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WHY I LEFT THE METHODIST CHURCH

Robert Jackson

I became a member of the Methodist Church at Charlotte, Tennessee at the age of twelve. This was a result of being brought up in a Methodist family. I was taught that one should believe in Christ and then join the church of his choice, and his choice as a rule would be the one of his parents. June 5th, 1948, I obeyed the gospel of Christ, thus leaving the Methodist Church. Since that time I have often been asked, "Why did you leave the Methodist Church?" I will try to answer this question as briefly as possible in this article.

I Did Not Leave Because:

First, I will state some of the reasons why I did not leave the Methodist Church:

A. I was not made to leave. There was no pressure from within the Methodist Church for me to leave.

B. I did not leave because of the people in the Methodist Church. There were some of the finest moral living people in the Methodist Church that you would ever want to know.

C. I did not leave the Methodist Church because it was not a popular church. The majority of people were Methodists in my home town.

After my discharge from the Navy in 1946 I had again made my home in Charlotte, Tennessee. In 1947 Grover Stevens moved to Charlotte. I was attending many of the services of the Church of Christ where he was preaching and became very angry at some of the remarks made by Brother Stevens. During this same time Brother Leonard Tyler conducted several meetings in this area which I attended and at which I was made angry. I became so mad at some of their remarks that I began to study my Bible to try to justify myself as a Methodist and at the same time to find error in their teaching, which I would have been happy to expose. Finally, I saw that I was fighting a losing battle and I either had to obey the Gospel or stay with the Methodist Church. I must say that it was a very difficult battle, knowing that I would be leaving that which I had been taught from childhood up, knowing that my personal friends would turn their backs upon me, and knowing the heartache that it would cause my mother to see her only child leave the family religion. I made up my mind to put God first and obey his will.

Error Exposed . . . Truth Taught

The results of my leaving the Methodist Church was due to the fact that error was exposed and truth was taught in a plain manner of speech and yet with love. I am deeply grateful to such preachers.

A. NAME

The first impression that was made on my mind was that the Methodist Church was wrong in name. Such a name could not be found in the Bible. I was called a Methodist, but yet no one in the Bible was ever called such. I was taught that they were called Christians (I Peter 4:16, Acts 11:26). I immediately saw that I could not scripturally justify the use

of the name Methodist.

B. WESLEY, THE FOUNDER, NOT CHRIST.

It was made clear that John Wesley was the founder of the Methodist Church and not Jesus Christ. If I wanted to be a member of the church that Jesus built, then I could not be a Methodist. Such preaching stirred up my spirit to the extent that I became dissatisfied with being a member of a church that John Wesley built.

C. FAITH ONLY—SALVATION.

I had always believed that one was saved by faith only. This is exactly what the Methodist Church teaches about salvation. However, when I was told to read James 2:24 I was made to see in words that none could misunderstand that "faith only" was wrong. I began to read more and found out that Jesus required faith and baptism (Mark 16:16).

D. CHOICE OF BAPTISM.

I had always been taught in the Methodist Church that there were three ways to be baptized:

1. Sprinkling
2. Pouring
3. Immersion

I was led to believe by Methodist preaching that it was up to the individual to select his own choice. To become a member I selected Sprinkling. The preaching that I heard exposed this error. I was told to read Col. 2:12 and then Eph. 4:5. Even with a mind as weak as mine I could see that according to God's teaching there was but one baptism, but by Methodist teaching there were three. I believed God.

E. INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

We had the instrument of music in the services of the Methodist Church and were led to believe that it was only an aid in the worship. It was plainly proven to me that such was not an aid but an addition to the work of God. I then was reminded of John 4:24 that one must worship God in truth. I was told that my worship would be in vain if done by the

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FOR UNMARRIED ONLY

Irven Lee

This message is not to suggest divorce for Christians who are married to unbelievers. The inspired teacher taught that if the unbeliever be content to dwell with the Christian let the Christian remain. (I Cor. 7:10-16). He did not, of course, suggest that the member of the body of Christ forsake the law of God to appease the unbeliever. If the church member acts like a non-member in such case there would be no conflict in the home, but there would be no peace with God. We must obey God rather than man. (Acts 5:29). The believer is to give diligence to win the unbeliever by chaste conduct, reverence, and the meek and quiet spirit. (I Peter 3:1-6).

To those who are not married we warn confidently that the marriage tie can be broken only by death and grievous sin. (Rom. 7:2,3; I Cor. 7:39; Matt. 5:31,32). We may just as confidently affirm that the tie is to be very close. The two should be one in many ways. (Eph. 5:31). If two are not one in the faith there may be some very unhappy conflicts. If one has love for the church and the other hates the church they cannot walk together in this important aspect of life. Any who investigate a little before marriage can learn from neighbors that this problem can be big and it can bring unhappy situations week after week, month after month, and year after year for a whole file time. The dreadful results even continue over into the next generation. How blind can people be in failing to see this until they have walked headlong into the same difficult situation from which they cannot then escape?

