

# THE REAL ISSUE

By A. C. GRIDER

I have written on the issues confronting the church many times. By so doing, many have learned the truth. I had thought, perhaps, nothing more need be said at present. And I am not going to write on these things much more for awhile. But since I have many friends who are going to lose their souls over these matters, I thought I would try once more to get them to use their intelligence and perhaps save them.

I have been accused of being opposed to caring for orphans. The charge is as FALSE as any charge SATAN ever made. I believe every orphan in the world should be cared for.

I have been accused of being opposed to orphan homes. The charge is just as FALSE as it can be. I have never opposed the existence of any orphan home. I don't care if my brethren build a thousand orphan homes.

I have been accused of being so cruel that I would let little orphans starve to death. The charge is as FALSE as Satan himself. I

would give the last dollar I had any time to feed any orphan in this world.

I have been accused of teaching that the church should not help orphans. It is a FALSE charge that is made by SATAN'S men. I believe and teach that the church SHOULD help orphans.

I have been accused of trying to force a certain WAY of caring for orphans upon the people. This is a FALSE charge. I believe the church may employ ANY method or ANY way it desires in caring for orphans.

Based entirely upon the FALSE charges listed above, I have been branded as a "hobby rider" and an "anti" and a "church troubler". I have had meetings cancelled and I have had some of the best friends I ever had to turn their back upon me. I am making this (another) effort to save some whom I hold dear. I am aware that a good many of the members of the church are not aware of what the issues in this fight really are. I will attempt to set them forth in simple form. I beg of you to consider them. For

some of you (who will be removed from my mailing list) this may be the last line I will ever write you. When we meet again it will be at the judgement where we will give an account of what we have done. May God help you to seriously consider.

The issue in this fight is NOT and never has been, "should orphans be cared for." Everybody knows they should.

The issue in this fight is NOT and never has been, "should individuals care for orphans." Everybody KNOWS they should.

The issue in this fight is NOT and never has been, "should churches care for orphans." Everybody KNOWS they should.

The issue in this fight is NOT and never has been, "is a certain WAY specified to care for orphans." Everybody KNOWS no way is specified.

But upon the basis of these FALSE issues and the FALSE charges enumerated above, the institutional brethren have waged their fight. They won't dare let the people see the real issue in the fight. I am going to show you what the issue really is. I beg of

you to be honest. I plead with you to deal fairly in this matter.

The issue in this fight has to do with the CONTROL and OVERSIGHT of the work and the resources of the church. The question is:

Should the congregation retain control of its work and resources, or can the church turn some of its work and resources over to a human institution?" I

say to you, my brethren, THIS is the issue. Forget for just a minute the SYMPATHY appeals concerning "little hungry orphans". And just answer my simple

underlined question. I am appealing to you. The issue is NOT "to feed or not to feed" orphans. The issue is NOT "should or should not" churches care for orphans. The issue is NOT

"should or should not" orphan homes exist. These are SMOKE SCREENS!! I am repeating; The question

is: Can a congregation of the Lord's people take a part of their work and a part of their resources

out from under God's elders and place it under a board which man has originated?

If they can take PART of it, why can't they take it ALL? I challenge you to consider this honestly. If you will just answer this one question you will see the truth.

The real issue in this fight has to do with the creeping MODERNISM of institutionalism. The church is facing a crisis. Where can we stop? Consider the following:

My brethren are saying, "The church must care for orphans and the Bible does not tell how to do it, so the church can establish a benevolent society in which and through which to do this work." Just think about that, Brother. THINK about that. If that is sound reasoning (and it is NOT sound) then these same brethren can say: "The church must feed the hungry and the Bible does not tell how to do it, so the church can establish a grocery institution in which and through which to do this work." But that isn't all. These same brethren can say: "The church must care for the sick and the Bible does not tell how to do it, so the church can establish hospitals and drug stores in which and through which to do this work." Can't you see there is no end to this trend? A good many of our brethren are already openly advocating church support of schools, hospitals, publishing houses and such. I'll tell you, brethren, we are done for and the church is THROUGH as a distinct body, if you

don't COME BACK!

We have churches supporting SCHOOLS! We have churches supporting CAMPS! We have churches supporting PUBLISHING HOUSES! We have churches supporting BIBLE CHAIRS! We have churches supporting BENEVOLENT INSTITUTIONS! We have churches supporting THE RED CROSS! We have churches supporting other churches who, in turn, support SECULAR, or HUMAN INSTITUTIONS! I ask you, Where can we stop?

---I have ALWAYS believed and I have always preached that orphans should be cared for. I never have had any other idea about it. I have ALWAYS believed and I have always preached that both individuals and congregations had obligations in the care of orphans. I have ALWAYS believed and I have always preached that the church could use any WAY or employ any METHOD it desired in discharging its obligations to these orphans. On these matters I have never changed and I never will. Those of you who used to look upon my preaching as being true to the Bible but who now regard it as wrong have simply MOVED AWAY from sound preaching and SAFE ground. If you will be honest with me I KNOW you will come on back to the Bible.

About four years ago the situation changed with regard to orphan homes. BEFORE that time, individuals who desired to do so, made contributions to them. And some churches sent contributions to them. Nobody objected much then. Nobody dreamed at that time that we would face such a situation as we began to face. I read one day where one of my brethren said, "The church CAN'T do its benevolent work without some OTHER institution." And then I debated a man who said Nobody could practice pure and undefiled religion without an orphan home. I have been fighting ever since that time. I expect to die fighting. Somebody tells me there are about 16000 congregations of the Lord's church. I imagine 2000 of them contribute to orphan homes. I simply am not going to agree that all the members of the other FOURTEEN THOUSAND congregations will be lost because they didn't practice pure and undefiled religion.

Let me say again, as I have said before: I do NOT oppose orphan care. I am NOT opposed to orphan homes operated in their proper sphere. Let these orphan homes operate as SERVICE SELLING institutions, like hospitals and I will help

them to exist. I will encourage people to patronize them. I will defend their right to exist and to do the work they are doing. But just as long as they insist on being placed in the church budgets, and as long as brethren try to contend that church support of them is essential to practicing pure and undefiled religion, I will, for it is my duty to do so, resist them. Brethren sometimes think they are making some point when they ask, Which orphan homes will you endorse? The answer is very simple. I will endorse ANY of them, or ALL of them, if they will divorce them from the church and operate them in the field of OTHER benevolent organizations, such as hospitals, clinics, etc.

Let the church, under its elders take care of any orphans, and widows, and aged, and any other indigent within its obligations and let the church do it any WAY it wants to. But DON'T let the church think it is pleasing God or practicing pure religion EITHER merely by sending a few paltry dollars to a HUMAN INSTITUTION that spends FAR MORE for overhead and upkeep than it does for feeding the orphans. YOU can't go to heaven on what the church does anyway!!