

Seven Score Short Sermons

By

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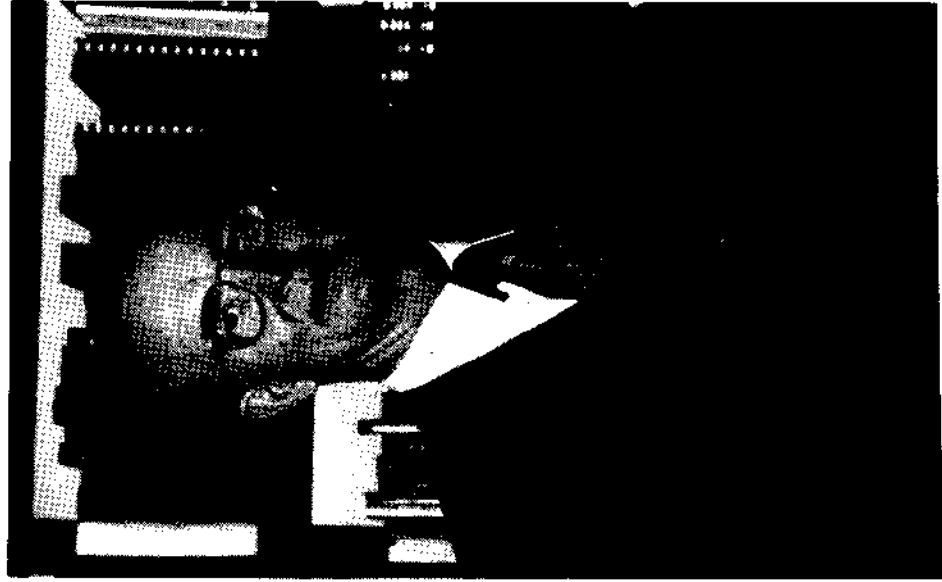
DEDICATION

TO

MY

MARGIE

**WHOSE LOVE AND LABOR
HAVE MEANT MORE IN MY
WORK THAN A LEGION OF
SCRIBES COULD WRITE.**



BASIL OVERTON

Preface

This is the second edition of *Seven Score Short Sermons*. Some changes have been made in Chapter XV.

The author prepared this volume of *Seven Score Short Sermons* hoping it might help get the saving message of the Book of Books to a few sin burdened souls. If just one person is influenced by this book to be a faithful servant of Christ, the author will be well rewarded.

It is reported that one great writer said in a letter to a friend: "I have made this letter longer than I wanted to because I lacked the time to make it short." It does take time and work to make a piece of writing short. It is also reported that President Woodrow Wilson was asked how long it would take him to write a six minute speech. He replied: "Probably about six months." His interrogator replied: "Six months! How long would it take you to prepare a two hour speech?" The President replied: "I suppose I am ready right now for a speech that long."

Relatively speaking, what Jesus said and the records of those who wrote about him are very brief. Brevity can be effective!

These *Seven Score Short Sermons* are designed to convert people to Christ, and to strengthen and reassure Christians.

These short sermons are especially designed for republication in bulletins, magazines and newspapers, for the purpose of reaching the masses. This book would also do good if Christians would circulate it among friends who are not Christians.

The author feels that congregations of God's people

would do well to publish the gospel in newspapers. For this reason he hereby grants permission for these short sermons to be used in newspapers and other media. He does ask that those who thus use these short sermons please state that they are from *Seven Score Short Sermons* by Basil Overton, and that this book can be obtained from him at P.O. Box 2279, Florence, AL 35630, or from Christian bookstores.

Foreword

Many of the sermons in this book were originally prepared in mission work done by the author while he lived in Rickmond, Kentucky. He wrote a short sermon for the newspaper in that city each week for two hundred and nine successive weeks.

These short lessons deal with God's great scheme of redemption and the glorious hope of heaven. Since they are short sermons this means that more time than one would think has been consumed in their preparation because to teach great lessons in few words requires skill and considerable time.

The author, Basil Overton, lived in Madison County, Kentucky, where Richmond is the county seat, for more than four years and preached the gospel by every conceivable means: through the newspaper, over the radio, from house to house, among students at Eastern Kentucky State College (now University) located in Richmond, in tent meetings, and by example.

Brother Overton spent seventeen years preaching in mission fields. Truly, the people of Eastern Kentucky were blessed by him and his devoted Christian wife, Margie.

Basil and Margie reared four children. One is deceased. They have seven grandchildren.

I lived in Madison County, Kentucky, at Berea, when many of these sermons were published in the *Richmond Daily Register* and suggested along with many others that they be published in a book so that many more people could be reached with their vital message.

Basil was born near Greenfield, Tennessee. He is one

of the seven children of Raymond and Mary Overton.

