it. It's all based on human devices, human explanations; arguments based on inferences etc. and they took those opinions and made them matters of faith and divided the body of Christ."

Well there you have it, brethren. Read it and weep—weep for one who has turned from the truth and who now ridicules those truths he once preached, and who like those of yesteryear have used these time worn arguments to try to "prop up" the missionary society, etc. May we all pray that brother Chandler sees the error of his way and returns before it is too late.

Building Better Families

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PARENTAL STUPIDITY

In more recent articles on parental responsibilities we have dealt with some implications of the Biblical statement. "Nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." In our last we pointed out that parental disagreement on proper disciplinary procedure may result in the ultimate breakdown of discipline and may even destroy a marriage. We also dealt with the effects produced by the five "IV of parental blindness—inconsistency, incompatibility, injustice, indulgence and indifference.

Several years ago I wrote Solving Family Problems, a booklet now out of print, in which I delineated seventeen points of "parental stupidity wherein reason is displaced by emotions, ignorance, or dullness of discernment." Practically all of these statements are positive. I bid my readers, particularly parents whose children are yet at home, to reflect upon these observations. In fact, if your children are yet with you, it would be well to copy or clip this out and place it where you can read it daily. If you are a grandparent, why not send these observations to your son and/or daughter?

Ponderable Points for Parents

1. True love always works for the child's ultimate welfare, not its temporary pleasure.
2. An act of a child which mars his character is incomparable to one which disturbs a parent's convenience or personal pleasure. Consider a child's lying, stealing, etc., along with parents' desire to golf, fish, party or even sleep.
3. A failure to punish a child after warning is (at least could be) a warning to parents that they will ultimately be punished by that same child.
4. Failure to teach a child self-reliance and initiative is to exchange strength for weakness, sturdiness for instability, independence for insecurity, bravery for cowardice and faith for doubt. It is to confuse rights with responsibilities and make hippies out of potential heroes.
5. Overdoing a child's accomplishments in his presence and to others is as destructive as failure to take note of his achievements at proper time and occasion. One "is as bad as the other if not worse!"
6. Failure to recognize the various stages of a child's

physical and social development and adjust "nurture" accordingly is to create a freak for the child's would-be buddies to ridicule, a misfit for family friends to pity and to produce a most embarrassing situation to explain!

7. Every "no-no" and every "yes-yes" should be prompted by love and each must find its explanation to the child by a parent who makes the child understand that he/she as a parent is amenable to God for his treatment of his child as is the child amenable to God for its treatment of the parent.
8. A child mature enough to ask an intelligent question is mature enough rightly to expect and receive an intelligent answer.
9. The child who is taught to pray that his parents may "nurture" him in the chastening and admonition of the Lord is learning the meaning of wisdom. "A wise son maketh a glad father."
10. Parental companionship with a child is the surest guarantee of child companionship with parents as the shadows lengthen.
11. The child who does not learn right from wrong from his parents will probably learn wrong through his associates.
12. Learning by earning is good for the head, heart and pocket-book. By failure to learn to earn one learns to be a dead-beat or a thief or both.
13. The child not allowed to entertain his friends at home will be entertained by them away from home and to his parents' great sorrow.
14. He who does not learn that he is to requite his parents misses a fundamental law of God. See 1 Tim. 5:4.
15. Parental disagreements in a child's presence creates confusion and distrust in the child and sets the stage for the child to use one parent against the other.
16. The child who learns truthfulness and honesty, dependability in responsibility, modesty and courtesy is building that "good name" which "is rather to be chosen than great riches" and the "loving favor" which is more valuable "than silver and gold" (Prov. 22:1).
17. Four steps guarantee absolute failure for parents: the wrong example, a lack of correction, a breakdown in communication, and no teaching of God's word.

NOTE: Parents stupid enough to overlook these perils make "F" on their report card and justly deserve the grade they receive.