Marriages between members of the church and people who hate the church are made, generally, with no consideration for the church. The member was not seeking first the kingdom of God at this time. Often such marriages are entered into by the very, very young who have not been taught and who have not observed the seriousness of the problems. Some of these ties may be suggested more by impulse, lust, and excitement than by judgment and forethought. Very little thought may have been given even to the problem of finance and responsibilities that force themselves upon homemakers. Marriage is not for excitement seekers. It is for adults who are ready to take adult responsibilities. How sad it is to see youths skip this great and important period of training and plunge headlong into the responsibilities of adults (homemakers) when they are unprepared mentally, socially, physically, or spiritually.

Parents should tell their children early about the great principles the Lord has given concerning marriage. Rushing children into "dating" and situations where instinct works against wisdom is a serious blunder which may bring about

unwise and unhappy marriages. Teaching by older people is so important, and yet it is obviously neglected by many. (Titus 2:3-5). Parents who failed to teach their little people the sacredness and significance of marriage need not be surprised at impulsive marriages. They have little room to be bitter toward these children if they do the unwise thing through lack of teaching.

Sometimes a member of the church will marry one who has the liquor habit and then complain about being married to an alcoholic. What right has one to murmur so loudly when that one walked wilfully into the situation? Those Christians who find it very, very difficult to worship according to the New Testament pattern because they married companions who hate the church deserve help and encouragement. They also deserve to face the difficulty patiently and without whining. Their bed is one of their own making.

When homes are divided, interest in religion is often killed. The two whose beliefs conflict discourage each other until neither has interest to go. This is especially true since there is usually a lack of interest in religion when such contracts are entered into. People who attend at eleven o'clock only and who go along with the world in the dance, immodest dress, etc. are often the ones who from these intimate ties with no regard for the will of God. It is easy to kill interest in religion when there is little religion to kill. Parents who fail to teach on marriage generally fail to teach on worship, the church, and on other things relating to eternity.

Children in divided homes are to be pitied. They need to be given whatever teaching and encouragement friends and neighbors can in spiritual matters. In divided homes what one teaches the other may deny with harsh bitterness. The Bible truths may become forbidden topics for discussion. Children naturally hesitate to line up with one against another parent. Service to God may be of such nature that to the child it seems more like taking sides in a family feud. The truly Christian parent in a divided home will feel a double responsibility to teach the right things in the proper attitude. Let children learn from some source that the Bible is right and must be obeyed.

Compromise is not the solution. This does not please God. A lack of conviction which would allow one to ignore the Lord's supper, the name of Christ, and his kingdom leads to no eternal treasures. The unbeliever is much more likely to glorify God if he sees good works in his companion. (Matt. 5:16; I Peter 2:11,12). Patience, kindness, meekness and many other good traits are always good. Revile not again. Overcome evil with good. Compromise on matters on which God has spoken is not commended by men or God. It is no marvel that some unbelievers are not converted. They see very little evidence of real conviction and interest on the "believer's" part.

In the divided home little effort for unity of belief is made, ordinarily. There is a standard in religion by which differences in belief could be settled. The Bible is right, but it tends to be ignored. After a few fiery discussions it almost becomes a law that there can be no further study. Even a pleasant "agreement to disagree" does not settle the problem. Children from such homes do well to have enough religion to attend some at eleven on Sunday. Such husbands and wives may not have angry hours of discussion, but they miss the happy hours of pleasant and profitable discussion and mutual edification. Oh, for more blessed homes where Christian unity prevails and where the Word is studied, loved, and discussed by the family.

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YES, I BELIEVE IN COOPERATION

Cecil F. Cox, Russellville, Ala.

In recent years I have heard many faithful brethren being accused of not believing in cooperation. Statements like this are heard, "Did you know that brother ----- believes it is wrong for churches to cooperate?" Many today are referred to as "anti-cooperation." In the February 11, 1960 issue of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE we note this statement from an article entitled, "Coongregational Independence." "The power or the paper or the personality or the pressure group that denies congregations the right to cooperate, denies the New Testament doctrine of congregational autonomy." (Page 89) I wonder if the person who wrote the above article knows of ANYONE who "denies congregations the right to cooperate?" I wonder if those who shout, "ANTI-COOPERATION know anyone who is actually anti-cooperation. "Anti" is a prefix meaning, "against or opposed to." I do not know of any of the brethren who are "anti (against, opposed to)—cooperation. Do you???" Hence, when these charges are hurled they are fighting "straw men" or we might say "a figment of their imagination."

