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GOSPEL Digest

VOLUME 5, JULY, 1950 NUMBER 2

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Volume 8

July, 1950

Number 2

News of the Month

GERMANY

On June 30 the U. S. government discontinued its program of help to German orphan children. The government is willing to turn surplus foods over to our brethren in Germany for distribution in the name of the church. For \$2,000 they can obtain 75,000 gallons of milk and 1,590,000 eggs. At this rate they can feed 24 school children for two cents! If you wish to help make this work possible send your check to the elders, Broadway Church of Christ, Lubbock, Texas, marked "milk and egg fund."

The brethren in Germany publish a monthly gospel paper. It has been enlarged to eight pages, with a circulation of 10,000. They have translated the tract "More Than Life" and printed 10,000 copies. A song book containing 85 select songs has also been printed in German.

The first in a series of eight tent meetings has been concluded. This meeting was in the Niederrad section of Frankfurt and was attended by over 500 people each evening. Severe Catholic opposition only served to help advertise the meeting.

FRANCE

The first gospel meeting in France in modern times came to a close on June 11. S. F. Timmerman of Belgium did the preaching in this meeting in Paris. Attendance averaged 45 at each service.

Five were baptized immediately following the meeting—the first-fruits of our present endeavor in France.

Close contact has been established by our missionaries with a group of brethren in Northern France who have come to the knowledge of the truth through their own independent studies. Two preachers of this group attended the Timmerman meeting in Paris. One of these, who speaks French, Flemish, Dutch, German, Polish and a little English, plans to go to Paris to help our brethren there.

Maurice Hall and Melvin Anderson have sold their cars to raise money for a nine-year lease on a building with an auditorium that will seat 350, besides several additional rooms. The address of this new and permanent location of the church in Paris is 11 Rue des Martyrs.

BELGIUM

One gospel meeting has been held in Belgium with good interest shown. S. F. Timmerman plans two other such meetings this summer in Liege and one in the neighboring city of Verviers.

ITALY

Howard Bybee and Carl Mitchell left by plane on July 5 to join the workers in Italy. They will work with Harold Paden and others in Milan, in the northern part of Italy. Bybee will be under the oversight of the Childress, Texas, church, while Mitchell is sponsored by the Harris and Irving St. Church in San Angelo.

The greatest news of the month from Italy is that already eleven have been converted in the progressive industrial city of Milan. These include a former active leader among the Waldensians.

Gordon Linscott has moved from Frascati to Rome. He has been preaching in Rome for several months.

HOLLAND

The Amsterdam church met in their building for the first time the first Sunday in July. The largest crowd ever assembled in Holland for a gospel service was present, 124 in all. Two were baptized at the close of the service.

MASSACHUSETTS

The church in Worcester, Mass., had a week's concerted campaign the last of June with Andy T. Ritchie, Jr., preaching, a large number doing personal work and a vacation Bible school in progress.

The little Worcester church is helping plant the cause in Springfield, Mass., Brookfield, Mass., and Manchester, N. H. They

also have weekly broadcasts over two Boston radio stations. Thomas N. Page is the capable evangelist.

MAINE

Kermit, Texas, is sending Marvin R. Martin to establish the Lord's church in Houlton, Me., beginning July 1. The state of Maine is proving to be one of the most fertile mission fields in the United States.

TENNESSEE

A new record in vacation Bible school attendance was set by the Dickson, Tenn., church last month. 1208 people were enrolled in the school.

NEW YORK

John P. Fogarty, preacher for the Flushing congregation in New York City, is making a tour of the churches to promote the evangelization of New York City, world's greatest mission field.

The first annual lectureship of churches of the metropolitan area has just been completed. A two weeks gospel meeting, accompanied by intensive personal work and a vacation Bible school has been held. Four more gospel preachers are needed to move to New York City before the end of this year.

UTAH

About 30 personal workers will concentrate their efforts on Salt Lake City August 1-15. E. R. Harper will preach each day over the radio and twice daily at the church house. Bill Davis will lead singing. A vacation Bible school will go on at the same time.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA

Marjorie Sewell and Ann Burns are on their way to Nhowe Mission, Southern Rhodesia, where they will work as medical missionaries.

JAPAN

In a meeting at Motoyama, high in the mountains, forty-three were baptized into Christ. Twelve more meetings are scheduled for the Hitachi-Taga area this summer. Joseph Cannon, Charles Doyle, Virgin Lawyer and Nagano did the preaching at Motoyama.

CUBA

A monthly gospel paper, La Revista Cristiana (The Christian Review) makes its beginning this month. The paper is published by J. R. Jiminez in Havana.

J. Edw. Nowlin in Maryville (Tenn.) Messenger, June 15, 1950.

Information Wanted

Paul, "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God" said that it is God's will "that women adorn themselves in **modest** apparel." (I Tim. 2: 9.) We know that Christian women know this; yet many of the members of Christ's church wear shorts and bathing suits in the presence of boys and men, which expose their legs from near the hips down, as well as the shoulders, backs and stomachs.

Evidently they think this is modest dress — or they would not wear it. The definition Webster gives of the word "modest" is:

- "1. Restrained by a sense of propriety; not forward or bold.
- "2. Free from anything sug-

gestive of sexual impurity; free from indecency; showing such reserve or decorum as is associated with a chaste mind."

Now, for some information:

QUESTION: If the above mentioned clothing is modest apparel, what kind of clothing is immodest?

ANSWER — -----

(Please, somebody who knows the answer to the above question, write it in the blank spaces and mail to:

Maryville Messenger
Box 101
Maryville, Tennessee

We'll print it.) —(JEN.)

PARDON MOTHER GOOSE

Girls when they went out to swim,
Once dressed like Mother Hubbard.
Now they have a bolder whim,
They dress more like her CUPBOARD!

The Heathen

One Sunday, when the collection was for foreign missions, the collection bag was taken to Mr. Dives, who shook his head and whispered, "I never give to missions." "Then take something out of the bag," whispered the deacon in reply. "The money is for the heathen."

Fleshly pleasure is a hornet's nest—more full of stings than honey.

Gled E. Wallace in Gospel Guardian, June 29, 1950.

Religious Racketeers

Our city was recently treated to a demonstration of religious fanaticism which is incredible in an enlightened community, where Bibles, churches, schools, newspapers and other mediums of sane information are supposed to promote sanity and balance in the population. An "evangelist" from somewhere breezed into the city with a bevy of trucks, a seven-pole tent, broadcasting equipment, and an army of helpers. His approach was heralded by a full-page ad in the daily paper, employing "second-coming" type, the largest in use, the kind used to announce an approaching event of the greatest importance, such as the coming of the Lord, or the collapse of the world. The lame, the halt, and the blind were urged to come and be "healed." Arrangements were made for local ambulances to convey the unfortunates to the big tent to be prayed for. If they could not come, they could send handkerchiefs to be blessed and prayed over, and returned to them charged with healing power.

Is it possible that there is enough ignorance and superstition, in any community in our land, to support and enrich such a charlatan, in such an obvious racket? There is. Our community is above the average, we think. They came from far and near, thousands of them.

Pitiful, despairing unfortunates reached for help that was

denied them. Not one miracle was performed, in spite of the bombastic claims that were made.

This phenomenon, which is being repeated in many communities of our great country, and throughout the world, justifies extended comment. What is the motive? As for the "evangelist," excluding the possibility, or the probability, that he is a mental case, the motive is **money**, and the sadistic thrill of whipping up a sordid mass hysteria. And he got the money! Thousands of dollars of it. Roman Catholics work the same game with their shrines, images and relics of the saints. Newspaper reports of Catholic miracles are getting to be a scandal in this country. None of them can be supported with credible testimony. The motive is to hold their dupes in mental and spiritual bondage and get their money. Many "healing" cults, with fantastic and conflicting doctrines play upon the credulity of the physically and mentally ill. It is a national, and even international skin-game that is worse than gambling. The gambler does have some chance to win.

The New Testament records many cases of true miracles of healing. They are positive, clear, instantaneous and final. We believe them to be true. The duplication of any one of them today would create a sensation that would overflow a city park,

and make a circus tent look smaller than a Primitive Baptist church. Testimonials from far-away would be superfluous.

These so-called modern healers appeal to the New Testament. Why? They claim the power that produced the New Testament. If they can do what they claim they can, they do not need the New Testament. If the New Testament does not contain the full and final revelation of God in religious matters, it really does not amount to much. They tell us that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever," therefore he is doing what he always did. That is one of the few quotations they can remember. It follows, then, that Jesus is still giving the same gifts to men he did in the beginning of the church, making and inspiring apostles and prophets, revealing new truth and confirming it by signs and wonders and powers. He started something he can never finish, because he is the same all the time. The argument is as absurd as the claims of the religious freaks who make it. God is the same "forever," too! He once fed the Israelites for forty years with manna from heaven. Does he still do it, because he hasn't changed? Where do these "healers" get their breakfast? Do

they go out and scoop it up from the ground each morning, and put enough in a pot to carry them over for lunch and dinner? They get theirs from the same sources normal people do, even if God and Christ haven't changed. The reason they eat at all, is mainly because the fanatics they prey on are not logicians.

When Jesus commissioned the apostles to evangelize the world with the gospel, and promised salvation to all who would accept it, he promised them that he would be with them, work with them, and confirm the word of the gospel by miracles. "And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark 16:17, 18.) This promise was fulfilled in the activities of the apostles and the early church. "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed." (Verse 20.) Modern fakers wrest these and other like scriptures to perpetrate a tragic hoax on the ignorant and unsteadfast.

What a World!

What a world! By the time you are important enough to take two hours for lunch, the doctor limits you to a glass of milk!

There are many "big bugs" who are simply "bed bugs" on Sunday mornings.

The editor of Gospel Digest presents some thoughts on one of the controversial questions of our day.

Reasons Why the Church Should Not Support Christian Schools

This writer is fully in sympathy with our Christian schools. He is a graduate of David Lipscomb College and Abilene Christian College. He has spoken many times in behalf of Christian education. He has served for seven years (since the beginning of the school) as Dean of Athens Bible School and is now serving as Vice President of that school. Let no one therefore misunderstand the purpose of this article. The issue is not whether we should operate and support schools in which the Bible may be taught. The issue is shall the church establish and support these schools from its budget?

The Church Is Not To Be Burdened with Duties that Belong to the Individual

Everybody knows that there is a certain amount of overlapping in the duties of the church and the home. Yet there is no denying that there are fundamental differences in their works. There are works that are right for the Christian to do privately, individually, or through the home that are wrong for him to do through the church. A few examples are cited.

It is right for a Christian woman to teach a man privately in the home, but wrong for her to teach him in the church. "But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more accurately." (Acts 18:26.) Priscilla was active in teaching this man in her home. But to the church at Corinth, once Priscilla's home, Paul wrote, "Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." (I Cor. 14:34-35.)

Instrumental music is perfectly in order in the home and perfectly out of order in the church. The idea that is now being put forth by some of our church-school advocates that one can do anything through the church that he can do as an individual will either

sweep the mechanical music into the church unrestricted or bar it completely from our entire lives. If not, why not?

Washing the saints' feet is a "good work" in the home, but completely out of place in the church. "Well reported of for **good works**; if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath **washed the saints' feet**, if she hath diligently followed every **good work**." (I Tim. 5:10.) The theory that anything that is right for the individual Christian to do is right for the church to do will either put the foot-washing ordinance into the church or stop us from washing feet altogether. If not, why not?

It is right for a Christian, privately, individually, or through the home to take care of his dependent relatives, but as long as he is able to do this it is wrong for the church to do it. "If any woman (A. V. Any man or woman) that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." (I Tim. 5:16.)

Here is a good work. It is a good work for the Christian. He is commanded to do it. He would be sinning if he failed to do it. "If any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." (I Tim. 5:8.) Yet the command is specific. The church is not to do this work. "**Let not the church be burdened.**" We have duties and responsibilities as individual Christians that the church does not have.

It is my responsibility as a Christian to provide for my own household. As long as I am able to do this the command is definite: The church is not to do it. "Let not the church be burdened."

On the other hand it is the duty and responsibility of the church to "relieve them that are widows indeed," to take care of those dependents who have no relatives to care for them.

Since the education of children is undeniably included in "providing for his household" it is to be taken care of by individuals and not by the church. Since school children are dependent upon their relatives the principle expressed concerning the widows in I Tim. 5:16 will apply to them. Let their parents or other relatives provide for them. Let not the church be burdened. Let the church provide for widows, orphans, and others who have nobody to provide for them.

The church should not support Christian schools because the education of children is the responsibility of the individual or the

home, and the church is not to be burdened with that responsibility.

Supporting the Schools Will Keep the Church from Doing What the Lord Has Commanded It To Do

The Lord has commanded his church to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15.) Saddle upon the church the enormous burden of educating the children of those who are able to "provide for their own" and it will not be able to carry on the work the Lord has intrusted to it.

This is the reasoning of the apostle in I Tim. 5:16. The church has the responsibility of relieving "them that are widows indeed." Those who are able to support their own widowed relatives are commanded to do so, "and let not the church be burdened, that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." The principle will certainly apply in the matter of education. If anyone has children let him provide for their education, and let not the church be burdened, that it may do the work God has commanded it to do.

It Is Not the Mission of the Church To Teach Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic

An education in the secular subjects is today almost as essential as food, clothing and shelter. It is included in the teaching to parents that "if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." Providing for their own household is the responsibility of parents as individuals. It is the responsibility of the church to carry the gospel to the whole world (Mk. 16:15, Mt. 28:19), to edify the church (Mt. 28:20, Eph. 4:11-16), and to provide for those who are not able to help themselves and who have no relatives on whom they may depend. (I Tim. 5:3-16, James 1:27, Acts 11:29-30.) Building and supporting schools of secular education, regardless of the place of the Bible in those schools, comes under neither of these classifications.

A Church Supported Educational Society Is Worse Than a Church Supported Missionary Society

If the church cannot scripturally establish, support and turn its work to institutions and organizations separate and apart from itself then it follows that the church cannot scripturally support either the missionary society or the education society (school or college.) Both are institutions separate and apart from the church, with a

human organization and subject only to their human officers — directors, administrative officials, etc.

If we contend that the missionary society cannot be supported by the church because it is usurping the work of the church — preaching the gospel — but that the schools may be supported by the church because they are not doing the work the Lord ordained for the church we admit that the work done by the schools is not included in the scriptural mission of the church. If their work is not the work of the church it is wrong to use the church's money to support them.

It is needless to defend the church supported education society while we oppose the church supported missionary society for usurping authority over the churches and building up an ecclesiastical machine. It is possible for a missionary society to operate without usurping such power. It is equally possible for the education society to usurp this authority. The abuse of a thing does not necessarily condemn the thing itself. Men have abused the office of the eldership, but that does not condemn the office. If this is our only grounds for opposing the missionary society why not organize one to do the good work but see to it that it never attempts to control its supporting churches — as the brethren say they are doing with the church supported education society. This argument assumes that it is right for the church to establish, support and turn its work over to institutions and organizations separate and apart from itself, provided these institutions do not abuse the trust committed to them.

If the church can scripturally establish, support and turn its work over to institutions and organizations separate and apart from itself surely preference should be given to the society that teaches only the gospel of Christ rather than to the society that teaches some gospel along with dozens of other subjects.

The missionary society is a man-made institution, separate and apart from the church. So is the school. The missionary society—if you organize one and keep it free from abuses—uses all its money to preach the gospel of Christ. The school uses its money to teach football, basketball, typing, shop work, history, geometry, etc., with Bible included as one of many subjects. By any manner of consistent reasoning, if the church can support one it can support the other. With this choice before it the church certainly must place its money with the institution that will spend all of it in the preaching of the gospel and building church houses rather than with the one that

will spend the greater part of it on teaching secular subjects and building science laboratories, football stadiums, etc.

The truth is that the church has no scriptural authority to establish, support and turn its work over to any organization separate and apart from itself. The missionary society exists to do the work committed to the church. (Mk. 16:15, Matt. 28:19, Eph. 3:10, 21.) The church is not authorized to build and support such a human organization to do the work the Lord entrusted to the church. Individuals are to give and work to spread the gospel "through the church" (Eph. 3:10), not through a missionary society. On the other hand the school does not exist to do the work the Lord gave the church. The school should be organized and supported by Christian parents to do the work the Lord gave them—providing for their own, nurturing them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.

There Is No Scripture To Authorize the Church Supported School

Churches of Christ have always—and rightly so—demanded Book, Chapter and Verse for religious practices. We have—rightly—condemned the missionary society, instrumental music in the worship and a host of other innovations on the ground that the Scriptures furnish the man of God completely unto every good work (II Tim. 3:17) and that since the Scriptures do not furnish the man of God to these things as a part of the church work they cannot be good works in God's sight.

This argument can be used with equal force on the church supported school. Where does the Scripture furnish the man of God to build, support and operate a school to teach academic and athletic courses—as a part of the church work? The passage cannot be found, and we must conclude that such cannot be a good work in the sight of God.

Christian Parents Have the Right To Build and Support Schools Where the Bible Is Taught

"If any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." (I Tim. 5:8.) This will include the necessities of life—food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, etc. All these are the responsibility of the parents. To provide food, clothing and shelter the father may operate a farm or a grocery store, work as a mechanic or factory

laborer, practice law or dentistry. The Lord did not tell him **how** to provide for his own—he just told him to do it. Each man has the responsibility of providing for his own the best way possible under his particular circumstances.

In like manner God has not told the Christian parent **how** to provide an education for his children. The responsibility again is left with each parent to provide for his own the best way possible under his particular circumstances. The Christian parent is told something of the **kind** of education he is to provide for his children. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10.) "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." (Ecc. 13:1.) "Nuture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4.) "Be not deceived; Evil companionships corrupt good morals." (I Cor. 15:33.)

In providing for his own the kind of education described in these and similar passages of scripture the Christian parent has three possible courses.

1. He may educate his children himself, at home. Parents in general have neither the training nor the time to do this.

2. He may build, support and send his children to the public schools. Our public school system was built for this very purpose, that through them parents might discharge their responsibility of giving their children the education that the parents themselves have neither time nor training to give at home. It is a well recognized fact that in most of the public school systems of our nation today children are not taught the fear of Jehovah as either the beginning or end of wisdom. Instead they are taught the Bible-denying theory of organic evolution of species and are thrown into an atmosphere of sex-stimulating dances, petting parties, mixed bathing, etc.

3. They may build, support and send their children to a school where all the teachers are Christians, where the word of God is honored and is taught daily, where science, history, and all other subjects are taught in the light of God's word, and where the companionship, the recreation, and every influence is guided by its holy principles. It is the sacred responsibility of Christian people to provide for their own the kind of education demanded by the word of the Lord and to use the means at their disposal to provide this education in the most complete way possible.

Don't be afraid of wasting time by learning something you are not required to know.

This excellent article is from the pen of D. A. Sinclair in Canadian Christian, May, 1950.

The Lost Book

We learn in 2 Kings 22 that Josiah was a good king. "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father." He was straight in all his dealings. He "turned not aside to the right hand or the left." One day Josiah sent Shaphan to the house of the Lord to "sum the silver. . . which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people" and to pay the workmen who had the oversight of the house of the Lord. He had ordered the breaches to be repaired in the house of the Lord. God's house had been sadly neglected and needed repairs, and King Josiah was having this done when the book of God was found in the rubbish. The high priest told Shaphan, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord." Shaphan took the book to King Josiah, and the servant read it to the king.

The king then sent his servants to pray and asked God concerning the words in the book. The people had been burning incense to other gods. God said to King Josiah, "Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord . . . hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me . . . thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace."

Then Josiah gathered all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem together and read to them all the words

of the book. He also made a covenant to walk after the Lord and keep his commandments. He not only made a covenant with God but had all the images broken in pieces and removed from the heathen temples.

As we read and ponder over this incident, we wonder if it has an application to people today, if it can be applied to our times. It can be. The precious Word of God is lost to many people and is lost even to some professing Christians. We find a Bible in almost every home, but are the people reading it? If people were reading and studying the Bible, surely they would fear to indulge in the many sinful practices of our day.

Even today the Bible is lost to many because it is hid behind the rubbish they worship. In Deuteronomy 6:6, 7 we read, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." We wonder how many parents speak to their children about the many good things found in the Bible.

The Bible contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer

strains of poetry and eloquence than can be found or collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written. In whatever light we regard the Bible whether with reference to revelation, to history, or to morality, it is an invaluable and inexhaustible mine of knowledge and virtue. Not only does reading the Bible feed the mind, but it feeds the soul until it rejoices. The Scriptures teach us the best way of living, the noblest way of suffering, and the most comfortable way of dying.

People have gradually neglected the studying of the Word of God until few have a knowledge of the glorious truths it contains.

The more you read the Bible, the more you will love it. It will become sweeter and sweeter, and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ.

A daily study of the Word of God will give a settled peace within and draws us close to God. It is a living power, a book surpassing all others. Nowhere else can be found such a series of beautiful ideas and admirable moral maxims which pass before us like a mighty celestial army. The soul can never go astray with this Book for its guide.

We know all this is true. Then why do we not read the Bible more? We see that our families are well fed and well clothed and sheltered. All this is good, but do we see that their souls

are fed through the day-by-day reading of the Book of books? Or is the Book lost to you?

Let us get back to the habit of reading the Word daily and get back to family worship. This will help more than anything else to keep the domestic wheels moving smoothly.

Go look in the rubbish and find the lost Book. Repent, read it, study it, and as you go about your daily duties, meditate upon it. The Word of God will stand a thousand readings. If we could get every professing Christian to read it, to take one hour in each day for the reading of the Word of God and prayers, we would see a mighty revival sweeping the land—yes, the entire world.

God made man to worship him and live for him. He left us a true guide in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit and the Word always agree. Nobody ever outgrows the Scripture. The Book widens and deepens and becomes sweeter to the soul with the years.

Let us be thankful that we have the Bible and the privilege of reading it. It is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by God on the children of men. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture for its matter. It is all pure, all sincere, nothing too much, nothing wanting. Let us read it each day. Let God talk to us through it. Then let us talk with him. The Book will become alive and give us life eternal.

A hearse is the wrong vehicle to use to begin going to church in.

W. R. Jones in Gospel Advertiser, June, 1950.

What Does It Take To Make A Strong Church?

A truly converted membership is essential to having a strong church. I am afraid in this age we are leaning too much in the direction of inherited religion. I am finding, much too often people claiming to be members of the Lord's church, and giving as their chief reason, "I was brought up that way," or "that's what my family was." Dear brother, if family tradition is your reason for being a member of the church of Christ then the truth is you are not a member. The sinner needs to come into the church with the attitude of, "I know I am lost and undone and if I don't obey the Lord then I'm bound for hell." These people who align themselves with the church so all the family can be together, or to please a companion, or because their best friends are found there, have not truly obeyed the Lord. Jesus gives some of the characteristics of true conversion in Mt. 18:2-3. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Our entering heaven depends on our being converted and becoming like a little child. Small children are forgiving, loving, tender hearted, pure, dependent, and free from hate. Therefore, in becoming Chris-

tians we are to pattern ourselves in many respects after little children.