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J. Wiley Adams
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THE CHANGING SCENE

I am writing this in late August. Even now there is a hint of fall in the air. Fall is our favorite time of year. There is something grand about fall. Is it because there is such beautiful maturity all around us in nature? The countryside is filled with evidence that summer is past, crops are being harvested. Soon the pumpkins, shocks of corn, stacks of hay and changing color in the leaves will appear and we will have a lavishly colorful interlude before winter is upon us.

Life is kind of like that, you know. There is first the energetic forces of spring, the prime of summer, the harvest of fall, and the inevitable winter. This is a new kind of time for us. For the first time in thirty-two years we will not be preparing a child for public school or college. Now that will take quite some adjustment on our part. Although it was always a lot of hurry-scurry and always expensive to try to get the "bargains" on clothes and supplies, it nevertheless became a part of us and our life-style. Now it must change and we must fill it in with other things, events, and activities.

Nostalgia is a hard thing to handle some times. Yet in reminiscing we have a tendency to think mostly of the good things and of the good times. Surely there has been the other kind but who wants to think about that? There are so many things to be thankful for that to dwell on the other side of the matter would seem most ungrateful.

My father-in-law once said that the happiest times are when our children are around our feet. I believe he was correct. Then is when we have our greatest opportunity to mold them and shape them into vessels of honor fit and meet for the Master's use. So many parents are letting this wonderful time pass them by. When both parents work and the children are farmed out to sitters or day care centers, there is a strain on everything. Great and wonderful times and phases take place during these early years. They will soon pass us by and be gone forever.

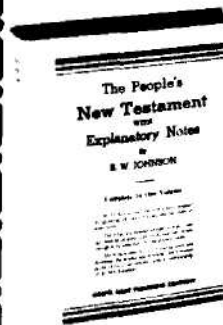
Looking back it is evident that our best times were not when we had the most money and "things". The best times were an assortment of little things. Trips to the Tampa airport on Saturday afternoon, cashing in gas coupons for free rides at the Super-test park, a ride on the causeway to Clearwater, trips to Virginia from wherever we happened to be living, fishing on the pier at Morehead City, cozy winter nights in West Virginia

while nature clothed the beautiful hills with a blanket of snow, picking and singing together, the new pup Jet, the black and white kitten we named Sputnik, going to gospel meetings here and there, trips back to Virginia at Thanksgiving to be with grandparents and parents, the Pennsylvania fairs and horse shows, Bryan's famous ice cream cones, teaching the kids how to drive (we also prayed a lot at such times), wonderful family gatherings at Christmas, our trip to Niagara Falls—all these and so many more rush into our thoughts now. Many of you who will read this will certainly relate and can substitute your own situation into the context. Surely there are a good many who know full well what this time of life is and what it brings about in our thinking.

Now is a time of transition for us and many others. The empty house will be full only on rare occasions and at special times. It is a time to re-evaluate, take stock and get ready for a new run in a different way. **We have not been this way before** as brother Homer Hailey emphasized in talking about the periods of our lives. In regarding it in this way we find the prospects both exciting and exhilarating.

My advice to those who are newly married and those who are starting their families is this. Make the most of your children while you can. All too soon that period of your life will pass and you will be back, the two of you, in an empty house. Yet, it need not be quite so empty if you have prepared a reservoir of beautiful memories to fill it. In that span of time hopefully you will have formed such a close relationship as man and wife that you can turn to each other. Then you can face the future hand in hand as one. This is God's arrangement. This is the changing scene!

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1. A mother died in Kentucky leaving five children. The word spread and within three days they had enough requests to adopt eighty-seven children.

2. A feature article in the Nashville Tennessean February 21, 1954 said there were ten couples registered for each child that was available for adoption in this country.

3. The Courier-Journal in Louisville, Kentucky on March 12, 1956 said one million families are asking for babies with only ninety thousand available.

4. George DeHoff agreed some years ago to put every child in the Tennessee Orphan Home in a good Christian family within thirty days. The Home refused to give him the permission. Many people today would still make the same proposition to Tennessee Orphan Home.