This reminds me of some things that happened during the 'society controversy.' Back then those who did not "line up" with the Missionary Society were "ANTI-MISSION." They did not believe in preaching the Gospel, according to those who were supporters of the Society. On November 27, 1865 Thomas Munnei wrote a letter to David Lipscomb and Tolbert Fanning and with reference to the GOSPEL ADVOCATE he said, "I am told that ANTI-MISSION (Caps. mine, C.F.C.) is to be one feature of the "Advocate". (The Search for the Ancient Order, by Earl West, Vol. 2, p. 68) Along this same line W. K. Pendleton said, "Let men who have missionary work . . . take counsel together . . . and let us not be disturbed, or distracted in our work, by outside railers, who seem to be rejoicing in nothing so much as their own success in PREVENTING THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL." (Caps. mine, C.F.C.) (Millennial Harbinger, Vol. 38, page, 255) Such charges as "anti-mission" and "preventing the preaching of the Gospel" were false and were resented by Lipscomb and others that stood with him.

We ask this question, "Why were Lipscomb and others accused of being ANTI-MISSION, etc?" It would be foolish to say it was because they OPPOSED and were AGAINST preaching the Gospel. There is too much evidence that they were in favor of preaching the Gospel to come to such a conclusion. WHY WERE THEY ACCUSED OF THIS? It was because they opposed the Missionary Society.

Today brethren are branded as ANTI-COOPERATION because they oppose a society composed of the elders of a congregation and which is generally called a SPONSORING CHURCH. If one opposes the "sponsoring church" type of cooperation, it follows that he is against churches cooperating is the conclusion that some come to. Such a conclusion is absurd. It is no more logical that the conclusion that David Lipscomb was ANTI-MISSION because he opposed the Missionary Society.

The person who does not believe that churches can cooperate does not believe the Bible. The Bible teaches that the churches in the first century did cooperate. Please note the following scriptures: 2 Cor. 8,9; Rom. 15:25-31; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 11:8. Yes, we believe in cooperation. We do not believe in the "sponsoring church" type of cooperation but we do believe in the type cooperation taught in the New Testament, viz. concurrent effort, independant action. We believe in cooperation not centralization. Now getting back to the statement referred to earlier concerning those who deny

"congregations the right to cooperate." We do not deny their right to cooperate but we do insist that such centralized arrangements as Missionary Societies and Sponsoring Churches are without divine authority.

WHY I LEFT THE METHODIST CHURCH

(Continued from page 1)

doctrine of men (Matt. 15:9).

F. HOW TO RAISE MONEY.

In the Methodist Church we would have ice-cream suppers, rummage sales, etc., to raise money for the church. The preaching that I heard by Brother Stevens and others brought to my attention I Cor. 16: 1-2. This was God's plan of having the church members raise its money, and the pie suppers etc. ,were the ways of men.

These are a few of the things that caused me to see the way of my error. Of course, since that time I have studied and found out many other errors within the Methodist Church. I have never regretted leaving the Methodist Church. I wish all would see their errors.

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"TO THE GENTILES ALSO"

Frank L. Smith

That the gospel of Christ should be preached to the Gentiles that they might become fellow-heirs of the promises seemed to all the apostles incredible. But God demonstrated to Peter in the conversion of Cornelius that He is no respecter of persons, that the gospel is His power in every nation to have those who believe and obey. The story of this conversion is given emphasis by its repetition in Luke's inspired history. (Acts 10, 11).

There were in Cornelius, qualities of character that have caused many men possessing the same to think they had no need of performing additional acts of righteousness. "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always," is the inspired tribute paid this man even before Peter was sent to speak to him the words whereby he would be saved. But devotion and reverence for Jehovah is meaningless, when it is not coupled with an obedient heart. Saul was told by Samuel, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Until Cornelius obeyed the commands of the gospel his fear of the Lord was empty profession like the services of the Pharisees of whom Jesus said they honored Him with their lips but their heart was far from Him. Even the fact that he demonstrated a benevolent spirit by giving alms to those who were in need did not relieve him of responsibility toward gospel requirements.

That this Gentile was morally good no one would deny, for he had the good reputation from both his own nation and from the Jews. Such an attitude from the Jews toward a Gentile signifies that he was an outstanding individual in moral and religious purity. And his office in the Roman government testifies to his leadership and respect among men. Yet all these qualities combined can never make one acceptable to the Lord separate and apart from faith working through love in Jesus Christ.