A faithful membership will produce a strong church. If people are truly converted they very likely will be faithful members. How are we going to determine what it takes to make a faithful membership? Shall we let man be the judge? If so then one man would say, "once-a-month-ers" are faithful members; another's standard would demand that you be at least a "once-a-week-er"; and yet another would require constant attendance to all services. Man and his standards are no good, therefore we turn to the standard of Him by whom we shall be judged. Not long ago a fellow pilgrim asked me this question, "Do you know of a verse in the New Testament by which one can determine whether he is faithful or not." Yes, I believe so. I realize that no verse is to be isolated from its setting and elevated above others, but some scriptures are more general and cover more ground than others. I believe that Mt. 6:33 is of more value than any other in determining whether a man is faithful or not, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." If it's pleasure, put Christ first. If it's entertainment, put Christ first. If it's work, put Christ

first. If in all things we put the Lord first we are bound to do His will, and if we do His will then we are faithful members of the body.

An informed membership is necessary for a strong church. The Word of God is food for the soul, and if not sufficiently supplied then the soul will die from starvation. Peter said we are to "grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord." (II Pet. 3:18.) Paul adds, "Study to show thyself approved unto God . . ." (II Tim. 2:15.) In the Old Testament Hosea recorded these words, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou has rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee . . ." (Hosea 4:6.) No doubt many church members in this day are losing their identity in the eyes of God, simply because they have not concerned themselves with learning the will of Jehovah.

A working membership is the backbone of a strong church. As a member of the church of Christ you are a workman in the vineyard of the Lord. Just keep in mind that you have come into the vineyard to **work** and when our day of labor is over on this earth the Lord is not going to reward us if we have been lazy and unconcerned. Notice this admonition, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye **steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding** in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." In our labors we must make certain that we pull

together. Hitch two mules to the wagon and let the one on the right spring forward and the one on the left stand still and see what happens. Hit the mule on the left and make him jump and hold the one on the right and see what happens. It will tear up the harness, jerk the kids down, turn over the water jug, knock the spring seat out of place, make a lot of noise, and cause the driver to lose what little religion he has, but the wagon doesn't travel. For the wagon to roll the two animals must pull together. So it is with our work in the Lord.

A loving membership is an important part in the foundation of a strong church. If you are wondering whether you are a loving member or not then I suggest that you turn to I Cor. 13 and read the entire chapter. Notice the characteristics of love. If you have these traits then you have love in your heart; otherwise you are dead. If you do not love God (and that means to keep his commandments) and your brothers and sisters in Christ it is definite proof that you are a dead member. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." (I John 3:14.) Love is not something bound up in our hearts to sit and think about, but rather something that must be un-leashed and put into action every day of our life.

A praying membership is vital to a strong church. "Pray without ceasing." (I Thess. 5:17.) "And he spake a parable unto

them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." (Luke 18:1.) How can a man keep unspotted from the world? First, "abstain from the appearance of evil" and secondly "pray without ceasing." Did you ever know of a person cursing, stealing, gossiping, committing adultery, or drinking while sincerely praying? If you and I

will fill our hearts with the constant attitude of prayer then we shall never be bothered with these things. I think it was pretty well expressed by the old darkey when he said, "a praying knee and a dancing foot don't grow on the same leg." To this I might add, "there is no room in a prayerful heart for the works of the flesh."

Foster L. Ramsey in The Watchman, Gamesville, Texas, April 13, 1950.

'I Can't Believe It!'

There are some things that I just can't believe; things that I am asked to believe concerning Christianity. When I study the Bible, I learn that faith comes by hearing the Word of God as contained in the New Testament. This is the only source of believing.

The teaching is often heard that there should be many churches so that man might have a choice; but I can't believe it! The New Testament does not teach of many churches; it teaches of only one church. (John 10:16; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4.) Those who obeyed the gospel were not added to many churches, they were added to the church. (Acts 2:47.) They did not have a choice.

The teaching is often heard that the church is not essential to salvation; that you can be saved out of it just as well as you can be saved in it, but I can't believe it! Christ purchased the church with his

blood (Acts 20:28); he gave himself for the church. (Eph. 5:25.) If the church is not essential, then Christ purchased a luxury and not a necessity with the greatest purchase price the world has known. He squandered his blood according to that teaching.

The teaching is often heard that baptism has nothing to do with salvation; but I can't believe it! There is not a single passage of scripture in the New Testament which even remotely intimates that baptism has nothing to do with salvation. In every passage where salvation (or its equivalent) and baptism are mentioned together, baptism **always** precedes salvation. Peter teaches that baptism saves. (I Pet. 3:21.)

There are many other teachings that I can't believe because they are not found in the New Testament. If you can't find those teachings in God's Book, **YOU CAN'T BELIEVE THEM EITHER!**

*T. H. Tarbet in The Call to Worship,
Hobbs, New Mexico, July 24, 1950.*

Better Follow the Bible Plan

The people who think about it know that the usual way of raising money in the churches has something wrong with it. It is a means to an end, but the means is not right.

1. It represents Christians as beggars and coaxers.

2. It prostitutes the religion of Christ to the level of secular organizations "doing something for charity" by promoting carnivals, contests, shows.

3. It makes sincere Christians ashamed that the work of the church is done on the money obtained by fleecing the sinners and begging the world.

4. It puts the means above the ends: they are forced to give concerts for money, not for music and culture; to hold suppers for profit, not for sociability; to distribute books for a

commission, not for instruction; and generally to degrade and pauperize the greatest business on the earth.

5. It makes the money bag the measure of recognition, and mortgages the church's conscience to heavy and showy givers.

6. It uses up time and strength in getting the tools for the work which ought to be spent in doing the work itself.

7. It insults God, and disgusts the world.

8. It fails to do the job.

There is only one way to carry on the work of the church. That is the way God outlined in His book: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him." (1 Cor. 16:2.)

*Elmer A. L'Roy in The Leader, De
Queen, Arkansas, March 15, 1950.*

What Does the Church of Christ Teach?

We are often asked questions about our teaching. Usually they are framed: "What does the church of Christ teach about this?" Sometimes members of the church ask, "What is the teaching of the church on this point?"

We feel that these questions are dangerous. Denominationalism in our thinking is revealed. Partyism and sectarianism are fostered by these thoughts. A love for party and creed rather than a desire for the truth is manifest. Do not ask what the church teaches. It would be better to ask what the Bible teaches. The Bible is right; it is our guide; it is authority in religion. We can never go wrong by following the Bible. To follow the former generation in the church will likely cause us to drift away from the truth.

*G. B. Shelburne, Jr., gives an interesting article in
Gospel Tidings, June, 1950, on the following subject.*

Why I Am Not a Campbellite

Early in the nineteenth century there arose on this continent a mighty religious movement whose purpose and effort was not to originate a new sect; but rather, by getting back to the apostolic order in all things, to free men from ecclesiastical bondage and from the confusion of sectarianism. Alexander Campbell came to occupy a leading position in this movement, and since his day those who have labored for the restoration of the church of the Lord, rather than for the building up of a sect, have been stigmatized on every hand as Campbellites.

We bear no personal ill-will against those who, contrary to our teachings and to our wishes, persist in referring to us as Campbellites. Although we know that the term is used by some in derision, we should like to be charitable and believe that the majority who call us Campbellites, do so through honest misunderstanding or through lack of information. Therefore, I shall endeavor to explain why the members of the churches of Christ repudiate the name "Campbellite."

Some Important Historical Facts

As a means of approach to the consideration of the scriptures bearing upon this subject, I shall first call to your attention some important historical facts.

First, although I accept some leading doctrines taught by Mr.

Campbell, I am not a Campbellite, because these doctrines did not originate with him. The cardinal point of his teachings were taught and held by many before his day. Martin Luther and John Calvin taught in the early part of the sixteenth century the right of private study and investigation of the Scriptures. Zwingli taught Campbell's principle of "speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where the Bible is silent" by contending that anything not authorized by the Scriptures should be excluded from religious work and worship. Walter W. Scott, a Scotch Presbyterian, was the first man to teach baptism for the remission of sins in this country. James O'Kelly of North Carolina, a Methodist preacher, urged acceptance of the principles of congregational independence and the Bible alone as authority, without human creeds, as early as 1793. In 1800 Abner Jones of Vermont and Elias Smith of New Hampshire, Baptist preachers, were pleading for the extinction of party names. Before Alexander Campbell reached the height of his career, Barton W. Stone and Thomas Campbell agreed on many of the outstanding points of his teaching. Barton W. Stone and Thomas Campbell were originally Presbyterians. I have cited these historical facts merely for the purpose of showing that the movement to get back

to the Bible was not started by Alexander Campbell, but that it had begun to take form through the efforts of various religious leaders of different faiths before Campbell became definitely associated with it. But the plea that was made by these men for a restoration of the primitive order has its foundation in the New Testament, as one may see by a careful reading of that volume. Therefore, my acceptance of this plea makes me neither a follower of Campbell, nor of those good men who were teachers of these principles before him.

In the second place, from the standpoint of historical fact, I would like to state that I do not accept everything that Alexander Campbell taught. A careful examination of his works reveals that he held some positions that are at variance with the word of God. If I were a Campbellite—that is, if I accepted his works, rather than the Holy Scriptures only as the standard of religious authority, I would accept without hesitation everything that he taught. But this I do not.

The Teachings of the Scriptures

With these historical facts in mind, let us now consider the subject in hand from a purely scriptural viewpoint. I am not a Campbellite, because:

1. To be a Campbellite would be to manifest an attitude of carnality, rather than an attitude of spirituality. It would run directly counter to Paul's admonition to the Corinthians: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus

Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that everyone of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? . . . For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" (See 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:3-4.) Certainly we have a picture here that fits the case. There were Paulites, Apollosites and Cephasites in the congregation at Corinth. If it was not right for the early disciples to follow such eminent men as the apostles, Peter and Paul, we surely would not do right today to follow Alexander Campbell. Mr. Campbell was not crucified for me. I was not baptized in his name; and to follow him would be to become carnal and walk as men!

2. I am not a Campbellite, because I cannot wear a human name. The name "Campbellite" is not a divinely-given name. The early disciples were called Christians (Acts 11:26), and they carefully abstained from all human prefixes or suffixes. We are taught in Eph. 3:15 that God's family both in heaven and

on earth wears the name of Christ, and in Acts 4:12 it is declared that there is salvation in no other name. The apostle Peter said, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

3. I am not a Campbellite, because the Bible teaches that Christ, and not Mr. Campbell, is the head of the church. Paul says in Col. 1:18, "He is the head of the body, the church." And again, in Eph. 1:22-23 the apostle says that God has "put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." These and similar passages teach beyond a doubt that the church has no earthly founder or head. I refer, of course, to that institution about which we read in the New Testament. Jesus Christ, our Savior, who "was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification," is now seated at the right hand of God as "Lord of lords and King of kings." He is the head of the church, and I dare not regard any man as such.

4. I am not a Campbellite, because I have not embraced Campbellism, but the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul teaches in Eph. 4:5 that there is "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." This one faith is not Campbellism, but is "the faith once delivered to the saints" mentioned in Jude 3. It is the divine system of teaching given through Christ. It is the gospel of Christ, which Paul preached,

and which he called "the faith which once he destroyed." There is no other gospel. Paul said: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8.) The gospel which Paul preached surely is not Campbellism or the teachings of any other man, and to embrace any gospel other than that which Paul preached is to invite the anathema of heaven.

5. I am not a Campbellite, because I was not converted to Mr. Campbell, but to the Lord. The psalmist wrote: "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." (Ps. 51:13.) Notice that it is the will of the Lord that sinners be converted unto him, and not to fine church buildings, to preachers, or to a high social standing.

6. I am not a Campbellite, because it is wrong to glory in a man, rather than in the Lord. Paul said: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. 6:14.) The God of heaven demands glory in all things through Jesus Christ. (See 1 Pet. 4:11.) Paul said, as we read in 1 Cor. 10:31: "Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." To take the glory that belongs to God only and transfer it to a man would be treason against high heaven.

Now, my friends, I would like to suggest some questions for

our earnest consideration. If, because of the scriptural reasons just enumerated, it would be wrong for me to be a Campbellite, would it not be wrong for anyone else to be one for the same reasons? If it would be wrong to follow Mr. Campbell for the reasons just named, would it not be wrong to follow any other man or group of men for the same reasons? And if it would be wrong for me to follow men for these reasons, why would it not be wrong for anyone else to do so?

Perhaps you have never thought seriously on this matter before. You may belong to some

religious body of human origin, and you may wear the name of some man, or some other human title. You may subscribe to a human creed, rather than to the Bible alone. If such be true, or if you have never professed religion in any way, I beg you to study the New Testament carefully. There you will learn that to be truly converted to Christ one must believe in him, repent of his sins, confess Christ, and be baptized for remission of sins. If you will do these things from the heart, the Lord will add you to his church, and you may begin that new life in Christ which leads to eternal glory.

Elmer A. L'Roy in The Leader, De Queen, Arkansas, March 15, 1950.

Are We Only Ones Saved?

Frequently, the question is asked, do you think that just the members of your church will be saved? The accusation is leveled that Christians teach that one must be in "our denomination" to be saved. What is the answer?

No, definitely no, one does not have to be a member of "our denomination" to be saved. Furthermore, one cannot be saved in any denomination on earth—ours, if we had one, or anyone else's. There is no salvation in any denomination. On the other hand, everyone who obeys the gospel of Christ and lives pleasing to God will be saved.

"WE" have no denomination, and if we did, men would not have to be in it to be saved. No one that we know is so blind that he thinks that being in a denomination can ever take one to heaven.

We do believe that only those who obey the gospel of Christ and live Christian lives will go to heaven. Our concern should be to obey the Lord. We could fall down there. The saved are added to the church by the Lord. (Acts 2:47.) We need not worry about which church to be a member of, for the Lord will add us to the right one.

Foster L. Ramsey in The Watchman, June 15, 1950.

Gambling

Figures released by the Gallup Poll last week, revealed a rather astounding trend among the American people. According to their figures, 53 per cent of the American people had engaged in some sort of gambling. They had bet on the horses, played the number rackets, bought a lottery ticket, bet on card or dice games, bet on an election or the outcome of an athletic contest, or played a punch board. And yet the greatest number of people had engaged in gambling through still another medium. The majority of people had gambled on church lotteries and bingo games. 37 per cent were guilty of "church gambling." When religion resorts to that which demoralizes righteous living, it is an indication that a pretty low ebb has been reached. Gambling is recognized to be wrong by men and women who think straight, just the same as traffic in narcotics is considered wrong; and yet neither are specifically condemned by the Bible in so many words.

Many people have come forward with the idea that gambling should be legalized, with the government profiting from a tax on it, the same as the government profits from the sale of intoxicants. Some states have already done this. It is not hard to see how people are led to think along these lines, when they see religious organizations profiting by gambling. The Catholic church has been in the forefront of those who appealed to the gambling instinct of people in order to raise money, just as she has been in the forefront among those who encourage the making, selling, and drinking of intoxicants. I know of no other religious organization which sponsors a distillers guild.

Pagan religions have often been based upon satisfying fleshly lusts of the human race. But true Christianity will not be a party to that which by its action and result is contrary to the spirit of Christ.

So you're just as good as half the folks in the church? WELL, WHICH HALF?

When you lie dying, you will find little comfort in counting the hypocrites in the church then.

From Food for Thought, church bulletin from Cassville, Missouri, dated March 12, 1950.

Classified Ads

FOR SALE: The morals of my family, decency of my children, honor of my home, and my dearest family ties, all for some good grazing land for my cattle.—Lot, nephew to Abraham.

FOR SALE: My birthright as heir of my father, Isaac, and an honorable and coveted place in history. Price: one mess of pottage.—Esau, brother of Jacob.

FOR SALE: My best friend, my good name, my hope of heaven, the respect of every person who reads the Bible, and my good conscience and self-respect. Will trade for thirty pieces of silver, or \$16.00 American money.—Judas Iscariot.

TRADE: Heaven and all its riches for earthly goods.—Young Ruler.

TRADE: Partnership with apostle Paul, loyalty to Christ, my place in the church, my hope for everlasting life and my own soul, all for a meager part in this present world.—Demas, gospel minister, Rome, Italy.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: Part of our field and our honor and salvation and the rest of our natural lives for a chance at some undeserved praise and popularity.—Ananias and Sapphira, Jerusalem.

From The Visitor, Odessa, Texas, May 28, 1950.

A Preacher's Prayer

Henry Robinson clipped the following from the "Fundamentalist" and asked that it be reprinted as so many of his friends, including ministers, wanted a copy of it:

Negro pastor tuning up for the take off: "Lawd, give Thy servant dis mawnin' de eye ob de eagle and de wisdom ob de owl; connect his soul wid de gospel telefome in de central skies; 'luminate his brow wid de sun ob hebben, saturate his heart wid de love ob de people; turpentine his 'magination; grease his lips wid 'possum oil; loosen him wid de sledge hammer ob Thy power; 'lectrify his brain wid de lightnin' of Thy word; put 'petual motion in his arms; fill him plumb full ob de dynamite ob glory; 'noint him all ober wif de kerosene oil ob salvation and sot him on fire! Amen!"

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GOSPEL Digest

VOLUME 12

MARCH, 1955

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Should We Have Regular Preaching?

Not long ago a letter came to us ordering some tracts by the editor entitled "How To Avoid the 'Pastor System'." The letter stated that there was some discussion in the church where the writer attended, about the scripturalness of having a regular preacher. The following is the letter written in reply with only a few minor changes. Reference to the author's preaching experience is given as proof that he is earnestly endeavoring to practice what he is teaching on this subject. Since the tracts that were sent contain the scriptural proof of the arguments presented no attempt was made to give such in this letter. Anyone wishing to obtain this tract may do so by ordering from either Elam B. Kuykendall, Box 627, Athens, Ala., or The C. E. I. Store, Box 858, Athens, Ala. The price is 5¢ each; 50¢ per dozen; \$2.50 per hundred.

From the Letter

It is certainly bad that trouble has arisen in the church over this subject. How much better it would have been if none had gone to either extreme in their teaching or practice. There is no doubt that some of the preachers have become "pastors" in the sense that denominations use the term. Some desire this work and push themselves into it; others — many others — are pushed into it by well-meaning but poorly informed brethren, and by lazy and indifferent elders. However, the abuse of this kind of work does not justify those of us who see the evil in going to the other extreme and turning against

a scriptural practice. We need to correct the abuse but continue the good work of having regular preaching.

In the early days of the church some of the elders abused the privilege of overseeing the church and gradually the great Catholic hierarchy was born. Of course this abuse was and is wrong. However, it would be equally wrong to decide that since this work of elders was abused we will just do away with elders. What we must do to please God is to correct the abuse but continue the good work that God has ordained for elders to do. In like manner we must not do away with the work of the preacher, but we must correct the abuses that have arisen in the church.

In the last several years there has been much emphasis on getting a preacher for every church. Many times brethren seem to think that if they can get a preacher all their problems will be solved and all their responsibility in working for God will be discharged. Of course this is the wrong idea. In many cases the preacher is expected to do most of the work that God intended for the elders to do, and not enough evangelistic work to keep a man busy is even thought of, much less planned. In such a situation it is almost impossible for the preacher not to overstep the work that God intended for him to do. The truth is that there is plenty of work for a preacher to do without doing the elders' work if that is the way it is planned. However, in many cases it would avoid much trouble if the preachers were paid only for part-time work and had other work, as Paul did, to provide some of their support. This is being done in many places now, but the tendency is toward fully supported preachers.

I have been preaching for 25 years. When I first started I preached at a different place each Sunday in the month. A lot of good has been done by that kind of preaching, but I saw that lessons taught that infrequently were not as effective as they should be. A child in school would never get out of the first grade if he had only one lesson a month. Then, too, there is no example in the Scriptures for monthly preaching. Certainly if that were all the teaching we could have it would be better than none, but a more intensive teaching program is much more effective and is the way it was done in the early church. For several years now I have preached regularly for one church for a time and then for another. I am now in my seventh year with the church here. But I teach part-time in the Bible school here, run my print shop and edit the **Gospel Digest** in addition to my preaching. Even if I wanted to do it I would not have time to

do the work that the elders should do. In my teaching and preaching I repeatedly emphasize that I am not here to take the place of the elders or to do their work. In fact, the elders are much more active now than they were when I started preaching here. Three of the elders, two deacons and two or three others have preached their first sermons since I have been here. Some of them preach almost every Sunday. My work is certainly not hindering them in their teaching nor taking the place of it.

Elders certainly need to be taught and encouraged to do the work that God intends that they should do. In many congregations the church is run by one or two members — sometimes even the wives of the members — instead of being overseen by the elders. This is just as unscriptural as to have a preacher acting as a denominational "pastor." May God help us to develop men who have the scriptural qualifications for elders and the zeal and courage necessary to do that great work. And may the rest of us find and do the work that we should do and not try to do their work.

L. E. O'Neal Tours States

ABILENE — L. E. O'Neal, evangelist from Zamboanga City, Mindanao, in the Philippine Islands, was here Monday (Jan. 31) at the start of a three-month tour in the United States aimed at securing more workers for the Islands.

He arrived in San Francisco Jan. 24 by plane by way of Manila and arrived here Saturday. He plans to leave soon for Duncan, Okla., to visit the West Side congregation there which has been supporting him in his work in the Islands.

While in the States he will speak (particularly in Texas and Oklahoma) to interested congregations and show color slides of that work.

Wants Six Workers

O'Neal says he wants to secure at least six workers: two to work in the island of Luzon in the north; two to work in Mindanao in the south, and two to work in the small islands (Visayas) in the central part of the Philippines.

O'Neal says that there are now some 100 congregations in the Islands with 2,000 members. — Christian Chronicle

Renew Your Gospel Digest Subscription on Time!

Some timely observations by Yater Tant in *The Vindicator*, Nov., 1954.

What Caused the War?

Many of us have listened on our radios and television sets to the voice of Fulton J. Sheen, associate professor of philosophy in the Catholic University, Washington, D. C. For some years his has been the most articulate and influential voice of American Catholicism. This man is on record as having declared that the cause of the awful World War II, so recently concluded, could be traced directly to the revolt against Catholicism led by Martin Luther more than 400 years ago. Also, he declared that the only way to avoid such wars in the future was for the whole world to return to Rome.

Let us take a look at the record. It was Mussolini, dictator of the most Catholic nation on earth, and himself a Catholic, who started in 1922 the trend that made

the war inevitable. It was Catholic Italy who defied the League of Nations by her aggressive assault on Ethiopia. It was Franco, Catholic leader of Catholic Spain, who overthrew the legally constituted government of the nation and precipitated the bloodiest civil war in modern history.