I knew Brother Overton first in Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee, as we attended that school in 1946 through 1949. Later he attended Abilene Christian College. He graduated with a B.A. degree from Eastern Kentucky State. He earned the M.A. degree from the University of Kentucky in Ancient Languages and Education Foundations. In 1976 he received a Doctor of Humanities degree from Morehead State University.

Brother Overton and I have been very closely associated in the work of the Master since our school days at Freed-Hardeman. We have worked together in many gospel meetings. We both lived and labored for the Lord in Eastern Kentucky for thirteen years. Our association has always been pleasant.

Brother Overton started *The World Evangelist* in 1972 and has been its editor ever since. He has also served as Vice President and a teacher at International Bible College since 1972. He began his work of preaching the gospel in 1945.

With pleasure, I commend this book.

Carson Burroughs
Minister of the Gospel

Introduction

I have known Brother Basil Overton from the days he was in Freed-Hardeman College. Having followed his work through the years, I have been impressed with the initiative he has taken in spreading the cause of Christ. He has worked in the mission field; conducted numerous gospel meetings; appeared on lectureships; written articles, tracts, books; and has edited *The World Evangelist* from its beginning. He has also served as Vice President of International Bible College for several years.

Although this book was originally written in the form of articles for a local newspaper in the Kentucky mission field, it has lost none of its value in proclaiming and radiating truths that will benefit all who will receive it. We believe it will continue to do the good it has done around the world.

Let me give you a brief history of the book. It was published here in the States under the name *Seven Score Short Sermons*, but Brother Overton gave me permission to print it in India and Singapore under the title *Seventy Short Sermons*, Volumes 1 & 2. With this printing, we are returning to its first name, *Seven Score Short Sermons*.

I am honored again to be able to publish this book. I hope it will be necessary to re-print it many times here in the States and in other parts of the world. It was written to teach, reason, and to plead that its readers will take heed to its message. With this in mind, I highly commend it to you.

J.C. Choate
Winona, MS 38967
November 1, 1989

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CHAPTER I

The Bible

WHY DID GOD GIVE THE BIBLE?

If God did not give the Bible, man did. It is easier to believe that God gave it. It is incredible that men not supernaturally aided could have produced the Bible. Friend, take notice of the volume lying around in your house called the Bible; it was written by the hand that made you! Why did God give this volume?

1. God gave the Bible to reveal himself to man; it is a permanent record of God's revelation of himself to man. Without the Bible, man might conceive that there is some force superior to man, but without the Bible man could not know what that force is; without the Bible man would not know the attributes of that superior force or being. One skeptic who rejected the information about God in the Bible began to set forth his concept of God. Whereupon he was asked, "Sir, where did you get your concept of God?" Man may foolishly make God be what he wants him to be, but such a God would not be the true and living God revealed to us in the Bible.

2. God gave the Bible to reveal or give us a last-

ing picture of Christ. What would you know about Christ were it not for the Bible? Relatively untutored men gave in the Bible the record of a man who was the world's greatest teacher who taught and lived perfectly the world's greatest truths! Their being relatively untutored is good evidence they were supernaturally aided.

3. God gave the Bible to reveal man to himself. God's word is like a mirror. (James 1: 22-25.) This is why some despise the Bible. It is said a heathen Chinese gave a Bible back to a missionary and exclaimed: "Every time I read this book it kicks me!"

4. God gave the Bible to reveal man to man. It will show you the sin of others as well as your own sins, and it will make you "consider yourself" as you view the mistakes of another. There is an Indian proverb that shows the meaning of this. It says: "I will not criticize another until I have walked in his moccasins at least two weeks."

5. God gave the Bible to reveal his plan of salvation. No more can we look for visions; God speaks to us through his Son in the New Testament. (Heb. 1: 1-3.) Salvation is in Christ, and nowhere else. (Acts 4: 11, 12; 2 Tim. 2: 10; 3: 14.) To be in Christ is to be in his body which is his church. (Col. 1: 2, 18; 3: 15.) We are baptized into Christ. (Rom. 6: 3.)

6. God gave the Bible to reveal man's destiny. You are going somewhere. You cannot put your soul out of existence. The Bible determines your eternal destiny, depending on your attitude toward it.

BIBLE STUDY

Everyone should study the Bible; those who study it need to study it more. There are several reasons why the Bible should be studied.

The Bible contains commands to study it. (2 Tim. 2: 15; 1 Tim. 4: 13; 2 Pet. 1: 5.) The fact that God commands it is sufficient motive for studying the Bible. One reason many do not carry out this command of God is because they have been made to believe they cannot understand the Bible. One church tells its communicants that they must have officials of its hierarchy to tell them what the Bible means. People are told they cannot understand the Bible, but that "the church" must tell them what it means. If people cannot understand the Bible, how can they be assured they can understand "the church" any better? The Bible is addressed to all classes. Wives, husbands, children, preachers, elders, aliens, employers, employees, governors, kings, merchants, etc. are addressed in the sacred volume.