His sincere, earnest, and repetitious prayers had not effected salvation in the Lord's sight. Neither did the prayer at the ninth hour when God sent the angel to him, lead to his salvation as a direct cause. It will be noticed that both his prayers (pl) and his alms became to God a memorial; namely of the promised salvation of the Gentiles which had not yet been fulfilled, though now the fullness of time had come. If one rejects the idea of God's being reminded in his providence by earthly events let him read Exodus 2:23-25. Having been reminded of the spiritual promise to Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed through the seed, Christ, he sent forth the angel to instruct Cornelius where and how he might hear words whereby he could be saved. (11:14).

But before Peter would offer the blessings of redemption to any save the house of Israel, it was necessary for God to show him that the time had been fulfilled, and to explain to him the universal nature of the reign of Jesus Christ. Hence the vision Peter saw of the unclean beasts which God instructed him to kill and eat. If the unclean had been cleansed, the law then had been changed; and the Gentile who had been excluded was now included. For still further proof to Peter and to fulfill the promise made through Joel, God also poured out the Holy Spirit upon the household of Cornelius so that they spoke with other tongues. Thus the fulness of the gospel blessings came upon Gentiles as well as upon Jews. Peter then could no longer resist preaching to them the commands of the gospel message even as he had preached to the sinful Jews upon Pentecost. He commanded them to be baptized in water. Of course it was for the remission of sins even as he

preached in Acts 2:38. Christ has commissioned the apostles to preach the gospel to the whole world, promising that "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mk. 16:15-16). As the angel had instructed Cornelius to send for Peter, promising that he would tell him words whereby he should be saved; this message of faith in Jesus Christ and obedience in baptism was the means of salvation to this first Gentile convert.

True there were unusual circumstances connected with this conversion which were not common to all conversions. But none of these were directed to saving these Gentiles. They were rather God's means of bringing Peter to preach the truth to the Gentiles first, that the door to this great family of humanity might be opened up before all the apostles that they might make no distinction. The promise to Abraham had been, "through thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Until this conversion the gospel had been preached only to the house of Israel. But as the apostles learned through Peter that all men in every nation were included in the commission, then world wide evangelism was opened up.

Some side-lights in this conversion are of interest; the apostles did not expect the Holy Spirit to come each time a man was converted. The sudden repeat of that which happened "at the beginning" caused the Apostles to "glorify God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (11:18). Since the beginning is mentioned as the former time when such had happened, then we conclude that Holy Spirit action in a direct way was not involved in the thousands of conversions in Jerusalem on Pentecost and afterwards. Neither is it necessary nor does such take place today; for faith in the gospel, God's power to save, and obedience to its commands make men the children of God and heirs of the promise. (Gal. 3:26-29).

"At the beginning" as Peter spoke of it, referred to the beginning of the church, the last days, the salvation of those who call upon the Lord. Christ received his kingdom and began his reign when the last days began. The Law of Moses had fulfilled its purpose and was removed, that a new and better covenant might begin by which God promised "their sins and iniquities I will remember no more forever."

The most important thing in the heart of Cornelius which led to his salvation was the attitude he himself expressed, "We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." (10:33) Without this disposition upon man's part, to do whatever God says, there can be no salvation. If we be willing and obedient, then God plainly has revealed in his Word, words whereby we shall be saved.

THE TEXT BOOK

Irven Lee

Men must write their own textbook in Chemistry and revise them often to add their bits of new found knowledge. The perfect law of liberty remains up to date since it is the divinely given text book of true religion. "Bible classes" on Sunday or any other day should study the Bible. "Helps" to avoid being hindrances should send the student to the Bible for answers to life's questions. Predigested lessons may be one explanation for many weaknesses among us today. We have been trained to listen to the scholars for answers. Many have not been taught to look to THE BOOK for the answers. Many cannot even find their places in a class that uses the Bibles.

WHAT CONSTITUTES SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM?

Earl Fly

BAPTISM IS ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16). "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38). "... arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16).

THERE IS ONE BAPTISM

"There is .. one baptism." (Eph. 4:4,5). Some falsely say there are many baptisms from which to choose. Men preach and practice different baptisms for different purposes in different ways. But the same passage which says there is one baptism says there is one Lord. It would be as scriptural to preach many Lords (Saviours) as to preach many baptisms! It is false and unscriptural to preach either, for there is one baptism, and one Lord.

SHOULD I EVER BE BAPTIZED AGAIN?