By no means least of all—Adolf Hitler, a devout and fanatical Catholic, made a systematic destruction of every element in German Catholicism which was not in sympathy with the Pope. Both Mussolini and Hitler were the recipients of the Pope's blessings at various stages in their march toward total war.

We think that Fulton J. Sheen had better take a more careful look at history; his devotion to the Pope has blinded his eyes to the truth.

Uses Articles in Church Paper

I know that men who stand for the truth are becoming less and less. Few do I find that will take a stand for truth. Oh, most all will fight the sects. But to stand against sin, worldliness, war, cigarettes, etc., they are very few. God bless you in your great work.

I use many of the articles in the *Gospel Digest* for our church paper. They are really fine. I only wish many more would take it. In fact I will see in the near future if I can send in some more subs.

— Guss Eoff, Lockhart, Texas

Recommends It Highly

My wife and I like the *Gospel Digest* very much. I would highly recommend it to every Christian. — Arvel Hymer, Huntsville, Ala.

Vaughn D. Shofner here refutes a persistent religious error very clearly. From *The Gospel Light*, Jan. 6, 1955.

Modern Miracles

In 1950 a fleet of trucks and automobiles bearing a huge tent and a flock of showmen and sensational salesmen stopped in a thriving west Texas city. Multitudes of gullible people heard the great noise of publicity and nightly attended the show and gave the amount of money the head man demanded in order to carry on his camouflaged career. Great boasts of miraculous healing were heard throughout the whole country. A big bluster was made by this religious racketeer, challenging anyone to bring proof contrary to the claims of healing which he made.

We, personally, in company with two other church members, investigated some cases. The physician who attended one lady who made the claim of being healed miraculously under the big tent, told us that she had been in serious condition in the past, had undergone major surgery, but at the time she went to the "tent of healing" she was much improved and was well on the road to recovery. After having claimed that she had been healed in the religious ceremony, she remained under the doctor's care, and at the time of our investigation was still receiving penicillin.

Another who claimed miraculous healing at the hand of this tent owner, had had delicate surgery performed on a crushed foot by a physician who was a bone specialist, had received antibiotic drugs, and had been walking several days as he favored the in-

jured foot. Yet, the gentleman told us he had been healed in the twinkling of an eye while the tent owner prayed for him and laid hands on him; he gave absolutely no credit to the doctor and his ability which had for weeks been working with and assisting God's natural plan in the healing, and in the same breath admitted that he was still going to the doctor and receiving his treatments after his claim of having been healed.

A young boy who had very early in life lost his hearing was claimed to have been healed during this "faith healing campaign." Upon investigation we found the young man as deaf as ever, but very adept at lip-reading. Friend, these were cases which we actually investigated, and the things we found.

After these investigations some of the church members in that city placed an advertisement in the daily papers calling attention to the fraud and offering \$1,000 for acceptable evidence of just one case of miraculous healing of cancer, tuberculosis, withered limbs, or paralysis. Testimony of two reputable physicians was the only requirement as sufficient evidence.

A week later the advertisement appeared again. Editorials of other papers commended the effectual efforts against the boasts of pseudo-preachers. The big tent left town, and the claims of these "faith healers" were temporarily silenced. Some 30 months later the

advertisement appeared again, emphasizing the fact that the \$1,000 had not been claimed. At this writing more than 50 months later, the reward is still unclaimed, and the fact that it will go on and on unclaimed cannot be lost in the noise of fanaticism as the religious racketeers send out sensational claims from places far distant from that city.

The power of persuasion is often labeled "the miracles of modern religion." There are no miracles performed by the religious people, or any other people, of today. Of course, false miracles exist, but supernatural events, such as the healing of the lame man by Peter and John in Acts 3, and the raising of Dorcas from the dead in Acts 9 by the apostle Peter are not performed in this age. O, yes, we'll hear of miracles being performed—most of which will be in faraway places and have to do with people we do not know. God says, "He that boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain." (Prov. 25:14.) We can hear the testimony of certain people who claim to have been healed miraculously, but the sorcerers, false miracle workers, of the Bible had their followers, also. Simon the sorcerer had many people who no doubt would testify of his great power from God, because we read, "Simon bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God." (Acts 8:9, 10.) Yet God was not with Simon, and he never wrought a single real miracle in the sight of those people he had

persuaded to believe him to be "the great power of God." He only bewitched them with his magic. Many people listen and look for the sensational, and such minds are ready soil for the deceptions of those who make great boasts and claims.

There are many ways that error can enter into the question of whether a real miracle were performed in any given case. For example, some people diagnose their own condition and decide in their mind that they are seriously ill, but the truth is that they are wrong in their judgment. Doctors are not infallible, being men, and sometimes a doctor makes a mistake in his diagnosis, thinking a person cannot recover. When in such a case the patient recovers people might get the idea that a miracle was performed. Many, many times people are healed from some disorder by nature without the assistance that man has learned to give. Physicians tell us that 80% of all sick people would get well without medical attention. Some healing is produced by mental relief, brought about by psychological power alone. And we are convinced that many people misrepresent the facts in their effort to honor God. These are not miracles.

To perform a miracle means that the thing accomplished was done supernaturally, or contrary to the laws known to govern the universe. That which God does through means of His established natural laws is not miraculous. God gives us food through natural laws, and not miraculously. But when God fed the Israelites directly from heaven and apart

from the established order of His universe, a miracle was performed. The first tree came into existence by a miracle, but trees come into being now according to God's established law of nature regarding them. The reason that God is not now miraculously healing the sick and raising the dead as in apostolic days is not that He lacks the power. His power is just as great now as then. The reason God is not now miraculously making men of the dust of the earth as in the creation is not because He cannot, but because He has established an order, the plan of procreation, by which mankind comes into existence. It is not a question of ability on the part of Jehovah God. The issue lies in what He willed to be done.

God honors His own laws, wherever they are in His universe, and therefore He does not use miracles uselessly as a child playing with toys. For Him to needlessly perform miracles would but teach us to distrust and disrespect His laws governing His universe. The man who respects God's natural laws and plants seed, trusting God to give him a harvest according to His plan, has a millionfold more faith in God than the man who prays for a harvest without having seeded the ground. And the man who ministers to and assists God's natural laws, complying with them and allowing them the time needed, has a millionfold more faith in God than the man who only prays for recovery and refuses to assist the diseased body, or allow a trained physician to help. God never does for us what we can do for ourselves.

Hebrews 13:8 is often quoted as proof that the disciples of Christ can work wonders today. This passage reads, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Their idea is, Christ and His followers **did** perform miracles, being the same today, therefore they must perform miracles today. Let's look at this reasoning and point out the lameness of it. Christ ate the Passover, He has not changed, so we must eat the Passover today. That's their logic. Christ had a mortal body, He is the same today, so today He exists in a mortal body, a body subject to decay and death. Of course God and Christ are the same today, always; yet we do not keep the Passover; we do not journey to Jerusalem once each year; we do not offer the blood of animals for our sins. God and Christ do not change, but the laws They gave have changed!

Everything originated by a miracle, and is perpetuated by divine law. God made Adam and Eve by performing a miracle, then He established a law of reproduction and commanded them to multiply. The Patriarchal age came into existence by all the miracles of creation. The Jewish covenant was ushered in by the miracles of Sinai. (Ex. 8-24.) But when the entire Old Testament was revealed, and Malachi had written the last word of it, about 400 B. C., the miracles ceased for the time. During these 400 years there were no inspired men, and no miracles wrought. God had brought into existence what He wanted, said what He wanted to say under that covenant, and His word being revealed and con-

firmed was then to be their guide. Hence, there was no need for miracles.

The Christian age was ushered in by a miracle. The apostles had to have "power from on high" to enable them to reveal and confirm the gospel for the benefit of all future generations. Their work was in our behalf as well as those of their own generation. There were no successors to the apostles, for there was no need of such after their mission was completed, just as there is no need for Christ to have successors. (1 Cor. 4:9.) They were to reveal and confirm the last will and testament of Jesus. They were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit. (John 16:13.) Without miraculous power they could not have wrought a single miracle to prove their message true. (Acts 1:8; Lk. 23:29.) They needed power that we do not need. They did not have the written word to learn and teach, as it was about 24 years after the Pentecost of Acts 2 before a line of the New Testament was written. So, God gave them power, and by about A. D. 96 the will of God was completely finished, confirmed and written. From that day to this we have had no need for such miraculous power as the apostles needed and possessed. The will of God having been finished, confirmed and written, signs and miracles were no longer needed, and in divine wisdom were taken away.

When Christ ascended "He gave gifts unto men . . . and he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." (Eph. 4:8-11.) The apostles were

to continue in the church just as long as the other miraculously-qualified men mentioned; and Ephesians 4:13 says they would be in the church "Till we all come in the unity of the faith." Paul preached "The faith which once he destroyed." (Gal. 1:23.) Jude 3 says, "Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." Thus we understand what the "faith" which was to come had reference to — the system of truth in the New Testament. "Till" the unity of the faith, means till all parts of the faith or new covenant could be revealed, and then miraculously endowed men ceased to exist. This unity of the faith which was to come cannot mean, as many tell you, the uniting of present denominations and that until united we have a need for miracles; because, in Ephesians 4:3 Paul pleads with them to "Keep the unity of the Spirit," and it could not be kept if they did not have it.

In 1 Corinthians 13:8 we read: "Whether there be prophesies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." Therefore miracles were to fail, cease and vanish away. Then the next verse declares, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." (1 Cor. 13:9.) Each inspired man received only a part of all the truth, the faith, and when all had been given through the different men, then that perfect and complete revelation had come from God. Hence, we read in the next verse, "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13:10.) The words "when" and

"then" are adverbs of time and point out a certain and definite time for miracles to cease — that is, when the perfect revelation has come, in contrast to the parts that they then had. Jesus had promised the apostles that the Spirit would guide them into all truth (John 16:13), and "bring to their remembrance all things that he had said unto them." (John 14:26.) This was done by the time they wrote the last word of the New Testament. Thus that which is perfect has come, and when it came, God said, **then** tongues and signs ceased.

Miracles and signs were for the purpose of revealing and confirming the word, and when the word was all given and confirmed, they were not needed and therefore ceased. Mark 16:20 says, "They went forth, and preached

everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following." In Hebrews 2:3, 4, we learn that the word "was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." "Confirm," Mr. Webster says, means, "To make firm and to give assurance of the truth of, verify; corroborate." To say there are miracles being performed today is to say that they are needed, and to say that they are needed is to say that that word of God is not already confirmed, and this denies the Bible, and shouts with a voice of thunder that the word of God needs to be confirmed, verified and propped up by modern miracles.

Help Send Gospel Digests to N. Rhodesia

W. N. Short, who has been in the States for the past several months, just told the editor good-by for his return to Northern Rhodesia. He plans to sail from New York March 8. He says that he would like to receive 100 **Gospel Digests** each month to use in his teaching. How could anyone spend \$12.50 per month any more profitably than to send the **Gospel Digest** to students who will read and study it carefully?

If you want to help in this fine work let us know at once. If you cannot send the **Digests** for a whole year, perhaps someone else will help too. Let us know at once how many months you will pay for. We are printing enough of this issue so Bro. Short can start using them as soon as he gets back at the mission.

Send Your Donation for This Rhodesian Work AT ONCE!

"Do you suppose a 'Sunday-only' church member would be satisfied with one-seventh of the crown of life?"

My Lord and I

I have a Friend so precious,
 So very dear to me,
 He loves me with such tender love,
 He loves so faithfully,
 I could not live apart from him,
 I love to feel him nigh;
 And so we dwell together,
 My Lord and I.

Sometimes I'm faint and weary;
 He knows that I am weak,
 And as he bids me lean on him
 His help I gladly seek;
 He leads me in the paths of light
 Beneath a sunny sky,
 And so we walk together,
 My Lord and I.

I tell him all my sorrows,
 I tell him all my joys,
 I tell him all that pleases me,
 I tell him what annoys.
 He tells me what I ought to do,
 He tells me how to try,
 And so we talk together,
 My Lord and I.

I have his yoke upon me,
 And easy 'tis to bear;
 In the burden which he carries
 I gladly take a share;
 For then it is my happiness
 To have him always nigh;
 We bear the yoke together,
 My Lord and I.

— Selected

"Christianity has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried."

— G. K. Chesterton

This article by Garnet H. Baker is from *The Gospel Way*, Jan. 27, 1955.

DENOMINATIONALISM, A NON-ESSENTIAL

The term "denominationalism" is used by the writer to denote the great number of varying and conflicting religious groups, each of which differs from all the others in name, doctrine, organization, etc., and each of which was begun by a man or group of men sometime after the Lord built His church on the day of Pentecost in the year 33 A. D. (Acts 2.) We emphasize that the Lord's church is **excluded** from this classification. It is **not** a denomination. It is the original, built by the Lord Himself in harmony with the Father's will, and is sufficient **within itself** to fulfill all of the Lord's requirements.

The Bible is emphatic in its condemnation of a divided religious condition such as is prevalent now. The Saviour prayed for religious unity—not disunity. (John 17:20, 21.) The apostle Paul condemned religious division at Corinth. (1 Cor. 1.) Hence, nothing which the Bible condemns could be considered essential. We now confine our inquiries to whether there is even a single aspect about denominationalism that is essential to the fulfillment of God's will.

For Preaching the Gospel

Is denominationalism essential to the maintenance of Christianity? Of course the maintenance of Christianity is dependent upon propagation of the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), and which, in Luke 8:11 is called the seed of the

kingdom. If the word is the seed, then the possibility of Christianity rests in the planting of the seed. There is not a single denomination on earth upon which God depends for the planting of this seed! Paul said in Colossians 1:23 that the gospel had been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. What wonderful success in one generation! The church of the Lord was able to accomplish this without the existence of a single denomination, and if every church except the Lord's ceased to exist, she would still plant the seed; hence, denominationalism is non-essential to the preaching of the gospel.

For Remission of Sins

Is membership in a denomination essential for one to obtain remission of sins and to enjoy spiritual blessings? Their own teaching (for the most part) will answer this question negatively. Most of them say it is not necessary to be a member of their denomination to be saved. The Bible teaches that all spiritual blessings are in Christ (Eph. 1:3), and that one must be baptized to get in Christ where those blessings are to be found. (Gal. 3:26, 27.) Denominations do not baptize into Christ! God teaches the necessity of baptism for remission of sins (Acts 2:38), but denominations do not baptize for the remission of sins. We conclude, then, that denominationalism is a non-essential in this particular. Centuries before there was another church,

we know that people were being baptized for remission of sins and to get into Christ's body (the church, Col. 1:18) where are found all spiritual blessings! (Eph. 1:3.)

For Benevolent Work

Must denominations exist before God's plan for doing benevolent work can be executed? To that we answer that the church of Christ was God's "benevolent society" in the days of the apostles without the existence of denominations or other inventions of men, and it can be so now. Please study carefully the following passages: Mk. 9:41; Acts 11:29, 30; Rom. 15:25-27; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; Gal. 6:10; Phil. 4:15-18; Col. 3:17.

For Worshipping God

Are denominations necessary in order that men may worship God in spirit and in truth? To the best of our knowledge, denomina-

tions have been a hindrance in this matter, because they have made subtractions, substitutions, additions, etc., to the plan for spiritual and truthful worship outlined in the New Testament. Long before the beginnings of any denomination Christian people were worshipping the way God prescribed. Please see Acts 2:41-47; Eph. 5:19; Acts 20:7 and 1 Cor. 16:2. Again, we see an essential feature of denominationalism.

We ask in conclusion: Were denominations necessary before they existed? No, because every essential for man's salvation is provided in the church which Christ established at least five hundred years before a denomination existed. Our plea to you, therefore, is that you will forsake sectarianism and take your stand with those of us who strive to be Christians — and Christians only!

Church Forgetting

"And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them." (Matt. 26:19.)

A little fellow in the slum section of a large city was induced to attend a Bible school, and by and by became a Christian. He seemed quite bright and settled in his new faith and life, but someone, surely in a thoughtless mood, tried to test or shake his simple faith in God, asking him, "If God loves you, why doesn't He take better care of you? Why doesn't He tell someone to send you warm shoes and some coal and better food?"

The little fellow thought a moment, then with tears starting in his eyes, said, "I guess He does tell somebody, but somebody forgets."

Yes, somebody forgets, the church forgets.

— Selected from Steps of Faith

Robert F. Turner selected this article from one of the pioneer papers and wrote the introductory paragraph. It appeared in *Son-Light*, May, 1853.

Child Psychology, a la 1832

Walter Scott, an early Restoration preacher and writer, published a monthly religious journal from Cincinnati, Ohio, beginning Jan., 1832. From *The Evangelist* of May., 1832, we reprint an article titled, "The Art of Miseducation from Salzman." Scott evidently wished to present a well-rounded journal, with lessons in child-rearing as well as in Scripture study. We believe our 1953 readers will enjoy and appreciate this too.

HOW TO MAKE YOURSELF ODIOUS TO CHILDREN

Rule 1st.—You may make them hate you by treating them unjustly.

Little Charlotte was going into her father's orchard. It was full of violets. "Oh!" cried Charlotte, full of joy, "What beautiful little flowers! I will gather my apron full, and make a nosegay for mother." She immediately knelt down and with great industry gathered her apron full; then she seated herself under an apple tree and made a handsome nosegay. "Here it is!" said she; "Now I will run and carry it to my dear mother. How she will be delighted to kiss me!"

To increase the pleasure of her mother, she crept slyly into the kitchen, took a china plate, put the nosegay on it, and went on full leap up the stairs to find her mother. But Charlotte stumbled, fell, and broke the china plate into a hundred pieces, and scat-

tered her nosegay all around. Her mother, who was in the room nearby, heard the noise, and immediately sprang to the door. When she saw the broken plate, she ran back, seized a thick rod, and without inquiring a word about the manner in which the plate was broken, came to the child. Terrified, both by the fall and on account of the broken plate, and half dead with fear of the rod, little Charlotte could only ejaculate, "Dear Mother! Dear Mother!" But this was of no service to her.

"You little wretch!" said her mother, "Break a beautiful plate — will you?" — and chastised her severely. Little Charlotte was offended, when she found herself treated with such open injustice. She did not forget it for a long time and never again brought a nosegay to her mother.

Rule 2nd.—Take no part in the pleasures of your children, show no feeling in the carasses you bestow on them, and you will soon make them indifferent to you.

An agreeable married couple had their heads so full of business and enterprises that they considered every moment lost which they devoted to conversation with their children. The husband was busy with calculations of profit, and the wife was always planning how to maintain their style of living, and increase their articles of dress. And inter-

ruptions from their children were considered as injuring their prospects. If little Nicholas skipped up to his father with his ABC book and said, "Look, Father! the pretty monkey has got an apple in his paw!" he received for an answer, "Don't disturb me!" He ran to his mother and she sent him away.

Then he went with his book in his hand to Sally, the chambermaid, and she knew how to treat him better. She laughed with him over the monkey, showed him the wolf and the hare, and told him how the wolf devoured sheep, and "how good roasted hares tasted." His dear sister Mary treated him the same way. She knew his secrets and entered into all his joys. If his father and mother were to journey three months, he would care nothing about it; but if little Mary were absent one day from home, he would sob and cry.

Rule 3rd.—Deny innocent enjoyments to your children, and you will easily make them dislike you.

A certain man became a father in his fiftieth year. On account of his age, he was grave and serious in his deportment, and he wished Gustavus to be so also. But Gustavus was not. As he was forming his character, he felt very lively and active; he jumped about and laughed and sought every kind of amusement. His father was much displeased with all this.

Sometimes he took Gustavus with him when he went to walk; but if he chased butterflies, or ran out of the way to find flowers, the angry father would cry out, "Gustavus! Gustavus! Where

are you running to all the while? Can't you stay here? Fie on the wild boy! Look and see how I behave! Can't you behave as I do?"

His father burned some nine-pins which Gustavus had received as a present from his uncle; and cut up his ball, saying that the time which his son consumed in play might much better be devoted to learning a chapter from the catechism. If Gustavus were in the room with his father, he was obliged to sit whole hours without moving from his seat.

By such management he made himself so odious to his son that he preferred the company of the most ignorant people to that of his father. When his father died, no tears of sorrow fell from the eyes of Gustavus. "I am glad of it," he thought, "For I will be rid of his hateful presence. I can now live as I please."

Rule 4th.—Show undeserved distrust of your children, and you teach them to hate you.

"I have missed part of the money which you brought back to me today from the merchant. Confess this moment what you have done with it, or the consequences will be very painful! Where is the apple which I laid upon my shelf? Will you never be weaned from this habit of petty thieving?" After this manner was Mr. Conrad accustomed to speak to his son Adolphus; he vexed him with his suspicions whenever he missed anything.

It is true, Adolphus, though thoughtlessly, might have lost the money that was missing, or he might not have observed that the merchant gave him too little;

or he might really at previous times have been guilty of taking small things, but no one could ever justly charge him with a base design, and he has long since given up the habit altogether.

Must not such unmerciful distrust on the part of the father deeply mortify the feelings of the boy? And can he easily love a father who is so suspicious of him?

Habit

The only way to get rid of a bad habit is to stop it at once. If you try tapering off, this is the result. You drop the "H" and you still have

A BIT

You think you're getting over it by dropping a little bit of the evil thing, so you go on and drop the "A" but you still are

BIT

That is to say, you are not getting on at all. You are deceiving yourself. You are just where you were. You are still bit by the evil thing. However, you think you are progressing and so you drop the "B." But you are no farther on; you still have

IT

And "it" is the sting of habit. "It" has been the trouble all along. You are where you started. Even when you drop the "I" you still have, just as you had,

T

Which stands for temptation. And temptation is a longer word to get rid of than habit. Better do the thing "wholesale" and drop all the letters at once.

—The Reminder, via Gospel Witness

Sends It to Others

I have been reading your Christian magazine, *Gospel Digest*. It is a splendid example of a Christian paper and will attract a lot of attention and interest in Christ's church. I have been sick and unable to do much church work, but I do a little—I collect and keep all the church papers I can and send them to others who can use them in teaching the Bible. Bro. and Sister Bruno, Mindanao, P. I., have asked me for all I can send them. Please send a year's subscription to them and one to me.

—Miss Doyle Murphy, Mineola, Texas

Japanese Cave-Dwellers Hear Gospel

Along the beautiful pine-studded Pacific coastline of the province of Ibaraki live the poorest of the poor, dwelling in shacks erected on the beaches, and in caves cut out of the rugged cliffs. In these damp holes the cliff dwellers pass their wretched existence eking out a living in one way or another.

Into the darkness of their lives, wrecked by alcohol and indolence, a light came shining, bringing good news for those called the off-scouring of humanity. A Saviour died for them; thus God brings a covenant of forgiveness and eternal life, for into these caves walked Yoichi Nagayama carrying the gospel of Christ.