5. The Courier-Journal in Louisville, Kentucky announced April 8, 1956 that an eleven year old boy had run away from home. The report said 200 calls came in wanting to help with MANY requests to adopt the boy.

6. In a Texas town recently a baby was abandoned and the report said the switchboard was swamped with requests to adopt the baby.

7. In Longview, Texas February, 1965 two boys were abandoned and the paper said 120 calls came in in eight hours with other calls continuing to come in the following morning from people wanting to help these boys.

8. On January 10, 1963 a baby was abandoned on the door steps of a church in Birmingham, Alabama. They received more than 100 offers to adopt the baby.

9. A few years ago a twelve year old boy was lodged in jail in Georgia and the report said they had calls from all over the nation with many offering to adopt the boy.

10. The Orlando Sentinel reported on March 19, 1966 that a teen-age girl had been rejected by her family and that SIXTY families wanted to adopt her "sight unseen."

11. The Arkansas Gazette reported on November 24, 1962 that officials at St. Edwards Hospital received more than 100 inquiries to adopt an abandoned baby.

12. Less than two years ago Brother Connie Adams came to Huntsville, Alabama to conduct a meeting at Chapman Acres where I was preaching. He announced one night that he knew of two children who were available for adoption. Two families responded that night. But within the hour word came that they were already adopted.

As the judge said, out in Texas, "We need an orphan home like we need a hole in the head." And as I would say to our liberal brethren, "You need a scripture for what you are doing, if you would go to heaven when you die."

**"IT TURNETH ITSELF AS CLAY
OF A SEAL"—JOB. 38:14**

**Luther W. Martin
707 Salem Ave.
Rolla, MO 65401**

"Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, And caused the dawn to know its place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, And the wicked be shaken out of it? It is changed like clay under the seal; And they stand forth like a garment." (Job 38:12-14, New American Standard Version.)

"It turneth itself as clay of a seal." (Robert Young's Translation.)

"It is turned as clay to the seale." (King James Version, 1611 Edition.)

"It is turned as clay to the seal." (John Campbell's Edition, 1857.)

The use of moist clay and a seal or signet ring, was a basic means of "signing" or authenticating as genuine the message contained on a clay tablet in ancient times. The wet clay was inscribed with the message, and then the ruler or law-making official, would impress his ring into the wet clay; the clay tablet would then be turned or rotated, so that the signet ring's design made a pattern of concentric circles, which was specifically related to the shape of the stone of the signet ring.

Thus, Job was comparing the stationary position of the sun, to that of the signet ring; while the earth turns under the sun, like the clay tablet was rotated under the seal. However, for many, many centuries after the time of Job, the ancient peoples thought of the sun as rotating about the earth. They thought of the earth as the center of the universe . . . the 'geocentric' theory.

Most of our modern English versions fail to note the Hebrew word that really carries the thought of "changed by turning". Job thought of each day-break, as the beginning position of the turning of the clay under the seal. By rotating the clay to the point of beginning, you were repeating the daily change of the earth, through turning _____ in relation to the sun.

I urge students of the Scripture to go over the 38th Chapter of Job "with a fine toothed comb", and see just how many hidden predictions and prophecies are contained in that one Chapter, that make reference to the many scientific discoveries concerning the earth and the universe, that man has stumbled across in later centuries.

Only the Inspiration of Heaven could have dictated the contents of that Chapter, as well as the rest of Holy Scripture.

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TRUMAN SMITH, 115 West "F" Street, La Porte, TX 77571—Pat and I have now moved to La Porte, Texas after serving five years with the church in Henderson, Texas. All readers of this paper, please make note of our new address above. We are optimistic about our work with the Broadway church. Clarence Johnson laboured with this church for 9 years, but has recently moved to work with the church of Exton, Pennsylvania. Every indication is that the work will go forward. La Porte is located a few miles east of Houston and just south of Bay-town. Our building is at 704 South Broadway. We meet on Sunday for Bible study at 10 A.M., worship at 10:50 A.M. and evening worship at 6:30 P.M. Wednesday evening classes are at 7:30. When in the area, please stop in and visit with us.