If you have not been baptized scripturally, the answer is yes. "But suppose I was honest and sincere, and thought I was obeying God?" ask one. Honesty and sincerity are not enough! Read Acts 19:1-5. These religious people were honest, sincere and truly thought they had obeyed God in baptism. They had been baptized in water for the remission of sins by John's baptism (Mark 1:4). But they had the wrong faith: they believed on Christ who should come as taught by John; but Christ had already come. They were baptized by the wrong authority; by John's baptism, not in the name of Christ. Hence, their baptism was not accepted by God. When they learned the truth they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jsus. Scriptural baptism must have all essential prerequisites.

WHAT DOES BIBLE BAPTISM REQUIRE?

1. **The right subject.** One must be taught. (Jno. 6:44,45; Matt. 28:19). He must be taught the right thing, the truth, for if he is taught wrong, he will believe wrong; and the wrong faith will make the baptism void. One must believe the gospel; in Christ. (Mark 16:15,16). It is the truth which makes one free. (Jno. 8:32). Error condemns the soul. (II Thess. 2:10-12). And, being honest and sincere cannot change error into truth. Hence, we must be taught the truth and believe the truth.

Furthermore, one must repent before baptism. (Acts 2:38). Next, one must confess his faith in Christ. (Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37). If one confesses that "God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins" before baptism he is making a wrong confession which is not true, which would indicate a wrong faith. This kind of confession would make the baptism void. The right subject, then, is one who believes the truth, repents of sins, confesses faith in Christ. This completely excludes infants for they cannot do either. And, they have no sins in the first place to be remitted or forgiven.

2. **The right element.** People were baptized in water. (1 Peter 3:20,21; Acts 8:36-39). This baptism was to be preached and performed by men until the end of the world. (Matt. 28:18-20). Men cannot administer the baptism of fire or Holy Spirit, hence, the one baptism until the end of the world is water baptism. Rose petals, used by one preacher, will not suffice. The wrong element makes baptism void.

3. **The right mode.** Bible baptism requires a burial and a resurrection from the watery grave. (Rom. 6:4,5; Col. 2:12). An example is found in Acts 8:36-39. No one was ever sprinkled or poured by any minister of God for baptism in the Bible.

If you have been sprinkled or poured, you have never been baptized in God's sight.

4. **The right purpose.** Bible baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), to wash away sins (Acts 22:16), to be saved (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21). Most denominations preach that one is already saved before baptism; hence, they do not baptize for the Bible purpose. Baptists, Methodists, Holiness, Nazarenes, Presbyterians, and a host of others preach salvation before baptism. Therefore, their baptisms are not acceptable to God.

5. **The right authority.** Baptism is to be performed by the authority of Jesus Christ, into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. If it is done by the authority of the Baptist Church or any other man-built church it is wrong, unacceptable. And no one can baptize by the authority of Christ who does not preach and practice the right subject, the right element, the right mode, the right purpose. All who received infant baptism, rose petals, sprinkling or pouring, or were baptized thinking salvation had already been obtained before baptism, must now be scripturally baptized with the one baptism in order to be saved in heaven. You may have been honest, sincere, conscientious and religious, but these are not enough. We must honestly and sincerely do God's commands according to God's way.

Via The Life Line and The Sentinel.

IRREVERENCE IS SERIOUS

Irven Lee

When a person has lost reverence for God he is in great danger of eternal damnation. It is a matter of repentance or destruction for such an individual. Parents should carefully watch for any signs of irreverence. They are especially responsible for training children, and no lesson is more important than the lesson of respect for God. Let fathers and mothers feel their load and duty if their sons and daughters talk, play and laugh during the worship assembly.

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SWORD OF PEACE

A NEW FAITH EMERGING

By: H. E. Patton

Recently I have been reading of what various writers are referring to as a "new faith" in America. Mr. Martin E. Marty has recently written a book entitled "The New Shape of American Religion." He refers to this "new shape" as "religion-in-general." The god of those holding this "new faith" is looked upon as "a jolly good fellow" and his worshippers emphasize "divine-human chumminess," according to Mr. Marty.

A United Press International item by Louis Cassels says: "In this new faith, which many observers regard as the most conspicuous feature of America's post-war religious revival, man is still the center of things, and his purposes are the only purposes worth bothering about . . . God is brought back into the picture, in the role of an indulgent "grandfather in heaven," always on call to serve man, to answer his prayers for physical health and worldly success, and to give him 'peace of mind' ". This new faith is being referred to by some as "the new humanism."

There has been for years a multitude of people who believed in humanism. Sir Julian Huxley, a leading exponent of humanism, describes it as "religion without revelation." He says it is "properly termed a religion because it offers its adherents something bigger than themselves to live for and by. But in humanism this something bigger—this object of supreme devotion or worship—is not God. It is a man a capital "M." Two goals of humanism are (1) self development; and (2) progress toward a perfect human society.