Nagayama, tired of a degenerate life in the underworld of Tokyo, left the city and came north to Ibaraki. While searching for work, he heard of a Christian school here and applied for some kind of employment. After some consultations he was given odd jobs around the school.

His interest in Christianity grew, and he began attending meetings. During a gospel meeting held by Harry R. Fox in Kushigata, he obeyed the gospel. The resulting experience of salvation struck him so deeply that he immediately began to tell others about it.

One day when returning from Hitachi along the coastal road, he noticed the caves where the poor were dwelling. He was touched in his heart by their condition and determined to take the gospel to them. Securing permission from a cave dweller named Endo, he began a weekly Bible class every Thursday night. As a result three married couples obeyed the gospel.

The church at Hitachi gave material and spiritual aid to Nagayama's efforts, and with the help also of American missionaries and Japanese brethren a church has been established. It now has a membership of seven, and meets every Sunday and Thursday evening.

Nagayama said, "I am now making efforts to get the brethren to move out of the caves and take on the responsibilities of an improved life and environment." — Joseph Cannon, Christian Chronicle

EACH PERSON SENDING IN 25 SUBSCRIPTIONS TO GOSPEL DIGEST (at \$1.50 per year, club rate) WILL RECEIVE \$3.50 WORTH OF BOOKS OF HIS OWN CHOOSING.

From *Just A Moment*, Sept. 25, 1954, comes this article from the pen of Roy Deaver.

THE MARKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

The marks of identity of the New Testament church are plain and simple.

1. Jesus Christ was the builder, head, foundation, and possessor of it. (Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:18, 24.)

2. It was established on the first Pentecost after the Lord's resurrection from the dead, in the city of Jerusalem, the record of which is in Acts 2.

3. Men of God proclaimed the facts of the Lord's death, burial and resurrection. (Acts 2; 3; 13; 17; 1 Cor. 15:1-4.)

4. The proclamation of these facts was intended to cause men to believe, for no man could please God without faith. (Heb. 11:6; 2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17.)

5. When men had been brought to believe they were then commanded to repent of their sins. (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30.)

6. Men were obligated to confess their faith in Jesus Christ as being the Son of God. (Matt. 10:32; Lk. 12:8; Acts 8:37; 1 Tim. 6:13; Rom. 10:10.)

7. Men were commanded to be baptized for the remission of their sins. (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 10:48.)

8. This baptism put one into Christ, into the Lord's church. (Acts 2:41, 47; Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27.)

9. In Christ, brethren wore the name "Christian" because it was divinely given and because it gave honor and glory to Jesus Christ.

(Acts 11:26; Jas. 2:7; 1 Pet. 4:16; Acts 4:12.)

10. The church was referred to as being the church of the Lord, and the church of Christ. (Acts 20:28; Rom. 16:16.)

11. In their worship they taught (2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:15; Matt. 28:19, 20); they sang (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:15); they prayed (Lk. 18:1; Jas. 5:16; Acts 2:42; 1 Thess. 5:17); they observed the Lord's Supper every first day of the week as is shown by consideration of Acts 20:7 together with 1 Cor. 16:2.

12. As a matter of duty and to help others they contributed of their means every first day of the week. (1 Cor. 16:2.)

13. They had no creed but Christ and no book but the Bible. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 John 9; Gal. 1:8, 9; 2 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17.)

These are marks of the New Testament church. In Luke 8:11 the Lord taught that the seed of the kingdom is the word of God. Every seed brings forth after its own kind. The seed of the kingdom in the first century produced Christians and Christians only; members of the Lord's church and members of the Lord's church only. The same seed sown today will produce the same kind of crop. To produce something else, something else must be sown. But God forbids the sowing of anything else. (2 John 9; Gal. 1:8, 9.)

In order to be a New Testament church we must do what

was done in the days of the apostles. We must teach what was taught then. We must be what people were then. The church of Christ is pleading with all its power for a complete return to simple New Testament Christianity. We teach exactly what the Bible teaches, all of what the Bible teaches, and only what the Bible teaches. We wear the name

the Bible says wear, and worship God according to the divine pattern. We have no creed but Christ, and no book but the Bible. We call Bible things by Bible names, and do Bible things in Bible ways. We endeavor to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where the Bible is silent. In no other way can we be the New Testament church.

How Would You Like This?

A church that is undenominational? (1 Cor. 1:10.)

A church with no head but Christ? (Eph. 1:22, 23.)

A church with no creed but the Bible? (2 John 9-11.)

A church with only a Bible name? (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2.)

A church organized by New Testament pattern? (Phil. 1:1.)

A church without any amusements to draw crowds? (John 12:32.)

A church with a divine vocabulary? (1 Pet. 4:11.)

A church supported by the free-will offerings of its members? (1 Cor. 16:2.) (No begging, rummage sales, pie suppers nor amateur programs, etc.)

A church that looks more to the adornment of its members in holy living than to the adornment of the meeting houses?

A church that observes ordinances of the New Testament regularly; continuing stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayer. (Acts 2:42.) **When?** "Upon the first day of the week." (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Eph. 5:19.)

If you like this, find the church that believes and practices such. Investigate the church of Christ in your community. ---Selected

Best Christian Paper Available

I sent \$2.00 (two dollars) that I might not miss a copy of the **Gospel Digest**. Do hope you received it, as I don't want to miss this wonderful book. It is by far the best Christian paper I know of, and I have taken quite a few. --- Mrs. C. E. Stewart, Richmond, Va.

Frank Poyner is the author of this article which was published in *The Church Messenger*, Nov. 15, 1954.

The Second Coming of Christ

The apostle Peter warned us saying, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Pet. 3:3, 4.) Since, in this fast-moving, pleasure-loving age, many are saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" we must continually remember that the blessed Lord Jesus Christ is coming again.

How Do We Know He Is Coming?

Jesus said, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1, 2.)

The angels said, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11.)

The inspired apostle Paul wrote, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels." (2 Thess. 1:7.)

Among the last words of the New Testament are these: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20.)

When Is He Coming?

No one knows the day of His coming. Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man." (Matt. 24:36.) "Watch therefore:

for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matt. 24:42.)

Do the angels know what day He will come? "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, **no not the angels of heaven.**" (Matt. 24:36.)

Then, did Jesus know the date of His coming? "But of that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, **neither the Son, but the Father.**" (Mk. 13:32.)

Even though we have these plain declarations from Holy Writ, frequently some reprobate man or woman will begin to preach that he or she knows just when the Lord will appear. These, beyond a shadow of a doubt, are false prophets.

Many years ago a man by the name of Miller prophesied that Christ would come on a particular day in 1843. His followers gave away their possessions and, on that day, went upon the mount to meet the Saviour. They waited and waited, but in vain. Of course, Jesus did not come. When will men learn that "of that day knoweth no man"?

However, the Lord did tell us what the condition of the world would be at the appearing of Jesus. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood

came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24:37-39.)

Need I tell you that today the world is exceedingly wicked? Men, today, are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Thousands are drinking, divorcing and remarrying, as the antedelvians did. Very few are watching and ready for the Lord's coming.

Dear reader, what about you? Are you ready for the Lord to come? Oh, I plead with you to obey the gospel; to be watching and ready for the Lord's coming.

How Will He Come?

Jesus came into this world in a very humble manner. He was born of an humble virgin and was conceived of the Holy Spirit. He had "no form nor comeliness." There was "no beauty that we should desire him." "He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." He "took upon him the form of a servant."

But His appearance will be altogether different. Jesus left this earth with a glorious appearance and shall return "in like manner" as He went. (Acts 1:11.) "He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him." (Rev. 1:7.) "The Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints" and with "his mighty angels." (2 Thess. 1:7; Jude 14.) "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." (1 Thess. 4:16.)

Oh, what a fearful and terrible vision it will be for the lost. Surely the sinner will hide in "the dens and rocks of the mountains,"

and say "to the mountains, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come." (Rev. 6:15-17.)

Friend, if you are not ready for His coming, Oh, I beg you to obey His word today. You cannot afford to be unprepared when He comes.

What Will Happen?

At least these four events will take place when He comes:

1. All of the dead will be resurrected. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." (John 5:28, 29.) This great resurrection will be at "the last day." (John 6:54.)

2. Everyone will be judged. "The Lord Jesus . . . shall judge the quick and the dead **at his appearing.**" (2 Tim. 4:1.) The future judgment will be on the same day as the resurrection—the "last day." (John 12:48.)

3. Vengeance will be rendered to the disobedient. "The Lord shall be revealed . . . in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God; and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction." (2 Thess. 1:7, 8.)

4. The righteous will be rewarded. "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, **shall give me at that day:** and not to me only, but unto all them also that love **his appearing.**" (2 Tim. 4:8.) The crown will be given "at that day"—"at his appearing."

Some teach that Christ is coming to reign in Jerusalem for one thousand years and that the wicked, during this thousand year period, will have a second chance to repent. They say that this millennium will be after the resurrection and before the judgment. But the Bible certainly does not teach such. Jesus said that the resurrection and judgment would take place on the same day—"the last day." (John 6:54; 12:48.) There will be no second chance! Prepare today! "Today is the day of salvation!"

Watch and Be Ready!

As the Lord delays His coming constantly remember that "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, . . . but is longsuffering to usward." And let us "account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation." (2 Pet. 3:9, 15.)

The antedelvian world was warned that a great flood was coming, but they did not heed the warning and all the creation was destroyed except Noah and his household. The world was not prepared!

The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were warned that the Lord would destroy their cities, but they did not heed the warning and were destroyed in fire and brimstone which rained from heaven. They were unprepared!

The Jews were warned that Jerusalem would be destroyed, but the majority of them did not heed the warning and were destroyed by the Roman army. They were not prepared!

Jesus is coming "quickly." "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." Be prepared when Jesus comes. Obey Him today!

Which Kind Am I?

Some "Christians" are like wheelbarrows—no good unless they are pushed.

Some are like canoes—they need to be paddled.

Some are like kittens—they are more contented when they are petted.

Some are like kites—if you do not keep a string on them they will fly away.

Some are like footballs—you cannot tell which way they will bounce next.

Some are like balloons—full of wind and likely to blow up unless handled carefully.

Some are like trailers—they have to be pulled along.

Some are like lightning bugs—they keep going on and off.

Some are like pure gold tried in the fire. (E. B. K.)

Which kind am I? — Evincor via The Riverside Reminder

The Lord's Supper

Elam B. Kuykendall

Text: 1 Corinthians 11:23-34

Introduction:

1. It is possible when we come together to do so "unto condemnation." (1 Cor. 11:17, 34.)
2. It is possible to "eat and drink damnation" unto our souls. (1 Cor. 11:29.)
3. Therefore we should study. (2 Tim. 2:15.)
- I. Jesus instituted the supper. (Matt. 26:26-30; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:19, 20.)
 1. Unleavened bread. (Deut. 16:3, 4; Ex. 12:15 -- no leaven; Matt. 26:19, 26; Lk. 22:7, 8, 19.)
 2. Fruit of vine. (Mk. 14:23-25; Lk. 22:18, 20.)
- II. For what purpose?
 1. Past. (Lk. 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24, 25.)
 2. Present. To strengthen us. (1 Cor. 11:30; John 6:53-58.)
 3. Future. (1 Cor. 11:26; Acts 1:11; Heb. 9:28.)
- III. Who must eat.
 1. Christians.
 2. Worthy? (1 Cor. 11:27-29.)
 3. Close communion? Communion is with Christ. (Rev. 3:20.)
- IV. How to observe.
 1. Unnecessary to discuss order, etc.
 2. Worthily. (1 Cor. 11:29.)
- V. What to celebrate.
 1. Birth?
 2. Death? (1 Cor. 11:26.)
 3. Resurrection.
- VI. When to celebrate.
 1. First day of week. (Acts 20:7.)
 - a. Memorable day for many reasons.
 - (1) Triumphant entry. (John 12:1, 12, 13.)
 - (2) At least 6 appearances. (John 20:1, 13; 20:19; 20:26; Matt. 28:1, 9; Mk. 16:9, 12, 14; Lk. 24:13, 15; 24:36.)
 - (3) Pentecost. (Lev. 23:15, 16 -- seven weeks.)
 - b. Christ conquered death. (Lk. 24:1-6; John 20:1, 14; Matt. 28:17, 18.)
 2. Every first day. (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 10:25.)

Elmer L'Roy wrote this article which is here taken from *The Gospel Light*, Sept. 23, 1954.

'Remember the Poor'

"Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do." (Gal. 2:10.)

It is a well-known fact that God made it the duty of His people in ancient times to remember the poor. He has taught the same care for the distressed in the New Testament. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (Jas. 1:27.)

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10.) The two plainest passages of Scripture that are used in preaching on giving are primarily concerned with the New Testament church's "remembering the poor." (See 1 Cor. 16:1, 2, and 2 Cor. 8 and 9.)

How Care for the Poor

The Bible does not specify the method or methods. We have the following examples: 1. An individual caring for the distressed. This is seen in the story of the Good Samaritan. (Lk. 10.) (See 1 Cor. 16:17 and Matt. 19:17, also.) 2. A church providing for the needy among its number. The Jerusalem church is an example of this. (Acts 6:1.) 3. Congregations cooperating in raising funds for the poor in another congregation. (Acts 11:27-30; 1 Cor. 16; 2 Cor. 8 and 9.)

The Worth of Beneficence

It would be impossible for any tangible amount of earthly goods to ever be set as the worth of genuine beneficence. It is the most valuable thing in the world. It brings happiness to the persons who practice it. (2 Cor. 9:6.) God in heaven has assured blessings to those who remember the poor. His Word says that they will never lose anything by contributing to the relief of mankind. (2 Cor. 9:10.) The Lord will never allow them to be bankrupt in doing good. As one man said: "As I shovel it out, God shovels it in, and His shovel is larger than mine." God will never forget their liberality, and a good deed is blessed forever. (2 Cor. 9:9.)

God's goodness to man is called an "unspeakable gift." (2 Cor. 9:15.) His was a gift of love. (John 3:16.) The greatest thing about man is his mind. He is distinguished by it from all other creatures. He thinks, reasons, remembers, loves. The last of them, **love**, is the greatest function of the mind. The greatest manifestation and proof of love is philanthropy. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his 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?" (1 John 4:20; see 3:14-18, also.)

Loving our fellowman requires the function of the will. There will be no relief for the poor except that our hearts be made

willing to feel compassion and to desire to sacrifice for another's benefit. But as "the road to hell is paved with good intentions," we must not stop here, for if charity is to be effective, there must also be the doing of it. **To do is to carry out the good intentions.** We must not say, "I am sorry for you, be ye warmed and filled," and at the same time do nothing to warm and comfort. (Jas. 2:15-17; 1 John 3:17, 18.)

Charity prompts the Christian to give. 1. According to his ability. (2 Cor. 8:12; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2.) 2. Judiciously: considering the needs of the distressed and at the time not hindering exertions by the needy to help themselves, for "if any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thess. 3:12.)

Benevolence is of inestimable worth. Remembering the poor is a work: 1. That requires the high-

est order of Christian men—testing faith and proving the sincerity of their love. 2. Of untold good for themselves and others. 3. Deserving the gratitude of all. 4. That brings the richest approval or the most fearful condemnation. Read it: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . ." **When?**—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

". . . Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: . . . Ye did not to me." (Matt. 25:34-46.)

The Devil Is Happy

1. When I willfully absent myself from the Sunday evening services.
2. When I quit the church.
3. When I am too stubborn to repent of my sins.
4. When I get peeved and refuse to attend the services of the church.
5. When I refuse to tell the brethren what I am peeved about.
6. When I willfully absent myself from the mid-week services.
7. When I refuse to do the things I can do to assist in the work of the church.
8. When my conduct causes the church to be blasphemed.
9. When my thoughts wander as the preacher talks about giving and godly living.
10. When I go one day without praying to my Father in Heaven.
11. When I make it a habit to be late for almost every service.
12. When I neglect to bring my children to the Bible classes.

Brethren, remember this: When the Devil is made happy by my conduct, **God is grieved!**
— Gospel Proclaimer

This article from *California Christian*, Jan., 1955, was written by Hubert G. Derrick.

A Message of Hope

Only those who are near the half-century mark in age can remember the days before 1914 when man's mind did not hold the lurking fear and confusion caused by three terrible wars and their aftermath. So constant has been the pressure that human nature, with its God-given power of self-preservation, has learned to adapt itself to such a framework of existence. Indeed, we have become inured, perhaps dangerously so, to cries of coming calamity. The invention and use of the atomic bomb awakened us somewhat from our stupor, but we have become accustomed to daily information and predictions concerning it. Too, the fact that its powers are beyond our comprehension has produced such mental fatigue that some of our citizenry go about the daily tasks with a "so what?" attitude.

Naturally, most of us are grasping for any sign of hope that things may not be as bad as they seem. Some place great faith in the efforts of United Nations; others feel that fear will prevent the use of such weapons. Neither of these convictions seems entirely justified: the first, on the basis of present results, and the second, from our past experience in predicting the end of war when gunpowder and dynamite were invented.

We do accept the word of our greatest scientists that hydrogen cobalt bombs exploded in the Pacific could waft dust over the United States to the destruction

of nearly all life, and almost everyone in every field, including science, agrees that the power to prevent such an event is to be found only in the spiritual area. Faith in God and His divine plan for man are absolutely essential to any hope for the future. Belief in the dignity of man and the value of the human soul, concern about and love for each living being, regardless of station, race and color, must underlie any effort for peace.

But history teaches us a terrible lesson, namely, that evil can increase and abound to the extent that cataclysms such as the Great Flood must come for the preservation of what good may be left among men. The "cup of iniquity" MUST overflow for the good of God's plan as a whole when men through stupidity and rebellion refuse to follow His laws and ways that have been made for the good of man, whom God loves dearly.

Christians have always lived in troublous times. Indeed, the people with whom Jesus walked and talked did not just **predict** calamity, they **had** it!! Their national hopes had been dashed, and nothing but gloom seemed to fill the future as far as material prospects were concerned. They did hope for the Messiah, but during Christ's time a great many imposters appeared to deceive the people in this regard.

What was the nature of the hope that they found in Jesus,

and what effect did it produce in their daily lives? For one thing, they found comfort and courage in prayer. From the beginning they "continued in prayer" (Acts 2), which helped to keep them in contact with God and Christ in what we are coming more and more to call "the world of reality." It is an encouraging note that our highest officials, from the President down, are putting increasing emphasis here. Certainly God's people should continue in prayer. Only such an atmosphere can make peace parleys profitable. Too, they began to apply the principles of living, such as are enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount. Men dared to "turn the other cheek" and to "go the last mile" with the hated Roman conqueror. Major General Dean pronounced this course as the only hope for changing the Communists' conviction when he said, after a long experience as a captive, "The ordinary Communist sincerely believes that his is the right way of life; we shall not convince him otherwise unless we **show** him something better." In other words, we must let him **see** Christianity in action.

We may not have an active part in legislation that will prevent catastrophe, but another thing we can do constantly is to develop an attitude of love toward our fellows, toward all men, regardless of race, nationality and station in life. We must recognize that every man is of supreme worth in our Father's sight, that Christ died for all. The very fear-born disposition to call others "niggers," "wops," "kikes," "rats," "skunks," is one of the greatest

enemies to peace. Love bears patiently with others, it hopes for the best.

Too, early Christians discounted the value of earthly possessions. Here is one of our greatest barriers to peace and good-will. All of us want good to reign "as long as it doesn't cost me anything personally." Most of us are like the rich man who **wanted** the kingdom, but who "had great possessions" that he worshipped.

In short, if we want God to save our lives we must make them worth saving!! This can be done by our continued quiet sowing of a harvest of peace in our daily lives.

However, will this be enough? Perhaps it will not, for at times in the past the salt lost its savour to such an extent that calamity came. And it may well happen again. The lives of good men may become forfeit also. The atom bomb has no respect for righteousness and goodness. Here is where true faith must enter the picture, for the basis of the Christian conviction is that our greatest hopes and dreams are not of **this** world anyhow, and that if our ship sinks it only delivers us into the loving hands of our Father. We must really believe that "if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. 5:1.) We must come to feel as Paul did, "Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." (Rom. 14:7, 8.) This faith is the "victory that overcomes the world," and the future may give us a chance to test it out.

One thing is certain: our efforts toward world peace may fail and the bombs may fall, but if Christians continue quietly sowing the seeds of righteousness,

their faith will stand in the evil day. Such a hope can keep us singing as we go. It is the basis of our optimism. It is our message of hope.

Let us heed the message brought by this article composed by Jesse M. Kelley for *The De Queen Boulevard Evangelist*, Jan. 7, 1955.

Who Can 'Come to God'?

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (John 6:44, 45.)

Who can come to God? He that "**hath heard** and **hath learned** of the Father." This idea of one falling down by his radio, or having some "miracle worker" lay his hands on him to be saved is a lot of foolishness. One must be **taught of God** before he can do what God would have him do. Hearing and learning are prerequisites of obedience to God. David prayed, "Teach me thy way. Oh Lord, and I will walk in thy truth." It is impossible for one to "walk in truth" without some knowledge of truth. We do not

mean to say that one must wait until he has a complete knowledge of the will of God before he becomes a Christian, but that he must know what God would have him as an alien sinner do in order to become a Christian.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:21. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." One may cry, Lord, Lord, without any knowledge whatever of the will of God, but he cannot **do** the will of the Father, as the above verse says he must do, without some knowledge of what God's will is. How can one obey the traffic laws without some knowledge of such laws? He cannot do it. He is expected to **learn** such laws, then obey them. The same is true of the law of God. One must hear and learn, then obey.

The G. A. Centennial Drive Gains Momentum

The campaign to raise the circulation of the *Gospel Advocate* to 50,000 in '55 is succeeding beyond our most optimistic expectations. The beginning of the drive at the Lipscomb Lectures, with 12,500 subscriptions in cash and pledges, was a prediction of things to come. From every section of the country preachers are sending clubs and indicating their intention of getting one hundred subscriptions, or more, this year.

—Gospel Advocate

N. L. Clark in *The Truth*, Dec., 1954.

Self-Sacrifice for Christ

How much real sacrifice for the cause of Christ are you making, dear reader? Sit down and run up your account with the Lord. How do the debits and credits balance? You are indebted to the Lord for all you have and all you are that can be used for your own real interest and the glory of God. Perhaps you own a good farm or a paying business. You are enjoying the comfort of a home free from actual want. You go daily to your task with a light heart. Whatever you undertake to accomplish in a business way is attended with success. Perhaps you are head of a family in which sickness and death are almost entire strangers. Your happy family lives in the enjoyment of daily pleasures in the form of social, educational, and religious privileges. The Lord is blessing you. His goodness gives you all these means of happiness. What are you rendering to the Lord for all His goodness toward you? How many hours per week do you give to the service of the needy, as God commands you to do? What per cent of your earnings do you give to the cause of Christ? Estimate now as correctly as possible how much money or its equivalent you actually give to the Lord in a year. Then try to estimate what the Lord gives you. While engaged in this task, find out how much of your earnings you give for tobacco, whiskey, fine and unnecessary clothing, jewelry,

cheap and pernicious literature, lodge dues, taxes, etc. Taxes, of course, must be paid. This suggests the thought that many church members are giving more to support Caesar's government than they are to the word of the Lord. Hear the Saviour in the poet's words say:

"I gave my life for thee,
My precious blood I shed,
That thou mightst ransomed be,
And quickened from the dead.
I gave, I gave my life for thee!
What hast thou given for me?"