WARNING

L. A. STAUFFER, 1716 Dover Trace Dr., Fenton, MO 63026—Brethren should be warned against extending benevolent help to David Abbott (his wife and brother-in-law), an unworthy brother who is contacting churches in the midwest (St. Louis and Kansas City). Brethren may contact me or Don Moore for full information. My phone numbers are (314) 225-5898 or 821-4910 and brother Moore's are (314) 849-1081 or 842-1612. He seems to be contacting conservative churches.

JERREL STURDY, 512 N. 10th Street, Ponca City, Oklahoma 74601—I am in need of the following books, should any reader have them and be willing to sell them: Autobiography of Daniel Sommer by William Wallace; Humble-Garrett Debate on the located preacher and Bible colleges; Introduction To the Scriptures by Thomas H. Home. This five volume set was reprinted by Baker Book House in 1970. My phone number is (405) 765-8593.

GENE TAYLOR, 3575 Picket Court, Tallahassee, FL 32301—The first Sunday in July I began working with the Westside church in Tallahassee. Since 1977 I have been working in southwestern Indiana, first in Evansville and for the last three and a half years in Mt. Vernon. The Southwind church in Mt. Vernon engaged in studies with the institutional church in Mt. Vernon which resulted in three families leaving that group and placing membership with Southwind. Included in that number is Jeff Adkins who had been their preacher. The Southwind church, seeing his desire to renounce error and preach truth, now supports him in the work of an evangelist. They are to be commended for giving this young preacher the opportunity to grow

and mature. He is a young man of conviction and ability.

I look forward to a profitable and pleasant association with the brethren at Westside. Our building is located at 2150 Belle Vue Way in Tallahassee. Service times on Sunday are 9:30 A.M.; 10:30 A.M. and 6 P.M. Wednesday nights at 7:30. When visiting in northwest Florida, or attending Florida State University, or if you have a son or daughter going there, please contact us. We will provide information and transportation to service for those needing it. Our phone number is (904) 576-4010.

FERRELL JENKINS, 9211 Hollyridge PL, Temple Terrace, FL 33617—After fifteen years of teaching Bible at Florida College, I have resigned to begin full-time preaching with the Carrollwood church of Christ, 13345 Casey Road, Tampa. I am already in my third year of work at Carrollwood. The church has an attendance of about 100, a good teaching program, and two fine elders. Opportunities abound due to the tremendous influx of young families into the Tampa work area. The brethren here agreed for me to continue with some meetings each year and to conduct my tours. For 1985 I have planned a Bible Lands tour to include the seven churches of Revelation, an area that I personally visited this year, and a tour of Scandinavia. About fifteen of my publications are available from Religious Supply Center. I have discontinued personal distribution of them. Taped sermons are available from The Spoken Word, P.O. Box 127, Greenville, IN 47124. Address me at my residence.

PREACHERS NEEDED

LAKE BUTLER, FLORIDA—The Danville church, located in Union County near Lake Butler, about 25 miles north of Gainesville, Florida needs a preacher to work with us. We have about 30 in attendance and our building is paid for. The church has been in existence for about five years. We would prefer someone with experience and able to do per-sonal work. He would need some outside support since we can supply about \$1000 per month. Contact us at Rt. 2, Box 796, Lake Butler, FL 32054 or call one of the following: Charles Blackwelder (904) 496-3859; Leonard Bivins (904) 496-2198; Roger Blackwelder (904) 496-3515.

GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN—Since Jim Smelser has moved to work with the church in Glen Elyn, Illinois, the church in Green Bay needs a full-time preacher. The congregation is small, with about 30 members, and can provide partial support. The church is sound and willing to work. Those interested may write the church at 1621 Hillcrest Dr., Green Bay, Wisconsin 54304, or call Keith Bucklew at (414) 497-4651.

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—The Bell Road church located in south Nashville is looking for an evangelist to work with us. We have approximately 80 members and are self supporting. We desire a mature family man who is well grounded in the truth. Please send resume to 1608 Bell Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37212. Cal (615) 833-4928.