According to Louis Cassels' United Press article, "The brutalities unleashed before and during World War II, the still-uncontrolled peril of nuclear energy, and other harsh facts of modern history have made it very difficult for men of good will to continue believing in human perfectibility." Consequently, the "new humanism faith" is emerging wherein some features of the Christian concept of God have been grafted into humanism. It has been pointed out that this "new faith" is held by many today who regard themselves Christians or Jews and who retain their religious affiliations.

That this "new humanism" has made in-roads almost everywhere can hardly be denied by careful observers. For a long time religious people have been showing less and less concern for a "thus saith the Lord." That which appeals to and pleases man is the thing sought. It is believed that the great "indulgent heavenly grand-father" will readily sanction whatever his children want. By what authority does today's religious world build its organizational machinery, include ballgames, swimming parties, camps, hospitals, kitchens for banqueting, etc. in the work and activities of the church, and disregard-even set aside—plain scriptural instruction concerning divorce and remarriage, women preachers, etc. Those who study the scriptures know there is no authority for such things. They exist because MAN wants them. "Thy will be done" with reference to God means very little to most religionists today.

For years, members of the Lord's church have been calling upon their religious neighbors for chapter and verse for their faiths and practices, asking "Is it from heaven or from men?" We have been met with utter indifference to such questions; many adopting a "so what" attitude. We have cited our religious neighbors to such passages as Col. 3:17, 2 John 9, Matt. 15:9 wherein we learn that we are to act "in the name (by the authority) of Christ," and to do otherwise means our worship is vain and we "have not God." Yet, in many cases, our words have fallen upon "ears dull of hearing."

To many this "new humanism" is not so new. We have

to contend with it for years. It may be, and no doubt is, true that the humanist in this respect did not exalt man and so completely reject God as authoritative at least knowingly, as do the modern "new humanism" enthusiasts. In both cases it must be admitted that emphasis is centered upon man and what pleases him rather than God.

The Park City Daily News in Bowling Green, Ky. recently carried this notice: "Church to dedicate Miniature Golf Course"—"They'll be teeing off at Crescent Hill Baptist Church—on a 9 hole miniature golf course that will be dedicated Sunday night at prayer meeting. The course in the education building will be open every day—except Sunday morning during preaching hours."

The Nashville Banner recently carried a news item about a Louisville, Ky. Methodist minister who "helped design a building which will include a swimming pool, tennis court, snack bar, an unloading ramp for motorists and the largest outdoor church bulletin board in the city." The newspaper article referred to this as "a new church that can double for a country club." Where, my friend, in this is the emphasis—upon God or Man?

But, have the Lord's people completely escaped the infection of this "new humanism?" From religious periodicals and church bulletins, we behold an ever increasing trend toward human satisfaction and arrangements. The bulletin of a Lubbock, Texas church of Christ recently contained this note . . . "our special thanks . . . to Jimmy Dent and Buddy Oliver for taking care of coffee drinkers and donut eaters during weekday morning services." Another Texas congregation had this bid of news in its bulletin: "Last Sunday there was a very hot volleyball game on the church playground. Joe Stokes' Sunday morning Bible Class was challenged by Floyd Ashley's Bible Class . . . after the game cookies and hot cakes were served." A Dallas, Texas church bulletin says: "Swimming—The Pleasant Grove congregation has rented the swimming pool for Thursday mornings—8:30-9:30. Everyone is invited." The information sheet, sent out by a congregation in Jackson, Miss. concerning a kindergarten school to be conducted in their "fellowship hall" listed the following facts about the school: (1) The purpose of the kindergarten is to expand the services of the church. (2) Tuition will be charged for these services. (3) Food and playground facilities are provided. (4) Language arts, social manners, health, culture and music will be stressed in the students. (5) No religious doctrine will be taught. (6) The birth and resurrection of Christ will be taught at Christmas time and at Easter."

Recently, a preacher told me of a family that transferred their membership from where he preached to another congregation—one that had an early service—because "we like to spend Sundays on the river."

Besides all these flesh-pleasing projects, human arrangements for cooperation and action are springing up throughout the brotherhood. Area-wide elders meetings for planning united, co-operative efforts are being reported regularly.

Thirty years ago Brother Brightwell warned in the Gospel Advocate, "We have a condition in religion analogous to the one which produced the economic depression. The church, speaking in a general sense, has lived too high, built too much machinery, trusted too much to human wisdom and human organization—it has become grossly inflated. Church debts, institutions, and cooperative enterprises will as surely enslave and destroy us as they have enslaved and destroyed others. The curse of humanism plays no favorites." (Gos. Adv. Nov. 29, 1934).