Near your own pleasant home dwells a poor widow. Death or something worse than death has deprived her of a husband. Now she must toil in lowest drudgery day after day to provide for the immediate wants of herself and her orphaned children. After the day's work is done, she lies down to rest upon her hard bed, racked with pains, and troubled with cares. When Sunday comes she dares not appear with her poorly clad little ones in the house where the more fortunate meet to worship God. Pride, fashion, worldliness, dwell in the house where only humility, simplicity, and godliness should ever be seen. Alas! how many of the Lord's poor are literally driven from our places of worship by the cruel laws of fashion?! How many imagine they are on the road to heaven while living in luxury and shameful pollution with the god of this world.

If you need an excuse, see the preacher. He's heard lots of them

This sobering article by L. R. Wilson is taken here from *Gospel Advocate*, Feb. 3, 1955. It was originally prepared as a radio address.

Why I Oppose Dancing

"Why do you oppose dancing?" This question is frequently asked, but somewhat like Governor Pilate asked our Lord, "What is truth?" without either waiting for or wanting an answer. However, there are some who really would like to know. Hence, this talk.

1. Dancing restricts one's appreciation for wholesome entertainment. This is evident from the oft-repeated question, "If young people don't dance, then what are they going to do for entertainment?" This is an admission that those who want to dance are not interested in any other form of entertainment. When I express my disapproval of dancing I am sometimes accused of being narrow, as if I were opposing the only worthwhile type of entertainment. The individual who wants to know what young people can do for entertainment if they do not dance is much narrower in his thinking than the one who opposes dancing. I would give up any form of entertainment so restrictive in its nature that nothing else satisfies.

2. Dancing takes too much of one's time. Those who attend the dance usually become so obsessed with it that they do not have time for church activities or for any type of wholesome entertainment. Dancing is so all-absorbing that everything else must give place to it. We can hardly have a convention of any kind without wind-

ing up with a big dance. Other matters of importance may be tabled, or carried over a whole year, but not the "big ball." When you find church members who attend the dance, you nearly always find them putting the dance first.

3. Dancing keeps one out too late at night. Rarely does a dance close before midnight. Usually it is just getting well underway by that time. A church service that runs more than an hour becomes terribly boring—especially to the dancing members. But the dance usually breaks up anywhere from two to four o'clock in the morning. One is hardly fit for church attendance, school work, or any other activity the day after the big dance. To argue that such practice is good for one physically, mentally, morally, or socially is to argue for something that has no foundation whatever in fact.

4. Dancing endangers one's health. The claim is sometimes put forth that dancing is a healthful exercise. No one questions the fact that dancing could be a healthful exercise, but the facts show that this is not generally true. The way public dancing is carried on does far more damage to the physical body than it does good. Usually those who engage in dancing never stop until they are exhausted. They dance in a crowded, smoke-filled room where they breathe the germs of everyone else. There the bodies

are overheated, then they go out into the night air, where their bodies are cooled quickly and they become an easy prey to the germs they have been breathing. Many cases of pneumonia and untimely deaths have been, or easily could have been, traced to the exposures of the dance hall.

5. **Dancing puts one in the wrong crowd.** It will be admitted that some church members attend the dance, but we cannot admit that the most faithful and most dependable members attend. Furthermore, we must not conclude that because **some** church members attend the dance **their** presence removes all the evils of the dance. We cannot escape the fact that by far and large those frequenting the dance are of the world. All classes from the average man of the world to the lowest type are found at the public dance. One cannot live in such an atmosphere without being contaminated by the evils of his surroundings. The apostle Paul made this quite emphatic, saying, "Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals." (1 Cor. 15:33.) The subject of conversation, the smoke-filled atmosphere, the alcoholic odors, the rhythmic strains of music, plus the closely moving body contacts, exert their demoralizing effects, not only upon our youth but upon our more mature people. It is impossible to completely escape the evil consequences.

6. **Dancing destroys one's love for the church.** Some argue that they can dance without being affected. If we grant this, which might be true in some instances, it is the exception and not the

rule. Certainly we should not base any general conclusion upon the exceptions. But we most solemnly protest when we are told that the public dance is beset with no more temptations than an ordinary church picnic. The will power of a few people may be strong enough to resist the temptations so characteristic of the dance, but these are in the minority. What is more: if people become regular attendants at the public dance it will not be long before they will be irregular attendants at the church services. The more people go to the dance the less they go to church. And the better dancers they are, the poorer Christians they are. The more they get out of the dance the less they get out of sacred worship.

7. **Dancing destroys one's influence for good.** Even if one who attends the public dance should attend all of the church services, he would have little or no influence for good. Dancing and spirituality are opposite in nature. Never do we hear of anyone being converted on the dance floor. Never does a great dancer become a great spiritual leader. Nor do we ever hear of a dance breaking up on Saturday night with everybody asking everybody else to be at church the next morning. Truly, the influence of one is opposed to the other. The more influence we have over the dancing crowd, the less we have over the church-going crowd.

8. **Dancing is a form of revelling.** Dancing is given as one of the meanings of the term "revelling." When you add to the accompaniments of dancing such

practices as eating rich foods late at night, smoking excessively, drinking intoxicating beverages, waltzing about on the dance floor until far into the morning, coupled with gaiety and hilarity, no individual can deny that this is a form of revelling, which Paul forbids in his long list of practices wherein, he concludes, "**revellings, and such like:** of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:21.)

9. **Dancing inflames the emotions.** Dancing would soon cease if it were not for the close body contact with the opposite sex. Add to the sex urge aroused by the body contact the rhythmic sounds of music, and the emotions often become inflamed to the point of bodily harm. Some of the well-known psychologists defend the dance on the ground that it is a partial satisfaction of the sex urge. (See **Psychology of the Adolescent**, by Leta S. Hollingsworth, published by D. Appleton and Company, 1928, p. 122.) This apology admits the inflaming of the sex desire, but assumes that which is not true. The biological facts of life are to the contrary. It is far better for one's health that the sex urge be not aroused than to allow it to be inflamed and then smothered. Furthermore, it is contrary to the Bible. The apostle Paul said, "They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof." (Gal. 5:24.) If we assume that inflaming the passions on the dance floor, which the psy-

chologists admit takes place, and if we may further assume that partial satisfaction is better than no satisfaction—which we certainly do not—we still must reckon with the consummated fulfillment of the sex urge, which so often takes place after the dance is over. It will be enough here to remind all thinking people of the promiscuity so prevalent now throughout our nation. That the dance is one of the major contributing factors to this loose practice can hardly be questioned.

But this is not all of the story. Every year, so we are told, more than 100,000 high school girls, from good homes, are recruited by the "syndicates" for "commercial" purposes. Those who have made a study of the figures tell us that more than seventy-five per cent of the recruits are first contacted at the public dance.

10. **Dancing endangers the peace and happiness of the home.** Many broken homes can trace their beginnings to the dance hall. A woman who may be a little tired of her husband gets in the arms of another man who holds her a little tighter, looks "divinely" into her eyes, and lifts her a little more gracefully on the dance floor—ah, what a delight! Yes, but often a delight that starts something which ends in a broken home, a broken heart, and creates more orphan children. Jealousies, quarrelings, fightings and sometimes killings have their beginning on the dance floor. To say that such things **could** start somewhere else is to beg the question. The fact that they **do**—yes, **often do**—start at the public

dance is enough to cause every thinking person to recognize the evils of the dance. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." All of the evils which grow out of the dance brand it as a corrupt tree.

The dance neither builds strong bodies, strong characters nor strong minds. Contrariwise, it weakens one's health, one's will to serve the Lord, one's influence for good, and leaves one an easy prey to all the dangers of a mispent and distorted life.

Selected by the editor of *The Impression* for the Jan. 30, 1955, issue.

Satan's Letter for the Winter

Satanic Realm
1-30-55

Mr. Lukewarm Christian
Wherever, U. R.

Dear Luke:

Glad you took my suggestion last summer, and did not bother too much about going to church during the hot weather. Now, you must watch out for the cold and rain and snow this winter, and not bother about going out in the weather, especially to go to church. You will need to go to your work every day and night, but that is different—it will not hurt you. But to go to church might be bad for your health this winter. And if the baby has a cold be sure the whole family does not go to church.

Do not take your religion too seriously. It might run you crazy

or destroy your lovely friendships. Why not suggest that the Bible study classes, evening worship service, the mid-week Bible study on Wednesday nights be discontinued. Don't forget to show your impatience if the morning worship is a little long.

Must stop now and write ole buddy Backslider. He's been intending to start back to church, and I am afraid he will. He might even confess that he has been unfaithful. That would be silly for him to do, and embarrassing, too. Of course you will be toooo tired to attend Bible study classes next Sunday morning. By the way, there is a good show on Sunday night. And then, how about a 42 party on next Wednesday night or a TV party???

Your friend & Father of Lies,
B. L. Z. Bub

Two More Baptized in Salzburg, Austria

The small band of Austrian Christians now meeting in Salzburg were greatly strengthened last month when two more souls were baptized into Christ.

Fourteen have been baptized since the beginning of this work less than two years ago.

—Bob Hare, Firm Foundation

We should all be awake to the facts presented in this article by Eugene Britnell in *The Gospel Guardian*, May 27, 1954.

Catholicism on Television

Have you ever spent a quiet evening watching television? If so, have you noticed the many free "plugs" the Catholic religion gets through the plays, newscasts, quiz shows, etc.? If you haven't, allow me to give you a synopsis of what I observed in just a few programs one evening.

It so happened that the evening I was watching the Catholics were observing the pope's birthday, and the fifteenth anniversary of his coronation as head of the Catholic Church. The first program I mention was a newscast on a nation-wide hook-up. It showed a film of the pope being crowned head of the Catholic Church fifteen years ago. In this film they showed the ring being placed on the pope's finger, along with these remarks: "This ring is worn in honor of Peter the great fisherman, who was the first pope." Yes, they slipped that in in a subtle way, but it still taught the point intended. Where is the Scripture that even hints that Peter was a pope? There is as much difference in the character and teachings of Peter and the pope of Rome as there is in black and white. The pathetic thing is the fact that there were thousands of people viewing and listening who did not know any better.

Then following this report, they switched us to one of the mid-western states for a look at the drought situation. To im-

press us with the seriousness of the drought, they showed a film of people gathered in a churchyard praying for rain. Who do you think they were? Yes, you guessed right, they were Catholics. The picture showed several of the Sisters with their costumes (I don't know what else to call them) on, and a group of children kneeling around them. They were all so arrayed in beads, crosses, etc., until you could hardly tell if they were in a religious service or a carnival. They were all looking upward, making the sign of the cross and holding the little beads filled with that sacred (?) water. They were jabbering as hard as they could, but all you could understand was, "Hail Mary, mother of God, Hail Mary, mother of God," every few seconds. To anyone who knows the truth, it took a strong and calm nerve to watch such mockery. Yes, I believe in praying for rain and anything else that we need from our Heavenly Father, but I do not believe in such prayers and religion as that.

A few minutes later, a popular quiz show came on the air. Now you wouldn't think they could get in anything on a quiz show at all, would you? On second thought, maybe that was the appropriate place after all, but anyway, they did. How? Well, they had an old gentleman on as one of the contestants who said he fought with General George Custer over 75 years ago. When the

quizmaster demanded proof of his age, he pulled out a baptismal certificate, and what do you think it said? Yep, that is right, it stated that he was baptized **the year he was born** in St. Mark's Church in some western town. Do you see what they got in there? Everyone knew that St. Mark's Church must have been a Catholic Church. And if he were baptized the year he was born that taught both sprinkling and infant baptism, much to the Catholic's delight.

Well, you would think that was enough for one evening, but it wasn't. The very next program was a play, and sure enough it had a religious scene in it and the men playing that part were dressed and addressed as Catholic "Fathers." (See Matt. 23:9.)

All this in one evening? Yes, and I went to bed early at that.

It is hard to see the Catholics get such freedom and kind treatment (for which I'm thankful) and their doctrine taught free in this good land, and at the same time think of what they are doing to our brethren in Italy. Is there anything fair about that? Do they really believe in religious freedom? Let us not deceive ourselves into thinking it can't happen here. The only thing that will ever destroy Catholicism is the same thing that will destroy Protestantism, Communism, and all other isms—the Truth of God. The only institution on earth that will ever teach this Truth is the church of the Lord, for it is "the pillar and ground of the truth."

Recent Responses at Nhowe Mission

Our hearts have been made to rejoice this month because the Word has been allowed to grow in the hearts of some of the students. Twenty-four students obeyed their Lord by putting Him on in baptism. We are thankful unto our Heavenly Father for these, and also for our own son, Foy, who obeyed the Gospel. —George Hook

Can Hardly Wait Until It Comes

I'm sending you eight new subscriptions and one for my own renewal.

The **Gospel Digest** is one of the best papers I have ever read. I can hardly wait until it comes. I have received lots of help from it. Please accept my thanks to you all and my thanks to God for the good work that you are engaged in. I pray that you will have a long, happy life to work for the Lord and that many souls will be won through the gospel of the **Gospel Digest**.

— Mrs. Hugh Van Sandt, Santa Cruz, Calif.

This was a first page article in the Jan., 1955, issue of *Truth in Love* of which Charles M. Campbell is editor.

Verbal Inspiration

The subject for this article was carefully selected. It is not enough to speak simply of inspiration. The modernists will quickly agree that the writers of the Bible were inspired, but when the word "verbal" is added they object strenuously. They believe the Bible writers were inspired but in much the same fashion as Shakespeare, Bacon, et al. Modernists do not believe in verbal, inerrant, miraculous inspiration. One modernist voiced this opinion in the presence of this writer: "The writers of the Scriptures did not even claim to be inspired." It will be the burden of this article to show (a very easy task) that such a charge is groundless. It is not possible to attempt to prove the verbal inspiration in such a short article, but it is possible to show that the apostles, prophets and other writers believed they were verbally inspired.

"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.) Our English word "inspiration" is derived from the Latin and means "the act of breathing into." However, the Greek word **theopneustos** literally means "God-breathed." Paul affirms that the Scriptures are God-breathed. The fundamen-

tal idea of this passage is that the Bible is the product of the God of heaven.

The apostle Peter speaks very plainly in 2 Pet. 1:19-21: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The word "moved" means "to bear." The men who wrote were taken up by the Holy Spirit and carried or borne to the goal of God's own choosing. The men who were thus carried did not determine the goal or the means by which that goal was to be attained, but God bore them by His power.

Both of the preceding Scriptures are very forceful in their teachings and would be sufficient to convince the honest inquirer, but the plainest of all Scriptures on verbal inspiration is 1 Cor. 2:12, 13. 1 Cor. 2 is a beautiful chapter that describes the mystery of the gospel. Paul affirms that this mystery hath been revealed unto us by God through the Spirit. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no

man, but the Spirit of God. (v. 11.) Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Notice closely what Paul teaches in this chapter. The apostles received the things of God. They communicated those things unto their hearers, but they did not use "excellency of speech or of wisdom." They did not speak in "words" which man's wisdom taught, but "which" (this "which" refers to "words") the Holy Spirit taught. Further Paul says we compare spiritual things with spiritual. The American Standard Version adds the word "words" after the second word "spiritual" in verse 13. Inspired men used God's words to reveal God's ideas.

Final proof that the Bible writers claimed to be verbally inspired will be taken from both the Old and New Testaments by citing a long list of statements from these writers. Jehovah said to Jeremiah, "Say not, I am a child; for to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid because of them; for I am with thee, saith Jehovah. Then Jehovah touched my mouth; and Jehovah said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." (Jer. 1:4-9.) God commanded Jeremiah to speak "all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a 'word'."

(Jer. 26:2.) He further instructed the "weeping prophet" to "write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book." (Jer. 30:1, 2.) "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken." (Micah 4:4.) "Hear the word of the Lord." (Isa. 28:14.) "Then spoke Haggai Jehovah's messenger in Jehovah's message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith Jehovah." (Hag. 1:13.) God said to Moses, "I will be with thy mouth." (Ex. 4:12, 15.) When Peter addressed some of the disciples he said, "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas." (Acts 1:16.) The same apostle cried as he was preaching on Solomon's porch, "But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." (Acts 3:18.)

The last two Scriptures cited are particularly appropriate. It was David that spoke, but it was the Holy Ghost who used David. The prophets were the ones who showed, but it was God who told them what to show. David, Moses, and the other inspired men were merely the spokesmen for the Lord.

It is very necessary that we understand what the Bible teaches on the subject of inspiration and that we preach the truth. When men reject the verbal inspiration of the Bible, they are headed for complete rejection of the Word. Let us plead earnestly for the truth on this as well as on every subject taught in the Bible.

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You Can Do Personal Work

By Otis Gatewood



A HUNGARIAN REFUGEE, a former Nazi spy, a new convert from the East Zone of Germany, a former Frankfurt orphan, and a converted Lutheran Church nurse are present in this picture at the Gatewood family dinner table in Frankfurt, Germany — all converted through personal work.

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What the Apostles Taught

During the forty days that Jesus was on earth after His resurrection and before His ascension He gave His disciples the great commission and also said to them: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8.) The editorial in the February **Digest** showed that when Peter preached the first gospel sermon in Jerusalem after the church was established he preached exactly what Jesus in the great commission had said for the apostles to preach. He preached that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and then told the people to believe, repent and be baptized. In this article other representative examples of the apostles' teaching will be reviewed. It will be noticed that the gospel spread just as Jesus had said it would.

Philip at Samaria

When the Christians were scattered from Jerusalem because of the severe persecution that arose after Stephen's death, "... they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." (Acts 8:4.) When Philip preached the gospel at Samaria the people received it gladly. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they

were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done." (Acts 8: 12, 13.)

From the above Scripture it is clear that Philip, like Peter, preached the gospel of Jesus. The people believed this message and were baptized, as were the people on Pentecost.

Nothing is said here about the people repenting, but the fact that they were baptized indicates that they did repent. Acts 17:30 states that God "now commands all men every where to repent." Since that is true, the people evidently repented even though the text does not mention it.

The Spreading of the Church

After the gospel was preached in Jerusalem and Judea, it began to spread to other places. One of the first cities outside of Judea and Samaria to receive the gospel was Antioch in Syria. (Acts 11:19-26.)

When the church was well established in Antioch, it became a radiating center from which preachers were sent all over the then-known world.

The Philippian Jailor

The first city in Europe to receive the gospel was Philippi. After Paul and Silas had converted Lydia and her household persecution arose, and they were thrust into prison. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16:25-31.)

If we should stop reading the story at verse 31 we would get the impression that this man was only told to believe. It would be well to note that Paul did not say to "only believe." Reading on we find, "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and

washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." (Acts 16: 32-34.) Although repentance is not mentioned here, it is definitely implied. Had the jailor not repented he would not have fallen at the feet of prisoners, brought them out of the prison, nor washed their stripes. Neither would he have been baptized. Like the others we have examined, he heard the gospel, believed it, repented and was baptized.

We have examined one example of the teaching of Peter, one of Philip, and one of Paul. In each of these the same thing was taught, and the sinners did the same things to be saved. A further study of the work of the early disciples would reveal that all of them taught and practiced the same things. Surely these are the things the Lord wants taught and practiced today.

Early Christians

Those early Christians were respectable and respected. Those on the outside of the church had great respect for the children of God. The disciples had favor with all the people. (Acts 2:46.) Honest folks cannot help admiring a genuine Christian. He may fight the doctrine, but deep in his soul he is forced to honor the real Christian. In our day there is not enough difference between too many members of the church and the world. The world cannot see wherein the Christian is much different from them. Maybe they attend the same dance, see the same show, sit at the same card table, bathe in the same mixed bathing pool, belong to the same lodges and clubs, laugh at the same dirty stories. The line of demarcation between the world and the church is wide and deep. The Lord made it that way. It is not our business to narrow this line. Our business is to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. (Jas. 1:27.) And, brother, you are not keeping yourself unspotted from the world when you do the same things that worldly people do. We are in the world, but we are not of the world.

It is no wonder the early church grew by leaps and bounds. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47.) Our growth will be phenomenal (?) when we adhere to the old paths and walk therein. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and breaking of bread and in prayers."

— Selected by Editor of Arab Bulletin

Laughing Ourselves into Hell

America laughs itself into hell! Everywhere you see billboards shout at you, "Hilarious . . . funniest comedy of the year!" On TV, radio and movies we see people knocking themselves out trying to entertain. They think if America would only collapse in mirth, all would be well.

Frankly, I don't feel like laughing. I can see ideals, standards and heritage dying before our eyes. In night clubs half naked women go through contortions and tell filthy jokes while America laughs. In bars men and women sit with their drinks about them. Some half-drunk rises and tells an obscene tale, and they all stagger to their feet roaring.

At a Washington cocktail party, top government officials stand, glasses in hands, planning our war strategy. Around them, partially drowning their conversation, is the hollow laughing of men and the shrill cackling of sophisticates. A man tells of losing his shirt at the race track . . . it sounds funny to all. Overseas the entertainers make the boys laugh. After all, they may die tomorrow; let's laugh today. Two men stand in the corner; "Quite a gal," says one and winks. They both laugh.

America finds sin very funny. We are not the first to have done so. Babylon saw it that way before the handwriting came on the wall. Rome likewise faded away. France was very gay, but moral decay became cancerous.

There seems to be an absence of heartfelt sorrow for sin in our land. We need real recognition of sin and genuine sorrow for it . . . if we are to survive. "If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chron. 7:14.) Let's return to the old ways and work toward a revival of the standards of decency and dignity that once characterized our nation. Let's stop laughing ourselves into hell!!

—Selected and rearranged by editor of "Restoration Banner"

"The Bible has been the Magna Charta of the poor and oppressed." — Thomas Huxley

"The Bible is the Word of life." — Woodrow Wilson

We are indebted to Leonard M. Gray for this fine article from *The Christian Advocate*, Nov., 1956.

Dancing Is Dangerous

Such a popular thing as the modern dance cannot be questioned without raising the blood-pressure of many who dance. I realize that it is accepted as quite proper by most people and that it is even practiced and recommended by some who would like to have you think that they are concerned about your soul's salvation. Some of these are men who claim to be leaders in Christianity and in pure moral living. In expressing the opposite views contained in this article I do not do so out of a desire to be harsh, hard or unkind. I do not do so with any fanatical pride. I do so solely out of fear—fear for the youth of our generation who are following so blindly in the footsteps of their parents—fear for the parents who are so shockingly ignorant and indifferent as to the moral, social and spiritual examples they set for their children—and a fear for the eternal destiny of both. I ask only one thing of you who read these words. I ask that you be honest with yourself.