PULPIT FURNITURE NEEDED

The church in Bridgeview, Illinois is trying to secure a used pulpit and matching communion table. Blond wood coloring is desired, possibly oak. If you have such furniture for sale or exchange, please contact Ray Madrigal at (312) 563-1819 or Lee Bolden at (312) 598-5760.

URGENT NEED

D. D. ISONG UYO, faithful preacher for many years in Lagos, Nigeria, passed away on August 30 at Norton's Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky where he had been a patient for seven weeks or more. He had cancer which destroyed his vocal cords and was sent here in the hope that he could get care not available in Nigeria. Nigerian brethren provided his plane fare to this country. He appeared to be making good progress until he suffered a stroke. Leslie Diestelkamp, Paul Earnhart and others who worked with him in Nigeria, speak highly of this brother. His death represents a great loss to the work in Nigeria. Brother Diestelkamp was here with him when he had his first surgery and many Louisville area brethren visited with him. The cost of his care here is enormous. It is likely that the hospital and Doctors will discount the bill considerably, but even with that it will come to \$50-\$60,000. Dale Proffitt, 3302 Tara Ct., LaGrange, KY 40031 (phone 502-241-4029), a member at LaGrange and a vice president of a local bank, has agreed to act in his behalf. He tells me that about \$25,000 has been received to date, mostly as a result of appeals sent out by Leslie Diestelkamp. If you would like to help or need information about the matter please contact Dale Proffitt.

* * * * *

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

"SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS."—Paul Earnhart and I were recently on the Fairview Lectures in Garden Grove, California where Floyd Thompson preached for so many years. Every time we arose to speak, the statement which heads this paragraph greeted us as we laid our Bibles on the pulpit stand. It was neatly stenciled on a piece of wood and affixed to the stand right below the microphone. It is a most appropriate sentiment for all men who preach.

FRINGE BENEFITS.—One thing not always considered in arriving at what would be adequate compensation for a preacher, is the "fringe benefits" common to the wage earner in the industrial world. But there are other fringe benefits. One of the fringes in my work is getting to spend some time with other gospel preachers with whom I work during meetings, or those in that area who come to visit and discuss the things of God. My life has been greatly enriched by being in the homes of devout Christians across this land. In August I was able to

work with Jack Nunn at Ridgeway, Virginia, Jim Price and Steve Goff in Kaysville and Salt Lake City, Utah and Ken Dart in Garden Grove, California. One of the richest fringes I have had in a long time was getting to hear Paul Earnhart preach 10 times in one week and added to that, staying at the same house where he stayed. His series on "True Spirituality" was rich indeed, and his evening series on "Seeking the Lost" was faith building and challenging.

We have our problems and disappointments, major issues and minor skirmishes, but it refreshes me to know there are a host of good brethren across this land who are simply trying to serve the Lord in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation and who want to go to heaven more than anything else. Among them are fanners, miners, teachers, bankers, factory workers, real estate agents, business owners and hourly wage earners. They share their meals, homes and hearts with those of us who preach the gospel. They work all day, rush home, eat quickly, change clothes and rush off to hear the gospel preached. They bring their neighbors, friends and relatives to hear the word of God. Their children get tired, have homework, ball games and other interests, but they are there when you arise to speak. They are refreshing Christians. What would we do without them?

* * * * *

GOD'S TAPESTRY

Every year about this time. Throughout the regions of our clime, Where'er a tree or shrub is found In quiet corners of our town In hidden nooks and countryside In forests thick and meadows wide,

God works a golden tapestry Which He displays for all to see. He works a little gold and brown Then scatters flaming orange around; A hint of russet here and there Then brilliant scarlet everywhere.

The pattern changes day by day As deep blue skies are changed to gray. And when His needlework is done He pulls the threads out one by one Till soon this glorious work of art Is swallowed up in winter's dark.

—Betty Tope

NN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	308
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