Brethren, there is no substitute for "Thus saith the Lord"

(Continued on Page 7)

TRANQUILITY

Robert C. Welch

This is a age of anxiety, hurry, money madness, travel craze, luxury trimmed, moral laxity, war scare, pleasure bent. It is no great wonder that we take stimulants to get us going in the morning, tranquilizers to keep us from going crazy in the evening, and sleeping pills to make us sleep at night. It has been so long since we have experienced or even seen it that we do not know the meaning of TRANQUILITY.

"I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgiving, be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all Godliness and gravity." (1 Tim. 2:1, 2.)

Signs of warning to speeders on the highways say, "SLOW DOWN AND LIVE." Christians of this century need that warning in their lives.

Too Busy To Serve

It is hard to find a suitable time for a class of study in the Bible; there are so many activities to which those interested have already made pledges. A preacher apologized for himself on a Sunday evening a year or so ago, saying that he had been so busy doing other things in his ministerial work that he had not had the time to prepare a sermon so he would read them a good article from a paper. He was so busy he forgot his real work. A man was being considered for appointment to the eldership he informed the church that he would be so busy in his business that he could serve only in a general advisory capacity. TOO BUSY TO SERVE.

Too Worried To Wait

"But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8:25.) We often get so worried and anxious about the problems and the affairs of this life that we cannot patiently wait for the promises of the Lord. A man gets so anxious about his job, a woman gets so anxious about her daughter's social life, that they do not take the time to enjoy life together, much less to patiently sit and study the import of a passage of Scripture with a teacher.

Too Tired To Toil

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.) One man has been on such a round of work and pleasure from Monday morning till Saturday at midnight that he is too tired to go to worship Sunday morning. One good "sister" had been to a dance the evening before, and went to sleep at worship and lost her hat, causing a big commotion among the worshippers.

Too Worldly To Worship

Some have become so enamored of and insured to the world that they want to wed the church to the world. They want to make the worship into some kind of an emotionally stirred jumping jive. There must always be some kind of a drive, some kind of special week, some celebration or celebrity. They cannot conceive of a calm, dignified, soul-searching, simple worship of God.

Too Ambitious For Ardor

Find a man who wants to be a big preacher in his community and you find no genuine fervor in his work. Find a church that wants to be the big church of the town and you find no ardor for truth and righteousness.

We need to LEAD A TRANQUIL LIFE IN ALL GODLINESS AND GRAVITY.

A NEW FAITH EMERGING

(Continued from Page 6)

"Not my will, but thine be done." A gradual drifting from the idea that we must have Scriptural authority for all that we practice has become more apparent. In an effort to justify various practices for which there is no Bible command, example, or necessary inference, some have written on "Where There Is No Pattern," and made such statements as "We do many things for which we have no Bible authority nor do we need any." Some brethren are even denying the binding force of Bible examples. I recently heard G. K. Wallace in the Wallace-Holt Debate in Florence, Alabama argue that before an example can be binding it must have a revealed command behind it. This type of reasoning would mean there is no authority for the first day of the week observance of the Lord's Supper. There is no New Testament command for WHEN the Lord's Supper is to be observed. It is authorized by an approved Bible example. (Acts 20:7). Some might wonder why certain brethren would deny the binding force of approved Bible examples. The reason is: There is no precept or necessary inference for a church relieving anyone but a 'saint' or for one church sending to another church except when the receiving church is in need, and in every example this principle is observed; hence it would be unscriptural for the church to relieve non-saints or send money to another church which is not in need. But brethren want to make sponsoring churches out of churches with abundance and some seemingly want to turn the church into a regular welfare organization, so they deny Bible examples.

It is true that we do and use many things for which there is no express command, but the things are still authorized by GENERAL authority in one of the three ways that scriptural authority is established. Faithful preachers of the gospel have always been able to give Bible (general) authority for seats, lights, baptistry, etc. The thinking, and teaching, of some brethren opens the flood-gate for things MAN wants, whether they have the authority of God behind them or not. This is the "New Humanism" that observers have seen becoming prominent in America.

We must never be moved from our stand on "Thus saith the Lord" or from "Speaking where the Bible speaks and remaining silent where it is silent." We should never tire of, or be offended at, having to give chapter and verse for our faith and practices. If we resent being called upon to give scriptural authority for anything we believe or do religiously, it indicates we have the germ of humanism within. When we rush head-long into practices, turning a deaf ear to pleas of "show me the scripture," we are already overcome by humanism.

"As for the Lord, His way is right."