What Is "Recreation"?

The word recreation has come to mean just about anything a person does that he does not consider work. To the man who makes his living fishing, gardening is recreation. To the man who makes his living on a vegetable farm, fishing is recreation. In its true meaning the word simply means "to create again." The true idea of the meaning of the word

is a refreshing or a replacing of that which has been used up or exhausted.

When you consider recreation in its true meaning, then dancing falls into its proper place—it is not recreational (of anything good) at all. It is actually destructive instead. If it is recreational, what does it recreate? what does it strengthen? Some claim that it is recreational because it provides exercise. This is often given as the reason people dance. If this is true then what causes the postman, who has pounded the pavement from dawn to dusk, to hurry home to his bath and rush off to a dance? Is his body aching for some exercise? What of the farm boy who has followed a span of oxen over the soft field all day or the salesman who has called on a score of homes and business houses during the day? What of the office girl who has walked 10 miles between desks, filing cabinets and the boss's office since she began the day's work? These and the thousands of other people who put in a hard day's work do not dance because they want exercise. There is some other attraction that causes them to spend hours at the dance, in spite of the fact that they are already worn out from being on their feet all day.

Call it what you like. Give it as nice a name as you wish, but the answer is still the same. The attraction of the dance is the women or men with whom they antic-

ipate dancing. This is the true attraction, but it is so subtle in some cases that some actually do not realize that this is the thing that draws them—or if they do realize it they will not admit it, even to themselves. This seductive force is dangerous—it is destructive.

It Destroys Homes

The dance, with its attending evils, is one of the major causes of quarrels and fights between parents. These often lead to divorce and a broken home. How many thousands of children are there today who are suffering the physical and emotional pains brought on by broken homes? How many of these homes have been broken because father or mother left to live with someone he or she first met in a “harmless” dance? How many juveniles are suffering because of the delinquency of their parents? If there were no other charge against the modern dance but this one it would still be enough to condemn it.

It Destroys One's Appetite for Wholesome Entertainment

Dancing is of such a nature that those who participate in it regularly find all other forms of entertainment dull and lifeless. For people who love to dance, the evening's entertainment has been a failure unless there is dancing. Why? Perhaps it is because dancing allows the most liberties, and is the most risqué form of entertainment to be found which enjoys the approval of modern society as a whole. Put this to the test. Observe the modern social parties and see if it is not true

that the dance is considered a “must” in order for the occasion to be a success. Most of those who dance regularly have had their appetite for less thrilling things dulled or destroyed.

It Destroys One's Influence for Good Among Christian People

The more influence you have at a dance the less you have at church. The more interest you take in dancing the less interest you take in Christianity. What would the average partner think of you if you filled your dancing evening with Scripture and with a discussion of the person's need of the Lord and Christianity? How often has someone cut in to a dance with you and invited you to a religious meeting or asked you to let the preacher call on you to tell you about Christ and salvation? There are many thousands of dances held on Saturday nights throughout the world. Have you ever known of one of these Saturday night dances to close with an invitation to everyone to be sure to attend church the next morning—it being the Lord's day? Where are most dancers on Sunday? Yes, dancing destroys our spiritual influence.

It Destroys One's Love for the Church

Watch the Christian who is fond of dancing. His love for the church will cool his love for the dance or his love for dancing will destroy his love for, and interest in, the church. The more one dances the less that one worships. The more one meets with other Christians in fellowship the less he will go to dances. The more

you enjoy the dance the less you will enjoy the worship service. The more you enjoy the worship service the less comfortable you will feel on the dance floor in the arms of your neighbor's wife or husband.

It Destroys Modesty and Purity of Thought

Whether or not we like to admit it, the truth of the matter should be stated. The modern dance encourages immodest dress and impure thoughts. Lewdness, immodest clothing and dim lights are all part of the modern dance picture. The spirit of modesty, virtue and purity of thought toward the opposite sex—which characterizes every decent human being—is directly and stubbornly opposed to that spirit which goes along with dancing. One just cannot keep and develop both. In spite of the self-righteous claims of many dancers, the only real appeal and drawing power the modern dance has is the close contact of opposite sexes. How many tired husbands could be dragged out to a night of dancing if they were going to be restricted to their own wife for a partner? If all women present at dances dressed in strictly modest dresses and behaved in a strictly modest manner—never encouraging impure thoughts either by their dress (or undress), or by their actions, what effect would this have on the popularity of dancing? It is not uncommon for a modest girl to go dancing—but it is most uncommon for a dancing girl to go modest! Occasionally you will find someone who claims that he or she never has

an impure thought when dancing. I will grant that this is possible (if the person involved is sufficiently abnormal), but it reminds me of a little story I once read about a young woman who said that a Christian could go anywhere she wished. She was in a group of people visiting a coal mine one day. She appeared dressed in a lovely white dress. When she saw the disapproving looks of the old miner who was to lead the party down into the mine she asked petulantly, “Can I not wear this white dress down into the mine?” “Yes,” replied the old timer, “there's nothing to keep you from wearing a white frock down there, but there is sure something to keep you from wearing a white one back out.” So it is with the modern dance. There is nothing to keep a pure minded young man from going to a dance, but there is “sure something to keep him from coming out like that.”

Listen to Some Authorities

I do not ask you to accept these charges unless there is some evidence. I call to your attention some comments from people who are recognized as authoritative in their field. Since this effort is concerned with the subject of **dancing** among our **young people**, let us hear some authorities on both. Consider these comments from some authorities on young people. These are psychologists and psychiatrists who are primarily concerned with your children and their education.

J. Edgar Hoover (head of the American Federal Bureau of Investigation, and one of the world's

greatest fighters for better lives among our youth) has this to say: "Most juvenile crime has its inception in the dance hall, either public or private."

Dr. Frank Richardson (speaking before the Homeopathic Medical Association of New Jersey) said: "Dance halls are the modern nurseries of the divorce courts, training shops of prostitution and the graduating schools of infamy and vice."

Dr. L. S. Hollingsworth (Columbia University): "Dancing is thus an exciting and pleasurable recreation, as it affords a partial satisfaction of the sex impulse. . . ."

W. J. C. Visser (one of the few youth guidance psychologists in the Union of South Africa devoting his full time to the guidance of problem children), speaking in a symposium before a Port Elizabeth audience on the subject of "Juvenile Delinquency," strongly condemned the "Rock-'n'-Roll" and "Jitterbug" craze. In a private interview the following morning, while not condemning every form of dancing, he made the following statement especially for this article. "Our failure to provide wholesome recreational facilities—especially in the built-up areas of our larger cities—has resulted in our children filling the dimly-lighted "honky-tonks," even rushing over to dance through the lunch hour. This is definitely wrong and may lead to serious delinquency. My child will never take part in this "Rock-'n'-Roll and Jitterbug craze, because I believe it to be a return to barbarism and heathenism."

G. Lawrence (Chief Magistrate, Port Elizabeth). This highly-respected magistrate was a speaker on the same panel with Mr. Visser. In an interview for this article, Mr. Lawrence said: "As a magistrate I can say that almost every case of crime that comes before the courts is a direct result of drink. As a private citizen expressing his views I can say that dancing may stimulate sexual instincts, and that the combination of alcohol, which lowers one's inhibitions, and the dance may give rise to unseemly behavior." These words of warning from a man of exhaustive experience with people in all kinds of trouble should be taken to heart.

Dr. E. S. Sonners (noted specialist in nervous disorders from Chicago and Los Angeles) says: "I attack the modern dance as a reversion toward savagery. As a medical man, I flatly charge that modern social dancing is fundamentally sinful and evil. I charge that it is the most insidious of the manoeuvres preliminary to sex betrayal. It is nothing more or less than damnable, diabolical, animal, physical dissipation! Do brother and sister dance like that? Father and mother? Mother and son? I tell you the basic spell of the dance is the spell of illicit physical contact . . . we doctors know . . . a trail of broken homes proves this." (Remember, this comes not from some "narrow-minded," "dirt-digging" preacher—but from a specialist on your nervous system.)

Archbishop Spalding of New York. (Although I do not approve of the Catholic confessional from

a doctrinal point of view, the facts revealed through it are still facts.) This man states that of the "fallen" who come to him in confession, **nineteen out of twenty** declare that they "fell" through the dance. (**Popular Amusements** by Sinks.)

DEEP REGRETS

Some months ago a fine Christian girl was dating a boy who was not a faithful Christian. They succumbed to the general practice among young people of today of kissing and embracing each other in the intimate modern way. As time went by their familiarities increased until finally, with the young man leading the way, the girl's will power was broken down and they committed fornication. The Christian girl immediately realized her mistake, repented of the sin, and prayed for forgiveness. In fact, she has prayed daily and agonizingly for forgiveness through the intervening months. The boy has gone his way, found another girl and is now married. The Christian girl has also found a fine Christian boy and has fallen in love with him.

She still carries a burden in her heart. She wonders whether she really has the right to marry. She wonders whether she should tell her prospective husband about her indiscretion. She wonders whether he would still want to marry her. She wonders if she could bear to live with him through the years not having confided in him. She has repented; she has prayed; she has been forgiven; but the stain still lingers. Oh, if only someone had done a better job of teaching her and the countless thousands of other fine, decent young people about the seriousness of sin. — Batsell Barrett Baxter, *Gospel Advocate*

Greers to Stockholm, Sweden

On May 15, 1957, Mitchell S. Greer of Knox City, Texas, plans to leave New York City for Stockholm, the noted capital of Sweden. His plans to help establish the cause of Christ in Sweden are encouraged and supported by the church in Midwest City, Oklahoma, a suburb of Oklahoma City. The elders of this congregation have known Bro. Greer for about five years. His wife was a member of the Midwest City Church before their marriage in 1952. These elders have taken the responsibility of helping him to raise the necessary support, and sending his family with three others to start the work in Sweden. — Report from Midwest City Church

● Notes from The C. E. I. Store Office ●

By Bennie Lee Fudge

We Have Gospel Treasure in Athens

Churches throughout the Eastern part of the United States will be pleased to know that we have now stocked the entire line of Gospel Treasure Graded Bible Lessons at Athens. Until now all orders for these lessons have been filled from the Abilene, Texas, store. Eastern churches will now get two or three days' earlier delivery on these lessons, due to the shorter distance involved.

We seriously suggest that if you have Bible classes meeting twice each week you use Gospel Treasure lessons with all ages at one meeting and the "Use Your Bible" workbooks with all grades at the other meeting. This will get rid of the problem of overlapping and duplication of lessons and will also settle permanently the question of, "What shall we use next?"

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Compiled and edited by J. C. Choate. One hundred full sermon outlines. Such subjects as, "Little Sins," "The Story of Cain," "Neither Protestant, Catholic, nor Jew," "Lessons from Romans 12:9," etc. 196 pages. Cloth. **\$2.00**.

A. E. Emmons, Jr., gives some much-needed advice in this article from *Gospel Advocate*, Nov. 15, 1956.

'I Sit on the Back Seat Because. . .'

The back seats are obviously the most popular seats at the average church service. There is rarely a seat left on the back row. Usually the front seats are empty. **Why?**

There are a few—but only a few—who have justifiable reasons for wanting the back seats: mothers with small children (although even this is debatable), people with special physical problems, certain ones who have particular duties to perform, etc. But why do so many others flock to the back seats? Let us see if we can gain a better understanding of the problem in this way!

"I sit on the back seat because:

"I am an extremely zealous and enthusiastic Christian, and I find I can generate more enthusiasm on the rear seats.

"I like to take a more personal and energetic part in the worship, and I find I can do this better on the back seats.

"I want others to see my good works and be led by them to glorify God (Matt. 5:16), and I am convinced that my influence for good over the lives of others will be increased by sitting on the back seat.

"I want to help make the song leader's task an easier one; so many people don't cooperate with him, and that makes the singing sound "draggy," and I am sure I can help him cure

this situation if I sit on the back seat.

"I really enjoy encouraging the preacher; his is a hard job at best, and I know it is an encouragement to him for me to sit just as far away from him as possible.

"I believe it is a Christian's responsibility to encourage young people and to serve as an example to show them how to be better Christians, and I am sure I will accept my share of this responsibility if I sit on the back seat.

"I come to the service because I really enjoy the worship; it thrills and inspires me. I sit on the back seat because there is less distraction and confusion there, and hence I can enter more heartily into the worship. The back seat inspires me.

"I want Jesus to know how much I appreciate Him and His church, and I feel that sitting on the back seat is the best way to demonstrate this."

Honestly, does anyone seriously believe a single one of the above statements? Does this not point out one of our most common weaknesses? How can any sensible Christian claim he can be a better Christian by sitting on the back seats? The hard-boiled truth is: if our members were what they should be, if they loved the Lord half as much as

they pretend to love Him, there would be plenty of back seats vacant. To sit on the back seats without good cause is merely an indication of a lack of interest and enthusiasm. The church would go out of business if its life depended upon the "back-seat-members."

To show that this is not simply the conceptions of another preacher, I here quote a piece from the *Houston (Texas) Post*, in which Lawrence Gould, a consulting psychologist, answered the question: "Is it modesty that makes one take a back seat in church?"

Mr. Gould said: "I very much doubt it. Any minister who knows psychology has realized that the reason why so many people do this is fear of committing themselves too completely to what being in the church stands for.

After all, nobody takes a back seat at a ball game if he doesn't have to, because there is no one who expects you to be more than a spectator. No doubt people take front seats in church for various reasons, but the ones who do are usually those who are willing to work hardest and make the most generous contributions."

This is not what a preacher said, but the words of a consulting psychologist. Could it be that the habitual "back-seaters" are after all the "spectators" at church services?

Christian friend, let me plead with you to break yourself of this unfortunate habit. Believe me when I tell you that you will be a better Christian, and your chances of going to heaven will be immeasurably increased.

They'll Do It Every Time

The preacher had just concluded a hot and scathing sermon on the sin of swearing. He had stated several times that he knew that one of his hearers was guilty.

The service ended. The worshippers one by one filed out the door. The first to go was a woman never suspected of using foul language. With a red and angry face she exclaimed, "I'll never darken this door again." Before the astonished preacher could recover from the blast, another said, "Well, brother, if I had known you were near last week, I would have been more careful of my language." A third said, "I think that you might at least have come to me privately about it, rather than telling it to the whole church." A fourth remarked angrily, "I was never so embarrassed in all my life."

Then came the real culprit—the one at whom the preacher had aimed all his remarks. With a bland and innocent smile he grasped the hand of the preacher and said, "Brother, that was what I call a real sermon. You certainly did pour it on them today."

—Via "The Biloxi Beacon" and "The Christian Journal"

From *The Christian Conscientious Objector* by James D. Bales, pp. 52-55.

The Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of War

Unless the spirit of Christ in Christians today produces the acts of war and the spirit of war, it is impossible to harmonize the spirit and acts of war with those of a Christian. Which statement, in each of the following pairs of statements, is in harmony with Christ's teaching? "Blessed are the merciful," or "Have no mercy on the enemy" (Stalin)? He died to make men free, or he killed to make men free? Love your enemies, or hate them? Do good to those who spitefully use you, or strike those who strike you? Good for evil, or bomb for bomb and more if possible? Spiritual weapons (2 Cor. 10:5; Eph. 6:14), or carnal weapons? Children of God, or "angels of hell"? War not after the flesh (Eph. 6:12), or shed blood and kill? Jas. 4:1; Gal. 5:24, or indulge and inflame them? Swords to plowshares, or plowshares to swords? Isa. 11:9; 65:25, or hurt and destroy? John 18:36, or fight? Matt. 26:52, or draw and use it? Eye for an eye (Matt. 5:38ff.), or no eye for an eye? Rom. 12:17-21, avenge not, or avenge? Mk. 8:34, or inflict suffering as well as bear it? Do as you want to be done by (Matt. 7:12), or do as you have been done by? Poor in spirit, or proud in spirit and nationalism? Meek, or resentful? Peacemakers, or warlike? Persecuted for righteousness' sake, or avenge oneself? Try to kill, or to save those who reject and oppose the Christ (Lk. 9:51-56)? Use in-

struments of redemptive love to redeem man, or instruments of vengeance to destroy man?

The following experiments will convince one of the full force of the impact of the spirit of Christ against the spirit of war. (1) Contrast a description of the most deadly and efficient soldier with the New Testament description of the noblest Christian. (2) Pray for the essential nature of war in Jesus' name. (3) See if Christian teaching would be accepted by the army as good pre-flight instruction.

(1) A prominent columnist described a commando as an individual who has been taught "in the ruthless forms of murder and attack. They are," he said, "turned and ground to a fine edge, too, in their hate. They hate more than any other men in the world." Notice newspaper and war books for descriptions of fighting men in action and ask: Is a description of the most efficient soldier in the world also the description of the noblest type of Christian? If Christians have the authority of Christ to kill they have, by virtue of that fact, the authority to become the most efficient killers in the world. A Christian ought not to do anything in which it would be wrong for him to excel.

(2) Christians should be able to pray concerning their activities and do their work as unto the Lord. The essential acts of war, those acts which are inseparable

arably connected with war, should be the object of Christian prayers if they are to constitute a part of the actions of a Christian. Should Christian lips pray Mark Twain's war prayer, which was penned in satire? "O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the cries of the wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended through wastes of their desolate land in rags and hunger and thirst, sport of the sun-flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it; for our sakes, who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask of One who is the Spirit of love, and who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset, and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Grant our prayer, O Lord, and Thine shall be the praise and honor and glory now and ever. Amen." (Richards, Leyton, **Realistic Pacifism**.) Shall we add: "Lord, may they suffer, tenfold over, all the anguish which they have caused

us and others, and, Lord, help us personally to see to it that they so suffer. Bless our propaganda and blast theirs, nurture our spirit of hate and vengeance that we may be more efficient in this work. Sanctify thou every means which we find useful in destroying and deceiving our enemies. Overlook any spiritual and moral lapse which, Lord, are an inevitable product of modern war. We pray in the name of gentle Jesus, who, on a Roman cross, placed there by hate, prayed: 'Forgive them for they know not what they do.' And forgive us, Lord, even as we forgive those who trespass against us. In the name of the Saviour, who died for men of all races, Amen." If thus praying for the instruments and acts of war seems to gag in your Christian throat, perhaps you can sing a song written by William T. Polk.

"Jesus, Lover of my Soul,
Help me drill a deadly hole
In my foeman's heart or face,
Loins or any vital place,
Abide with me, and do not pass
Till I have filled his lungs with
gas."

If you think that this is blasphemy, and if you cannot sing it with the spirit and the understanding (1 Cor. 14:15), then why prostitute your body to such acts which are an essential part of modern war. If it is blasphemy to speak it as a sincere prayer song, then why is it right to do it? to actually perform such acts?

(3) No army, that I know of, teaches the Beatitudes as an essential part of the development of an efficient soldier. The ser-

mon on the mount will make a noble Christian. Will it make an efficient soldier? Will it cultivate the spirit of the acts of war? Nowhere does the word of God, which furnishes us to every good work (2 Tim. 3:16, 17), furnish us with the spirit and the acts which are involved in the rain-

ing down of destruction upon an enemy. And since the Christian is a personality, and not an automaton, how can the spirit of war and the spirit of Christ animate the same individual at the same time? One spirit must be laid aside if the other spirit is to reign in the individual's heart.

Self - Denial

"And he said unto all, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Lk. 9:23.) These words of the Master deal more directly with Christian living and church work than we might think. As in the parable of the great supper, even yet today, when brethren are urged to "Come; all things are now ready," many with one consent begin to make excuse. Personal affairs are given first consideration, the Lord's work second or third. Sometimes when one is corrected, even in a spirit of meekness, he tries to justify himself in self-defense.

The awful thing about excuses is that no one is deceived except the poor one who forgets to deny himself before his Lord. Everyone with any experience knows that we usually manage to do what we want to do. Why not be honest with ourselves and spread the truth instead of making excuses for our failures and shortcomings? "For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." (Lk. 14:24.)

The challenge is to each of us. Life comes only to those who lose their own. Explicit faith in the word of God brings greater personal gain than does even one's whole life devoted to selfish interests. There is an epitaph which reads:

What I spent I had.
What I saved I lost.
What I gave I have.

A life of service is the greatest thing any of us will ever have to give. — C. M. Coleman via "Macomb Caller" and **The Old Paths**

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Did You Know That . . .

The church of Christ is the same today in origin, name, mission, doctrine and in practice as when built by Christ more than 1900 years ago.

The church is the oldest church in existence that claims to be Christian. She began in Jerusalem, 33 A. D. The Catholic Church is the second oldest, having begun no sooner than 606 A. D. in Rome, Italy, some 573 years later.

All the apostles were members of the church of Christ. (Eph. 2:20.) Some say that Alexander Campbell started the church of Christ, but this is not true. He was not even the first to plant it on American soil. James O'Kelley began this work in America in 1794; Abner Jones, in 1800; Barton W. Stone, in 1804. Campbell was not born until 1788; did not come to America until 1809; and was not baptized until 1812.

One big difference in the church of Christ and other religious bodies is expressed in the principle: "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where it is silent, we are silent." We seek authority from the Scriptures for all that we teach and practice. Others appeal to the Bible for what is forbidden, thinking that silence permits liberty. It is this principle that explains why the church of Christ does not foster: titles of distinction (Matt. 23:8), denominational machinery (Eph. 3:21), joining the church of your choice (Acts 2:47), instrumental music in worship (Eph. 5:19), begging money from the world (2 Cor. 9:7), and special days as Easter or Christmas. (Gal. 4:10.)

— Paris, Texas, Church Bulletin

A Pessimist

A Georgia farmer sat one day at his shanty door, smoking a corn cob pipe. Along came a stranger — "How's your cotton coming?" he asked. "Ain't got none," replied the farmer. "Didn't you plant any?" "Nope," he said, "'Fraid o' boll weevils." "Well, how's your corn crop?" "Didn't plant none; 'fraid o' drowth." "Well," finally asked the stranger, "How are your potatoes?" "Ain't got no 'taters either," said the farmer, "Scairt o' 'tater bugs." "Well, what did you plant?" "Nuthin'," declared the farmer, "Just playin' it safe." Too often the progress of a congregation is blocked by a pessimist just "playing safe."

— Reprint in "The Apostolic Voice"

That Roman Catholics still use violent methods to put down opposition when they can is well illustrated by this editorial from the Jan. 3, 1957, *Gospel Advocate*.

Persecution in South America

In the current issue of *Signs of the Times*, a Seventh-Day Adventist publication, the editor calls attention to the brutal treatment of the freedom-loving Hungarians by the Russians, as they strike to regain their lost liberties. He expresses his sympathy for them in their hour of suffering and martyrdom. Then, he calls attention to the misfortunes that have befallen Seventh-Day Adventist missionaries in South America and suggests that we should show some concern about them and sympathy for them. He says,

"At the very time that the Hungarian people were moving into their hour of anguish, the following incidents were taking place in a certain South American republic:

"On August 10, 1956, a Seventh-Day Adventist layman was beheaded in the presence of his family in his own back yard. On the same day another member was decapitated and dismembered.

"On September 5 the missionary leader of the Seventh-Day Adventist church in ----- was shot to death in the door of his home.

"Three other adults, who were to have been baptized into the church on September 29, were murdered.

"Two boys, 12 and 14, known in their community as the singing 'Sabbatists,' and who also were to have been baptized on

September 29, were tied back to back and given the order, 'Sing, Heretics!' They sang their songs, after which they were kicked, beaten, and finished off with daggers.

"Here is the full catalogue of crime for 1956:

"Churches closed, 3. Companies disbanded, 10. Persons killed, 9. Laymen imprisoned, 89. Workers imprisoned, 21. Bible colporteurs imprisoned, 87. People forced to flee from their homes, 234.

"It is not a pretty story, but it is true. The figures are vouched for by the Inter-American Division of Seventh-Day Adventists, and were made public at the recent biennial mission council in Washington, D. C.

"Surely these poor people in this South American republic are as deserving of our sympathy as the people of Hungary. True, they are not fighting for political liberty; they are merely seeking religious liberty without fighting at all. All they ask is freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, which in their case means freedom from the tyranny of the dominant church of their land.

"One wonders why the United Nations does not concern itself with such a shocking situation as that set forth above. Perhaps when its new police force has successfully separated the Israelis and Egyptians, it could move

into this Western country and see that justice is done.

"Meanwhile, let us share our sympathy and our prayers with those suffering people at our doors."

We have no brief for the tenets peculiar to Seventh-Day Adventism, but we do think that Seventh-Day Adventists who are persecuted and put to death by Catholics in South America should, at least, be as much a matter of concern to us as the Hungarians who are persecuted and put to death by Communists in Europe. Rome, with an air of injured innocence, will cry out against Communist persecution in Hungary, while at the same time her hands are reeking with the blood of slaughtered Adventists in South America. It is rank hypocrisy for Rome to anathematize the Communists for their torture of Mindszenty and others in Hun-

gary while they are decapitating Adventists in South America. Our sympathy goes out to people who are being persecuted in any land. We see no reason why the persecution of minority groups in South America, some of them American citizens, no doubt, should not be a matter of concern to us and our government as well as the persecution of citizens of a foreign government in Europe. Rome, no doubt, is delighted to have our government investigate conditions in Hungary, as far as such is possible; but how she would howl if such an investigation were proposed for conditions in our neighboring continent to the south! But why not? Why should we not seek religious freedom for South America as well as for Europe — religious freedom for Adventists as well as Catholics — religious freedom for all.

One in Fifteen

Suppose I were to be out on a picnic with 14 boys and girls, and suggest that we all walk across a certain pasture, explaining that it was alive with rattlesnakes, and that one of the fifteen would be bitten by a rattler if we did. How many of the young people do you suppose would favor the hike?

In our country there are 60 million people who drink beverage alcohol, and of that number there are 4 million alcoholics: confirmed addicts, and as helpless as babies where alcohol is concerned. Every one of these alcoholics became one by taking his first "hike" (drink). Had he not taken the first one, he would not have become an alcoholic. There is no way to become an alcoholic but by drinking alcohol! One in fifteen! Wouldn't it be sensible for us to stay out of the "pasture"? The risk is too great, even if there were no spiritual aspects of the thing to consider. Stay out of the pasture!

— Roy E. Stephens, "The Riverside Reminder"

This article is the text of a radio sermon preached by Bonds Stocks and printed in "The Christian Journal," Aug. 16, 1956.

Back to the Bible

Everyone who loves truth, everyone who is genuinely interested in the welfare of mankind, everyone whose heart is wrapped up in the spread of the glorious kingdom of God on earth, is distressed and grieved by the destructive, wasteful and chaotic division in the ranks of those who profess faith in the Prince of Peace.

It does not do any good to deny that division exists. The nearly 300 separate and distinct religious organizations in America, each with its own peculiar creed, confession of faith or discipline, are a grotesque monument to the terrible fact that professed Christians are torn asunder into rival factions and warring camps.

Neither does it serve any good purpose to play the part of the popular conception of the ostrich by plunging our heads into the inviting sands of unconcern, claiming that differences among various religious bodies are over minor matters. That is emphatically untrue. We may as well face the facts. The awful truth is that so-called Christendom is radically divided over the very fundamental teaching of the Bible. There is scarcely a cardinal doctrine of Scripture that does not find itself interpreted and applied in nearly "57 varieties" of conflicting ways in the contradictory and antagonistic human creeds that man, without the approval or sanction of God, has written.

Not only are thoughtful men

disturbed by this shameful situation, but the heart of the great and compassionate God of heaven is wounded by it, and the suffering, bleeding Son of God is daily crucified afresh because of it.

God's eternal purpose is being temporarily thwarted, God's benevolent program for the rehabilitation of man is being in many places sidetracked because of man's stubborn insistence on having his own way. Man can have his own way only by ignoring and flaunting the will of God. In maintaining the vast and multiple system of denominationalism, man is making impossible an affirmative answer to the passionate prayer of Jesus Christ in John 17:20, 21: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Did you ever carefully analyze this part of the Saviour's prayer? There are two significant things about it. Note, first, the kind and degree of unity for which Jesus prayed. He did not ask for a unity so loose, so broad and so flexible that every man may have the church of his choice. He prayed that His disciples would be bound together by the same sublime unity that exists between the Father and the Son, between Himself and God. That is per-

fect unity! That is unity par excellence! That is total unity! That is unity that leaves not a fraction of an atom of room for difference on any fundamental principle!

The second noteworthy thing about this petition is that it reveals the reason Jesus is so tremendously interested in the complete unity of His disciples. Here it is: ". . . that the world may know that thou hast sent me. . . ." (John 17:23.) What is the great overshadowing purpose of Christian unity? To demonstrate to the world that Jesus is the Christ, the dearly beloved and only begotten Son of the omnipotent God of the universe!

But there is one group which is not pained by the division in the religious world. Satan and his cohorts do not shed even crocodile tears when they see the body of the Lord torn asunder by strife and confusion. Hitler didn't invent the policy of "divide and conquer." That old serpent, the devil, devised that system centuries ago. Satan is not opposed to sectarianism. It is one of his most devastating weapons. Every time a new religious denomination, sect or society is established, Satan shouts for sheer joy, because it is another spear thrust into the side of the resurrected Lord. It means more division, and Satan thrives on division, because division retards the progress of the kingdom of God. By fostering denomination-ism the exponents of division are playing into Satan's hands and making themselves his instruments.

"That the world may know that thou hast sent me." Can any in-

telligent person seriously believe that the world can be taken for Christ so long as there are a thousand and one conflicting voices crying in the wilderness of confusion, "Lo, here," and, "Lo, there," each one claiming to represent the right way, and each one different from all the others? No wonder the man in the street is confused! No wonder that the thousands of sincere and honest souls whose hearts are bent on the quest for truth are perplexed! Sectarianism has thrown a whole mountain range of stumbling blocks in their path!

But the situation is not hopeless. God has never required man to do the impossible. God demands unity of His people. Therefore, unity is possible.

How can this unity be achieved? Here's the answer! Get back to the Bible! Scrap the whole system of denominationalism, and get back to the Bible! Throw overboard every vestige of human opinion, human tradition, human innovation and human invention in religion, and get back to the Bible!

For the most part, people are not divided over what is in the Bible. In 1 Cor. 14:33 the apostle Paul affirms: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

People are divided over what man has **added to and subtracted from** the Bible. The remedy for religious division then—and it cannot be too often repeated—is: get back to the Bible! Take the Bible and the Bible alone, without addition or subtraction, without mutilation or corruption, without alteration or perversion, as the

only standard of authority in religion, and as the only guide-book to eternity, and accept the New Testament as the only rule of faith and practice in spiritual matters.

Whenever this scriptural "back-to-the-Bible" plea is sounded a great conclave of voices raise themselves in scornful unbelief, shouting: "It can't be done. It's impossible. We can never see things alike." That's one of the oldest, most common, and most gigantic lies that Satan ever drilled into the hearts of men.

It is true that we do not see all things alike, but it is also true that we can see all fundamental spiritual matters alike, and here's the way to do it! Get back to the Bible! Men must lay aside their preconceived notions, they must overcome their prejudices, they must repudiate their man-made creeds, and get back to the Bible!

Now the Bible is God's revelation of Himself to man. And the apologist for religious division who claims that we cannot see the Bible alike is accusing the omniscient God of heaven of revealing Himself in such a vague, awkward, clumsy and complicated manner that man cannot understand His word.

This statement is made to an intelligent audience, in anticipation of the judgment when all men shall be called upon to answer for their words and deeds—and along with the statement goes a challenge to any exponent of religious division to refute it: There is not a shred of evidence in the New Testament to support the modern system of denominationalism. The New Testament knows nothing about denomina-

tionalism except to condemn it.

The New Testament outlines the perfect platform for unity in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, verses 3-6: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

The New Testament recognizes one body, one church, which is not a denomination of any description, but the body of Christ. The New Testament offers one hope, the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ to all those who obey Him. The New Testament glorifies one Lord, Jesus Christ, Who died for our sins and was resurrected to assure our eternal happiness. The New Testament teaches one faith—the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. The New Testament authorizes one baptism—immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of past sins. The New Testament honors one God, the Father of our spirits.

The New Testament church, the Lord's church, is in existence today. There are thousands of living and growing congregations of it in the United States and in various parts of the world today. You can become a member of the Lord's church by embracing the one faith, being led by the one Spirit, accepting the one Christ, submitting to the one baptism, and thus becoming heir to the one hope and live with the one God throughout eternity.

Comparison and Contrast

Ten Commandments

1. No other gods before me.
2. No graven images.
3. Not take God's name in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Not kill.
7. Not commit adultery.
8. Not steal.
9. Not bear false witness.
10. Not covet.

Jesus Teaches

1. Love God completely. (Matt. 22:37.)
2. God is a Spirit. (John 4:24.)
3. Speak Yea and Nay. (Matt. 5:37.)
4. None given.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother. (Eph. 6:2.)
6. Love your enemies. (Matt. 5:44.)
7. Not lust. (Matt. 5:27ff.)
8. Work so you can give. (Eph. 4:28.)
9. Speak the truth in love. (Eph. 4:15, 25.)
10. Seek not own. (1 Cor. 10:24.)

The ten commandments given to the children of Israel were mainly negative. They forbade the act. The teachings of Jesus are mainly positive in their nature. He teaches that not only the act is wrong, but the motive that is behind the act also brings condemnation.

—“The Gospel Light” (Bulletin)

Religious Freedom

The following statement is taken from a Catholic article in one of their papers called *Shepherd of the Valley*:

“When the Catholic Church shall be in possession of a considerable majority which will certainly be the case by and by, although the time be long deferred, then religious freedom will come to an end in the republic of the United States.”

— *Christian Chronicle* via Arab Bulletin

Good for Members and Non-Members

We are enjoying the *Gospel Digest* and want you to know that this is among the best. Truly it is the “cream of the crop.” For this reason I recommend it to be sent to members and non-members of the Lord's church.

— Paul Wilkinson, Trinidad, Colo.

Dow Wilson wrote this thought provoking article which appeared in *The Preceptor*, Jan., 1857.

The Church Building Craze

The true Christian's conscience compels him to sacrifice and work to “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” His love for lost souls drives him with the knowledge, “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” Though Jesus fed the multitude, raised the dead, and healed all manner of sickness, no permanent relief was found in those benevolent deeds from the Master. All such was means to an end: Hearts were opened, and the truths of the kingdom were preached so that they might enjoy the blessings of the kingdom of God forever. Though we may be absorbed in doing charitable deeds, if the gospel be not preached, the God of heaven will never be glorified and souls will not be saved. A life absorbed in charitable deeds might be lost because it might be thought that benevolent deeds are a fulfillment of duty to God and man. The materialistic mind can be misled in materialism in this respect.

Most folks believe that buildings to accommodate the teaching of the gospel are a wise investment of time and money. We may build a million-dollar building and never preach the gospel which is “the power of God unto salvation.” Instead of buildings being used to a wise and good end, they may be thought to be an end within themselves. We are impressed with the fact that no Scripture tells of a church owning

a building, much less spending out of the “budget” for a million-dollar building which crippled all their preaching activities for the next twenty years! Many fine churches have been established where there was no building at all and some of the most successful efforts in preaching the gospel have been under brush arbors and in country schoolhouses.

In our materialism we like that which satisfies the eye and demonstrates to the world that we are making progress. It seems that some think that when a building is built and paid for, it is time to slow up and rest a while since we can demonstrate to ourselves and the world our progress!

To demonstrate more visibly to the world, we seek to build as fine and as large a building as the best in town. Thus the building parade becomes a matter of competition. But remember that we are not competing with the sects in the building program. Our competition is in preaching the gospel of Christ which is surely such as will eventually crush every barrier of sectarianism and evil in existence! Let us not let the sects set a pattern of material activity. Materialism surely destroys spirituality and blinds to the true mission of the church of Christ. The church degenerates a bit every time a person is appealed to on the ground that we have a nice building.

One church in our section owns

a million-dollar building. So pious are they that they have erected to the Lord a \$70,000 tower. How magnificent it is, and what an appeal it makes! Without doubt such appreciation for beauty must erase the contempt of the worldlings of the community who scoffed at the fathers for appealing to "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent." Should not all the town bow in silence and never again laugh at the plea for the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism"? Such money could have been properly handled and a gospel preacher could have been supported in destitute places almost for a lifetime. Yet how insignificant to the work of demonstrating to the homefolks that we have appreciation for materialistic beauty!

One church which had 100 members built a \$100,000 building. The preacher made his apology for them with this: "Well, they would not give to send out a gospel preacher and would give to build a building. It was better that they build than do nothing." Just think of people who call themselves **Christians** and had rather build an elaborate building than send the gospel to the heathen! Note the progress of

the church during the past century and tremble as we realize that the basements of these old cathedrals might be used for Sunday night dances within another 50 years.

What we do now will largely determine what the church will be in another 50 years. Our attitude and disposition of mind will determine what the church will be as much as the doctrine that we preach. It is very possible that we hold the right form of doctrine but deny the power thereof.

It takes very little Christianity to build buildings. It is much easier to build a materialistic structure than build a church (of people with truth)! Buildings certainly ought to be up to the standard of our homes and of a durable material. When it is apparent that we are appealing to people through our materialistic structures and had rather build buildings than preach the gospel, it is high time we stop and reconsider what we are doing and beware lest we become unworthy of the name of Christ.

Had you rather support the preaching of the gospel of Christ in heathen lands, or had you rather build a fine building at home?

It Is Wonderful

I am sending \$2.00 for renewing the **Gospel Digest**. I think it wonderful. I don't want to miss a copy. I read it and give to my neighbors.
—Mrs. F. N. Williams, Tompkinsville, Ky.

Good temper is like a sunny day; it sheds its brightness everywhere.

HUDSON REPORTS ON ITALIAN WORK

ROME PRATI, Italy — As most of our readers know, it has been my privilege to conduct a survey among the churches of Christ in Italy every six months. In these surveys we get a bird's-eye view of the work, and a general idea of the progress over the last six months.

231 Baptisms in 1956

During 1956 there was a total of 231 baptisms reported by 35 communities. This brings the total membership of faithful members to 904. This membership was 834 only six months ago, so this means a total gain of 70 members the last six months of 1956. There were 88 baptized the last six months.

Worship services and study periods are being conducted in 35 cities in Italy. In all of these 35 places we have private meeting places, open to the public, where regular and steady programs of evangelization are being carried to completion.

During 1956 we were all thrilled to see an entire Baptist Church converted to the true way. Today their total membership is reported to be 23. Lida Petrini of Florence, Italy, is the regular preacher for this group, in addition to his regular duties at Florence. The church at Alessandria reported a total of 18 baptisms for 1956, including 8 Italian military men. The Italian armed forces are scattered throughout Italy, and from time to time some of them are being converted, taking New Testament Christianity back to their own homes upon release from the service.

Milan Largest Group

Milan reports 68 members, and this is the largest congregation in Italy, owning its own meeting place. The next three largest are Rome, Palermo, and Padova, where 50 members are reported at each place. Rome and Padova each own their own public meeting halls. The congregation at Cantania in Sicily reports 45 members and the church at Alessandria 41. We proudly salute these six congregations on their outstanding progress during 1956.

The congregations in Cantania and Alessandria were established entirely by Italian brethren, as were the congregations at Pistoia, Piombine, Verona, Aprilia, Civitavecchia, Magli, Messina, Moncalieri, Poggiomarino, Petilia, Policastro, Rimini, Serrapedance, Spezzano, Piccolo and Velletri. American evangelists have never taken residence

in any of these above-mentioned places where Italian brethren, supported by American churches, have patiently labored to establish the churches of Christ. God bless these 23 full-time Italian evangelists.

Gospel Publications Needed

They need to be receiving all the papers published by our brethren in the U.S.A. This would certainly be a wonderful project for some faithful Christian, or group of Christians, as all of these men read English well enough to prosper from this type teaching. Commentaries, debates and sermon books would be welcome gifts on the Italian front.

—Wyndal H. Hudson, *Christian Chronicle*

(If any of you want to send one or more of these brethren a subscription to *Gospel Digest* we will be happy to hear from you. We have their addresses and will be glad to enter your subscription for one or more of them at only \$2.00 for one year. This is a saving of 50 cents from the regular price for foreign countries. —E.B.K.)

It's Just a Matter of Wanting To

A man can get out of bed at three o'clock on Saturday morning to go fishing, but when you talk to him about Sunday morning Bible classes, he can't get up that early on Sunday! **Why the difference?**

A man can go a hundred miles on Friday night to a ball game but is too tired to get out for the worship on Sunday and Wednesday nights! **Why the difference?**

A man can take his family to a circus and spend considerable money but can't afford to give more than a dollar to the Lord! **Why the difference?**

A man can be on the membership committee at the civic club and canvass among his friends for prospective members but can't make the right approach when asked to do personal work for the Lord! **Why the difference?**

A man can take an aspirin and go to work despite an annoying headache, but a similar headache is considered a good reason for missing the worship. **Why the difference?**

—Selected by editor of *The Sentinel*

Some men never go to work for a living until they have given everything else a fair trial.

Arthur W. Atkinson, Jr., has presented some revealing and sobering facts in this article from *The Gospel Guardian*, Jan. 31, 1957.

Salacious Literature

To understand our discussion we should be well aware of the meaning of the words in the title. We shall use the term "literature" in a colloquial sense, meaning, "any kind of printed matter," and include advertising. "Salacious" means, "having a propensity to venery; lustful." Speaking as plainly as we deem proper, our subject has to do with that type of printed matter which has a definite tendency to produce within the reader an inordinate desire for venery.

This sin is spoken of very clearly in the Scriptures as "lasciviousness." It is described as a work "of the flesh" by Paul in Gal. 5:19. You will note in reading this passage that "lasciviousness" is categorized with three other sensual sins. Lasciviousness is defined as that "which tends to promote lewd and lustful emotions."

Other Scriptures which have to do with this are Mk. 7:22; 2 Cor. 12:21; Eph. 4:19; 1 Pet. 4:3; and Jude 4.

"Salacious literature" produces lasciviousness which in turn brings about uncleanness, adultery and fornication as well as other sins which we do not categorize as sensual.

All should realize that our hearts or minds determine our conduct. This is a Bible principle which all should know. "Keep thy heart (or above all that thou guardest) with all diligence; for

out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23.) A wiser man than Solomon said: "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Matt. 12:35.) Paul realized that thoughts were important, thus he writes: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, . . . honest, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, . . . of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil. 4:8.)

All must agree that thoughts are motivated by something. Good things produce good thoughts which result in a good life. Bad or evil things produce evil thoughts which result in an evil life. Salacious literature cannot be expected to produce the type of thinking and life that should characterize a Christian.

Since thinking produces the actions of life, we must direct our axe to the root of the matter; that which produces the evil thoughts. Books and magazines are published today by the millions of copies. Some are good; many are bad. Some are worthwhile; many are worth nothing.

One needs only to walk into a drug store, grocery, newsstand, etc., and an abundance of literature confronts him. All of it is for sale to whomever has the price of the magazine. This includes the youngest child to the

oldest adult. Some salacious material is disguised as "children's literature" when in reality it is not even fit for adult reading.

One of the greatest mediums of spreading salacious literature is the 25- to 50-cent pulp novels available to all on every newsstand. We believe that someone would do a great service to humanity if a complete survey of these novels were made showing their general content, the influence they could have and have had upon young and old, and their general detriment to the morale of our nation. That they are a detriment can be easily observed. One just needs to look at the pictures on some of the novels, read the suggestive titles, notice the descriptive phrases concerning the content, and it is easily seen that they are not fit for digestion. Recently I was presented with thirteen such novels that had been sold on the newsstands across the nation. They were not presented to me for my personal enjoyment, for I do not enjoy reading such filth. However, I did use them to make the following survey:

1. Five of the thirteen had suggestive titles such as "Lament for Four Virgins," and "Memory of Desire."
2. Nine of the thirteen had provocative and lewd pictures such as half nude or fully nude women and men.
3. Ten of the thirteen had suggestive descriptive phrases such as "hot dope . . . loose women . . . and murder in Reno . . .," "Midnight lovers in a 9 o'clock town," and "Loved by one man — Mistress of many."

4. All thirteen of the novels carried gaudy descriptions of the story and its characters which ranged from indecent to vulgar.
5. That there was illicit love portrayed in all thirteen is easily seen by reading the synopsis of each.
6. Five of the thirteen spoke of violence within the covers of the book. It is very likely that there was violence in more than this number, but we were interested only in what was contained in the descriptive language on the cover or fly-leaf of the books.
7. These thirteen represented six different publishing houses, showing that no one publisher has a monopoly on salacious literature.

One of the books has reprints of several reviews of it. One review is significant in that it gives us the purpose of this particular writer, and we can no doubt expect that most other writers have the same purpose. The review says: "Almost all of the principal figures in . . . are outwardly disreputable characters. But the author has matched them so strongly against the bigots and hypocrites of Haviland's society that we see them only as brave and honest human beings." The author thus subtly weaves his story in such a fashion that when it is done the reader sees these disreputable sinners as "brave, honest human beings." The next review says the novel contains "greed, envy, jealousy, gossip, backbiting, . . . hate. . . ." Are these the charac-

teristics that make these "disreputable characters" "brave and honest human beings"? Sin is sin no matter how subtly a writer may rationalize it.