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FOES IN ONE'S OWN HOUSEHOLD

Lynn Headrick

This article is concerned with a problem that is very real in so many homes. It is the problem of what to do when one's own husband or wife tries to prevent one's assembling with others for the purpose of worshipping God. The Christian will have a deep love for those in his own family, but Jesus taught that a member of one's own family might be one's spiritual enemy or foe. Here is what Jesus said:

"Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." (Matthew 10:34-37.)

The Situation In Many Families

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of having part in a question and answer session. Someone handed in this question: "Should one go to services regardless of the feelings and contrary actions of one's husband and wife?" As I write this I have before me a letter from a dear brother who attended the above mentioned meeting. From the letter comes this quotation: "Dear Lynn . . . I found out concerning the question about husbands and wives going to services regardless of persecution, that one of our members had been attacked by her husband just before she came that night and he would not let her in the house when she returned . . ." How sad the situation! That husband needs to read and apply Ephesians 5:25, 28—"Husbands, love your wives, ever as Christ also loved the church . . . Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies . . ." When they first married it is probable that such actions were never even thought of. Do not marry hastily. Think about your marriage in the light of your responsibilities to Christ. In this case the husband is the foe in the household, but sometimes the situation is reversed.

In many homes the wife constitutes the spiritual foe. Prejudice can so blind her eyes that when her husband prepares to go to worship with the saints she will curse, criticize, and clamor (Proverbs 9:13) constantly. Instead of her being a "help-meet" (Gen. 2:18) or help-suitable to her husband she will do all in her power to hinder his spiritual progress. She is a foe in the household. She is hostile toward the Lord and His church. Some women want their husbands to help them clean house on the Lord's Day or take them on a visit to the house of some relative. If he goes to worship instead she will pout or cry or whine or fail to prepare a meal—just anything to try to hinder him from serving God. Men need to think about these things before they marry. They should ask themselves, "Will this woman help me in my efforts to get to heaven or will she hinder?" Yes it is surely possible for the wife to be the foe in the household. She is often the one who does not like to assemble with saints and so she expresses her hostility in various ways.

The Family Should Worship Together

"The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers." (John 4:23.) An individual can worship God whether anyone else does or not. However, it is a beautiful sight to behold a mother and father happily leading their children to the place of meeting where they will together worship the Father of them all. An ex-

ample of that sort is more precious than gold. A family of that kind will have a great leavening influence for good in their community.

The family should worship together in the public assembly and also in the privacy of the family circle. "The father to the children shall make known thy truth." (Isa. 38:19.) Someone has said that the family altar will alter your family and the family that prays together stays together. Do not be a spiritual foe to your household and discourage such activities.

"We Must Obey God Rather Than Men"

The apostles were told to teach no more in the name of Jesus in the city of Jerusalem but they "filled Jerusalem" with the teaching. They gave as their reason for so doing obedience to "God rather than men." (Acts 5:29.) When the will of men conflicted with the will of God, those who want to go to heaven have no alternative but to obey God. As Christians, we will not be found "forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is." (Hebrews 10:25.) That is God's command. When some human being endeavors to force us not to attend we must do so anyway. "We must obey God rather than man." If the one that tries to hinder us is of our own household it does not change our duty to God. To obey the member of the family is to indicate greater love for the member of the family than for the Lord. (cf. Matthew 10:37.)

I know a woman who was told that if she went to a certain religious service she need not come home. She went and did not return home. In a short while her husband came pleading for her to come home. Today she worships with the saints when they assemble. Another fine woman of my acquaintance used to walk about three miles to worship because there was no congregation in the community in which she lived. Many thought her fanatical, but there is now a congregation in the community where she lives. A wedding party was scheduled by a non-Christian. A little girl in a Christian Family was invited, but her mother refused to let her go because on that night the saints assembled for Bible study. I need not tell you that today that little girl has grown into young womanhood and is a Christian. She learned early in life to seek first the kingdom. (Matt. 6:33.)

An Earnest Plea

"Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12) but "be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.) Do not forsake the assembly. Your soul is at stake. "Be thou faithful unto death." (Rev. 2:10.) Be victorious over foes even though they are in your own household.

HOW DO YOUR ACTIONS SPEAK FOR YOU?

Some people never grow too old, nor too tired, nor do they live too far from the meetinghouse, to be at the services of the church. The weather never gets too hot or too cold; as long as travel is possible, certain ones can be depended on to be present. For some it is never too dry, and never too wet.

Do you think it strange that some should so act? You shouldn't! They attend because they love the Jesus Christ, and they believe He is pleased to have them make special effort if it is required. To them He is more than life or death, joys or earthly pleasures: more than earthly comforts, entertainments or even earthly gains. To them Christ is All in All. Such persons do not have to tell others how much they love Jesus: Their actions speak louder than their words!

—Bulletin, Belpre, Ohio