This is characteristic of much of our literature today. Sin is glorified. The novels are written as though sin was the thing most expected from man and thus should be accepted as "brave and honest." Those who commit murder, mayhem, fornication, adultery, etc., are not punished or looked upon as evil but are actually elevated to the role of the

heroes of the stories. It is no wonder that our moral standards are decaying. It is no wonder that our young are becoming delinquents. It is no wonder that divorce is becoming our national shame. It is no wonder that there are thousands of unwed mothers each year. Here is a part of the trouble — salacious literature. It deceives our youth and corrupts our adults. When a person reads evil he thinks evil and the end result can only be evil action unless the cause is removed and the remedy applied.

SO YOU DON'T SING?

Singing reveals the spirituality of a congregation. Church members who are passive and unconcerned will have poor singing, while Christians who love the Lord fervently and want to worship will always sing beautifully. Songs do not come from hearts filled with hatred and strife. It is amazing to observe the number of church members who never sing at all. Many others sing only part of the time and in a most unconvincing manner. A lack of training, absence of a good singing voice, no knowledge of music, and other such excuses are offered. Such excuses **may be the result of a mistaken attitude toward the real purpose of singing!!! This is a spiritual, rather than a musical, problem.** When a heart is tuned to the worship of God, singing follows naturally. Christians sing because they have something to express. Singing will be meaningful in proportion to the singer's acquaintance with God. Christians have a song in their hearts. Do You??

— Cleveland, Miss., Church bulletin

He Says He Is Successful

He tells those who see his manner of dress that he is successful. He tells those who see his home that he is a successful man. He tells those who see his table that he is successful. He tells those who see his car that he is successful. But he tells the Lord and those who see his contribution that he is a financial failure, and is able to give only a dollar bill each Sunday. — Cleon Lyles, "The Riverside Reminder"

Noah Sparks, Jr., wrote this clear description of spiritual birth which appeared in *The Way of Truth*, Jan., 1956.

Born of Water and of the Spirit

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:3-5.)

The new birth is one of the most controverted subjects in the New Testament. It is one of the most misunderstood. But since it is a "must" it is one of the most important subjects, and "must" be understood, and can be understood, because God would not require an individual to do something that he could not understand how to do.

Nicodemus was a clean-living, high-minded, religious Jew, who was a Pharisee, and a ruler of the Jews. He also was a teacher of the law. He came to Jesus by night for information concerning Christ as a teacher from God, and evidently, from what Christ said, Nicodemus also sought information concerning the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God."

Christ ignored his remarks, and went directly to the motive which seemingly prompted the visit as if to say, "Now, Nicodemus, if you expect any benefits

from my kingdom, you must be born again; for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus was puzzled, and said, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus then explained that a person must be born of "water" and of the "Spirit."

Christ, therefore, strictly charged Nicodemus that if he would see the kingdom of God he "must" be born again! "See" means to experience or enjoy the blessings of the kingdom. Without the new birth, therefore, a person cannot enjoy the blessings and privileges of God's kingdom. "Ye must be born again." Not through mere emotionalism, or good resolutions, but by yielding one's self in obedience to the Spirit of God. Hence, the new birth is a truth—a divine dogma—stated in the urgent tones of a "must"!

The terms "kingdom" and "church" are used interchangeably in the New Testament. They are used to express the same institution, which is the church of Christ. (Matt. 16:18.) No distinction is to be made between the church and the kingdom. Some teach that Christ came to establish a kingdom, but the Jews refused Him, so He brought the church into being as a by-product. But the church is the "eternal purpose of God." (Eph. 3:11.) It could not be the eternal purpose of God and an after-thought

at the same time. In it men are to glorify God "by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. 3:21.) The church, therefore, is not a by-product brought into being when Christ failed (?) to establish His kingdom. Christ came into the world for the express purpose of establishing a kingdom, and that He succeeded is emphatically taught in the following passages: Mk. 9:1; Heb. 12:28; Col. 1:14; Rev. 1:9.

Entrance into that kingdom depends on a birth of "water" and of the "Spirit." Two elements, i.e., **water** and the **Spirit**. Some try to prove that water does not mean water in this passage. They say that it means Spirit. If that were true, you would have Jesus saying, "Ye must be born of the Spirit and of the Spirit." That would be sheer nonsense.

What would lead anyone to think that "water" means anything else here? Every commentator of any note admits that here "water" means water, and that it refers to gospel baptism. Baptism is the only ordinance in the Christian religion that has water connected with it. Holy Scripture incontrovertably locates water in gospel baptism. (Acts 10:47; 8:36; 1 Pet. 3:21.)

Water has a significant function in God's plan. Christ gave Himself for the church "that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5:26.) We are saved by "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." (Tit. 3:5.) Christians are to draw nigh to Christ, "in full assurance of faith, having our

hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:22.) All scholars admit that these passages refer to baptism. So those who try to make "water" mean something else do so because of inexcusable prejudice against the Lord's command to be baptized.

In spite of what men teach, the Holy Scriptures indisputably connect baptism with salvation from past sins. This truth is demonstrated by the following: 1. Baptism is always on the left of salvation, showing that baptism is always before salvation. 2. Baptism is always specified in every detailed case of conversion. Sometimes faith or repentance is not mentioned, but baptism is always specified. The preacher never left his converts without baptizing them. 3. The Bible plainly states that baptism is connected with salvation. (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mk. 16:15, 16; 1 Pet. 3:21.) The unbiased and scrutinizing student can derive no other conclusion from these passages.

Someone may reply, "If the 'water' of John 3:5 means water, then that places water between man and his salvation." Precisely so. But who placed it there? God placed it there and who will dare object?

What is a birth? A birth is a bringing forth. Two necessary actions are involved: The begetting process, and the delivery. This is true in the spiritual and in the natural. In the spiritual birth the Holy Spirit does the begetting. The word of God is the seed used in conception. (1 Pet. 1:23; Lk. 8:11; 1 Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:18.) When we believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ through that word, we are begotten. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." (A.S.V., 1 John 5:1.) When we believe we receive the "power" to become the sons of God. (John 1:12.) The new birth is not completed, however, without the delivery. A birth requires two actions. There must be the delivery which in spiritual birth takes place in baptism. No one has been born anew until he has been scripturally baptized.

Our Baptist friends object that life is not imparted by deliverance or birth, but passes the pre-existent life into a new and favorable state of development. That **may be true, but can life as we know it be experienced without the delivery?**

The new birth is not like a natural birth in all respects, but is similar in many. In both there is the begetting process. Also there is the bringing forth, the

natural from the womb, and the spiritual from the grave of baptism. When one is born of water and of the Spirit he is brought into new relations. And in both the natural and the spiritual, when the birth is completed, we have a new creature. (2 Cor. 5:17.) We have new-born babes. (1 Pet. 2:2.) So the two births are similar in many respects.

Therefore, to be born of water and of the Spirit, one must be begotten of the Spirit. The Spirit begets through His word which is the seed of the kingdom. (1 Pet. 1:23; Lk. 8:11.) When the word produces faith in our hearts, we are begotten, and when faith is perfected by obedience to the Lord in baptism, we are born of water and of the Spirit. We are then new creatures in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17.) And as "newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 Pet. 2:2.)

The Law of Love

Make channels for the streams of love
Where they may broadly run.
For love has overflowing streams
To fill them every one.

But if at any time you cease
Such channels to provide,
The very fount of love for you
Will soon be parched and dried.

For you must share if you would have
Such blessings from above;
Ceasing to give you cease to have,
For such is the law of love.

— Anonymous

Increase your knowledge of the Scriptures by reading Gospel Digest.

Athens Clay Pullias wrote this article which appeared in the *Gospel Advocate*, March 7, 1940.

The King on His Throne

The central message of the Bible is the salvation of man. In this drama of human redemption the personality of Jesus, the Christ, "the King of kings, and Lord of lords," adorns the center of the stage. He is called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6), "the bright and morning star." The Old Testament Scriptures point forward to Him in hope. In the New Testament He is revealed in kingly glory. Our purpose is to trace that series of divinely-directed events by which Jesus obtained the throne of His father, David.

The Meaning of "Throne"

Literally the word "throne" means "the seat on which a king sits on ceremonial occasions." Solomon had the most magnificent throne in this sense that the world has ever seen. It was made of solid ivory and overlaid with pure gold. More often the word "throne" is the symbol of sovereign power and regal dignity. For example, this is what Pharaoh meant when he said to Joseph: "Only in the throne will I be greater than thou."

Facts Concerning the Kingdom

God definitely predicted the establishment of the kingdom over which Jesus now rules. Through Daniel He said: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which

shall never be destroyed." (Dan. 2:44.) Referring beyond question to this prophecy, Jesus said: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." (Mk. 1:15.) On another occasion Jesus asserted that the kingdom would come during the lifetime of those who heard Him. "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." (Mk. 9:1.) The kingdom came with power on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of our Lord. Thereafter the kingdom is spoken of as an accomplished fact. For example, Paul, writing to the Colossians, expressed gratitude to God: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. 1:13.) "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. 12:28, 29.)

To deny that the kingdom now exists is to deny the word of God.

Facts Concerning the Messiah

God told Abraham: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3.) Paul explains clearly the meaning of this promise: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy

seed, which is Christ." (Gal. 3: 16.) Speaking of this very point, Jesus said: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." (John 8:56.) Through the magic eye of faith Abraham caught a glimpse of "the Light of the world." Throughout the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah are to be found; in fact, the Old Testament ends on that very note: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. 3:1.)

Facts Concerning the King and His Throne

The spiritual realities of the New Testament often have a type in the Old Testament in the form of some physical reality. This is true with reference to the throne which Christ now occupies. When rebellious Saul was found unworthy to continue on the throne of Israel, God promised the throne to David: "The Lord hath sworn to David, . . . to translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beer-sheba." (2 Sam. 3:9, 10.) Later, Jehovah, speaking to David, added: "And thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure (steadfast) for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." (2 Sam. 7:16.) David prayed to Jehovah in the same connection: "O Lord Jehovah; but thou hast spoken

also of thy servant's house for a great while to come; . . . now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee; for thou, O Jehovah, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever." (2 Sam. 7:19, 29.) David remembered God's word when he was about to pass the throne to Solomon: "I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; . . . that the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel." (1 Kings 2:2, 4.)

In the Psalms there is an even more pointed reading: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." (Ps. 89:3, 4.) "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." (Ps. 89:34-36.) "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." (Ps. 132: 11.) The prophet Isaiah adds further evidence: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful,

Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." (Isa. 9:6, 7.) "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." (Isa. 11:1.) These passages establish several basic truths:

1. That God promised David that his (David's) throne would continue.

2. That it was to continue in some one great king, and **not** in a series of earthly monarchs.

In the New Testament an angel from God, in speaking to Mary, reaffirms the covenant with David and designates Jesus as the one to sit on David's throne according to God's promise: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Lk. 1:30-33.)

The crucifixion ended the earthly career of our Lord. Forty days after the resurrection He ascended into heaven. (Acts 1:9.) Ten days later the Holy Spirit descended, the kingdom was estab-

lished, and Jesus, the Christ, began to reign on David's throne. The apostle Peter took great care to explain this very fact in the first sermon ever preached under the Christian dispensation: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:29-33.) The conclusions are unmistakable:

1. God promised David that He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne (David's throne).

2. God has done what He promised to do—He has raised up Christ and placed Him on David's throne. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

3. Jesus did receive the throne: "**Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit**" — God through the Holy Spirit promised David that Christ would receive his (David's) throne — now, says Peter, He has received that throne according to that promise. In

verse 36, Peter, using the fact that Christ was at that moment on David's throne, concludes his thought in these eloquent words: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2:36.)

Jesus of Nazareth at the very moment in which Peter spoke was both "Lord"—King, Supreme

Governor—and "Christ"—the Anointed, the Saviour. Paul, writing to Timothy, said: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, . . . and before Christ Jesus, . . . that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: . . . who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." (1 Tim. 6:13-15.)

At Last - - They Admit It

An editorial, which appeared recently in the **Houston Chronicle**, confirms the teachings of God's word and the things gospel preachers have always taught. Quote:

"In this age of high tensions, nobody presumes to offer a short means of curbing juvenile delinquency . . . however, there appear hopeful signs lately that the experts on child behavior are more and more disposed to lean back on the ancient truth in the search for one means to bring about a better behavior in our children. And in so doing, they are exploding a modern canard that a minimum of discipline is to be invoked against the juvenile else his personality be inhibited.

"It is generally agreed nowadays that failure to impose proper discipline upon children has been one of the leading causes of delinquency, that it has led to an immaturity in the growing child and to psychopathic behavior in the adult. In other words, we have spared the rod and spoiled the child."

It is interesting to learn that the experts on child behavior are finally coming to the realization that they may learn from the pages of Inspiration. God is the real expert on this and all other matters, and God-fearing men and women have known all along that these so-called "experts" were mistaken in their thinking. It is surely a shame to have to learn the hard way, but the real pity of the whole matter is the lives of children that have been ruined all because of the lack of discipline from parents.

— "The Vandelia Star" via Market Street Bulletin

This selection was published by World Vision Publishing Company as a tract. The comment on the cover, "Worth Reading," is well put.

Christianity Cannot Be Localized and Kept at Home

When Jerusalem wanted to keep Christianity, God got it out by persecution. And now it makes a direct appeal to the church at Antioch for missionaries to go out into the great pagan world to preach Christ. It got the missionaries. They were men of courage and vision and spirituality and brains. They were not weaklings. They were giants. That is the kind to send where the need is greatest, where the task is most challenging and where the work is most trying. If we have weaklings in the church, let us keep them at home. If we have spiritual giants, let us send them to the foreign field, if they will go. In other words, the best men and women we have are they who alone can do the biggest piece of work to be done in the world.

This is not the popular idea of this task. The church as a whole is not yet possessed with this notion. There are thousands of Christians who scarcely have any notion at all of the importance and bigness of the task of missions. It is the most difficult undertaking to get them to think at all about the world program of Jesus Christ. We have members who are as lukewarm toward the universality of the Christian task as they are indifferent to the thought as to whether Mars is inhabited or not. We have hard-headed businessmen in the church who continually protest against sending out brilliant young men

and women to difficult fields of paganism. They regard such a procedure as a criminal waste of brain power that might have been kept here and dedicated to the task of managing a corporation. But what is managing a corporation alongside of building the spiritual empire of the King of kings in the waste places of the earth? Build the latter and corporations and big business will follow. That has always been the order of things. Get first things first and secondary things will follow. The missionary is always the pathfinder. He always lays the foundations.

The fact of the matter is we would have a better and more prosperous world for everybody if we had more Pauls abroad upon the face of the earth. It may be a very long and winding way back to the day when the church at Antioch sent forth Paul and Barnabas, but if we could find that way and go over it, we should see that our modern civilization owes a great deal to that day. We should find that a great many forces were in the process of liberation upon the world that day — forces that worked for a new order of things. Never was a great mind and a big soul given to the world but that the world was different thereafter. You never can lift men to higher planes of usefulness and character and at the same time not lift their social and economical interests. Put a

regenerating idea into the man's head and you have given to the world a more useful and protective citizen.

So it would be a new day for the world if we could get the church to be in dead earnest about the mission task at home and abroad. What we want businessmen to see is that business is better when we put more gospel into the world. The fear of God, love of our fellow men, honesty, brotherhood, peace-making power, a sense of ultimate values, a response to the noble and the good and the beautiful are not soul-powers apart from life. They manifest themselves in contact with the everyday world in which men live and of which they are a part. They make life. They give

it color and direction and meaning. They are forces without which every interest in life would ultimately fail. What is the use of living in a world that is nothing more than a human jungle? What is the use of doing business in a world in which there is no character, where there is no one who can be trusted? Let us Christianize Japan and we will have a better field for business in that country. Let us lift the vast hordes of China to Christian levels and the markets for our goods will multiply astonishingly. But of course the greatest missionary motive is not to be looked for in a fattening pocketbook as the result of giving the gospel to the heathen of the countries across the seas.

Strange People

People who talk about prayer, but never pray.

People who wish to belong to the church, but never attend or support the church program.

People who say giving is right, but never give.

People who say the Bible is God's word to man, yet never read it.

People who say that eternity is more important than time, but who live for the present.

People who criticize others for things they do themselves.

People who stay away from church for trivial reasons, and then sing, "O, How I Love Jesus."

People who follow the devil all their lives, but expect to go to heaven.

— Weekly Visitor

Doing a Lot of Good

These **Digests** are doing a lot of good, more so than preaching. People can sit down with them and Bible and check and study seriously.

— Mrs. L. M. Barlow, Whitehaven, Tenn.

This is from the "Question Box" of *The Scripture Standard*, Jan., 1957, which is conducted by L. Channing.

Speaking in Tongues

Question. I have heard it claimed, on the basis of Acts 2: 6-8, 11, that the apostles were given a miraculous knowledge of foreign languages in order to help them in their missionary work. Is this claim correct, in view of the following? (1) We never find the apostles afterwards making use of the gift for this purpose. (2) Such a gift would hardly be needed as Greek was spoken throughout the ancient world. (3) Paul says in 1 Cor. 14: 2, "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God, for no man understandeth him." Does not the statement in Acts 2:6, "Every man heard them speak in his own language," infer that the miracle was worked on the ears of the hearers?

Answer. The question is an involved one. It is best answered in two parts. What was the gift of tongues? and For what purpose was the gift given?

(a) **What was the gift of tongues?** The gift of tongues, whether given as a result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or the laying on of apostles' hands, appears to have always been the same. Only the manner of imparting the gift varied. (Acts 2: 4; 10:44-46; 19:6.)

From the consideration of Acts 2, verses 4, 6-8, 11, it seems quite clear that under the inspiration of the Spirit the apostles spoke in various languages, the languages of the nationalities after-

wards mentioned. The testimony of the hearers is against the idea that **they** were under the power of the Spirit in any way.

In verses 11-13 they speak as though a miracle had been performed on them, but as a matter of fact, they are surprised that by Galileans their own languages are being spoken, and they are unable to account for it. Again, seeing that the nature of the gift of tongues is the same throughout the New Testament, although the method of imparting it varies, we would find that, if the miracle was upon the ears of the hearers in Acts 2, then it would be so in the case of the Corinthians. But the reverse is true. Those at Corinth who were without knowledge of the foreign language being spoken, were unable to understand it without an interpreter. Paul directs that if an interpreter is not present, then the inspired man is to keep silent. (1 Cor. 14:9-11, 16, 27.)

It is claimed by some that the gift of tongues was not the actual ability to speak foreign languages under the power of the Spirit, but consisted merely of ecstatic utterances in unknown tongues. In support of this, it is argued that the usual Greek word for language, the word **dialektos** (from which the English word **dialect** comes), is not used in connection with tongues in 1 Cor. 14, but the Greek word **glossa** (from which the English word **glossary** is derived).

It is further said that those under the Spirit were given the promise in Mk. 16:17 of speaking in "new tongues." Again, Paul speaks of "unknown tongues" (1 Cor. 14), of there being "many kinds of voices" (1 Cor. 14:10) even of tongues of angels. (1 Cor. 13:1.) Some of the points that the questioner has made are also put forward in support of this theory. But it seems to the writer that the more such arguments are examined, the less convincing they become.

The word *dialektos* is used in connection with the gift of tongues in Acts 2, verses 6 and 8, and is translated in the R. V. in both cases by the word *language*. In the other references in Acts where the word "tongue" is used, notably 2:11, 26; 10:46; 19:6 and throughout 1 Cor., chapters 12, 13 and 14 (with the exception of 1 Cor. 14:21) the word *glossa* is used. This latter word is capable of wide application. It is used to describe the manifestation that accompanied the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:3.) It is sometimes used for the actual organ of speech, as in Mk. 7:33; Phil. 2:11; Jas. 1:26.

In connection with the "new tongues" promised in Mk. 16:17, apart from the fact that the R. V. shows that the word "new" is not found in some manuscripts, it surely means that under the power of the Spirit, some would speak in languages that, though not new to some of the hearers, would be entirely new to the speakers. The argument on the word "unknown" tongues, as found in 1 Cor. 14 has no foundation, for the word is not

in the original. It has been rightly omitted altogether in the R. V. Likewise, no argument can be drawn from Paul's reference to the tongues of angels in 1 Cor. 13:1. Paul does not there say that he could speak with the tongues of angels, or ever would be able to do so. He says "If" (see R. V.) he could even do this, and had not love, it would avail him nothing. He uses a similar argument, though in a different connection, in Gal. 1:8, 9. The gift of tongues, then, was not a miracle on the ears of the hearers, nor the speaking of so much gibberish, claimed to be "new" or "unknown" tongues, but the ability to speak under the inspiration of the Spirit, in a clearly recognizable foreign language, which the speaker had not learned.

(b) **For what purpose was the gift given?** The gift primarily involved praise and prayer to God. This is consistently indicated throughout the New Testament. For instance, Acts 2:11 says, "... we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." Acts 10:46, "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God." Acts 19:6, "... and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

What, then, was the purpose of the gift? The answer is that it was a sign to unbelievers, whether Jews or Gentiles. It was so used on the day of Pentecost. Peter acknowledges the same manifestation in the household of Cornelius, to be a sign to himself and his Jewish brethren. (Acts 11:15-17; 15:8.) It was convincing proof to the former followers of John the Baptist that Christ had come

and that the Holy Spirit had been given. (Acts 19:2-6.) Paul clearly teaches the same purpose of the gift in 1 Cor. 14:22. He argues that there was therefore not much value in such a gift being exercised in the church, and a man so doing without an interpreter merely spoke to himself and to

God. (1 Cor. 14:1.) He therefore allowed it only when an interpreter was present. (vv. 27, 28.) It was wrong even to be used in front of unbelievers, when everyone was speaking at once, or when the languages spoken were not understood by unbelievers. (1 Cor. 14:22, 23, 27, 28.)

Prove It Right or Wrong

In the "proving plant" of a great merchandising house one man smashes dishes and glassware and gets paid for doing it. Trunks are thrown from a roof to the ground, nine stories down, to see whether they will break. The head of this plant has devised many surprising ways to find out how well some 35,000 products "stand the gaff." He is a sort of commercial detective who is engaged in throwing light on any possible flaws in the cases of goods that are sent to him to be investigated.

Everybody appreciates him and his work of picking out flaws. The manufacturer appreciates him, because he points out weaknesses and gives him a chance to correct them.

Are you that sensible about religion? Do you want it continually put under the light, or under the test, to see if it is genuine, or if it could be a sort of counterfeit of the real thing God put in the world? People believe in proving everything but their religion. The only people who do not want products proved is the counterfeiter or the cheat. But in religion, God says, "Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits to see whether they are of God, for many false teachers are gone out into the world." (John 4:1.)

Again, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." (1 Thessa. 5:21.) And then Paul told the Corinthians, "Try yourselves, whether ye are in the faith." (2 Cor. 13:5.)

And so beloved, put your religion to the test. Check the church of which you are a member—when did it originate? Who built it? What name does it wear? What about its worship? You may be the unsuspecting victim of a false teacher. —Bermuda Church Bulletin

A DIGEST Subscription to a Sinner Friend May Touch Him the Truth.