Others do not study the Bible because they think it to be a great mystery. Indeed there are many difficult matters in the Bible, just as there are in God's revelation of nature. Skill and diligence are required in investigating either the Bible or nature. And there are things in both which we know little or nothing about. The gospel plan of salvation and the Christian way of life are clearly enough revealed that we can constantly learn if we will study. And we are without excuse if we do not study. The word "mystery" does not signify that which is

“unknowable,” but that which is “unknown.” The gospel is a “mystery revealed.” (Eph. 3: 1-5; 6: 19; Rom. 16: 25.) Paul said if we read what he wrote we could understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ. (Eph. 3: 4.)

STUDYING THE BIBLE TO TEACH IT TO OTHERS

Studying the Bible is not merely a privilege, but an imperative. Many search in the various denominations to find what seems to them to be right. People should search in the Bible instead of in the various churches. If one will study the Bible with an unprejudiced mind he will find the truth and the right church.

Christians are obligated to study the Bible so they can teach it to others. The Hebrew Epistle was addressed to Christians among the Hebrews in and around Jerusalem; they were the “church of the firstborn.” (Heb. 12: 23.) This has been more literally translated: “church of the firstborn ones.” Those in the Jerusalem church were the first ones to be born into God’s family, or church. They were born of water and the spirit. (John 3: 5.) This means that they believed the gospel, repented of their sins and were baptized into Christ’s body, the church or family of God. (Acts 2: 36-47.)

When the Epistle to the Hebrews was written those to whom it was addressed had been in the church about thirty years. They had been Christians long enough to be teachers of others, so the writer said: “For when for the time ye ought to be teach-

ers, ye have need that one teach you again what be the first principles of the oracles of God. . .” (Heb. 5: 12.) Many Christians ought to be teachers, but cannot be because they have not studied the Bible enough to even keep that which they learned: they need to be taught again. That is why the writer to the Hebrews said: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” “Let them slip” in this passage is more literally translated: “Let them run out as from a leaking vessel.” How many people do you know who study the Bible? Do you study it?

STUDYING THE BIBLE TO GIVE AN ANSWER

God holds you responsible to study his word. “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” (1 Pet. 3: 15.) In this passage Christians are enjoined to give an answer to those who ask them for a reason of the hope in which they rejoice. It is always a pleasure to me for people to ask me concerning my hope as based upon the promises of God, and my obedience to the commands of my Lord. We do not object to questions being asked.

We also may be called on to give a scriptural reason for our beliefs and practices. We should rejoice in such an opportunity. Any preacher who does not like for people to ask him about what he

preaches, practices, and believes has the wrong attitude and people should not pay any attention to such a preacher. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4: 11.) A good way to find out if a preacher is "speaking as the oracles of God" is to ask him to show where God has spoken what he speaks. There are many passages in the Bible that warn us concerning those who would not be able to give an answer from the Bible for what they would teach. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4: 1.) Jesus commended some who tried certain teachers who taught things that God had not spoken. (Rev. 2: 1, 2.)

STUDYING THE BIBLE TO SEE OURSELVES

The Bible must be studied for one to see himself as God sees him. (James 1: 23-25.) The Bible is the only true mirror of the soul. One reason why some people do not succeed in the Christian life is because they never see themselves as God sees them. The philosopher who said: "Know thyself," spoke a mouthful of wisdom. One cannot know himself as he needs to without studying the Bible. One scholar said: "You can learn more about human nature in the Bible than you can by living in New York City."

James said that those who hear God's word and do not do what they hear, are like the man who looks into a mirror and then forgets what he looks like.

Those who are respectable are careful to see that their appearance is neat. We are all careful to look in a mirror before appearing in the public. If one needs to adjust his clothing, comb his hair, or shine his shoes he is careful to make these improvements in his appearance if he cares for himself as he should. But many look into God's mirror of the soul and pass off lightly their ill appearance and make no attempt to make corrections in their lives.

By looking into; by studying God's word we can see our errors; we can see our mistakes, and we can find out how to correct them. Try to conceive of a world wherein everybody would study the Bible and give attention to the things that pertain to life and godliness like they would to the things that pertain to physical welfare. It is hard to conceive of such a society. Imagine all people looking into the mirror of the soul with the same regularity and diligence with which most of us look into literal mirrors!

STUDYING THE BIBLE TO UPHOLD IT

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3.) A good reason for studying the Bible is summed up in this verse of Holy Scripture. I have heard people who said they were Christians object to one's contending for the faith. One Christian responsibility that is greatly neglected is that of contending for the pure gospel

as it is revealed in the Word of God. Jude told the brethren that they were to earnestly contend for the faith. We are not to just contend for the gospel, we are to contend earnestly for it.

“Contend earnestly” of this text is from Greek “epagonizesthai” and this term was used to refer to the vigorous efforts of accomplished athletes. If all Christians would uphold the gospel with the vigor and zeal of accomplished athletes this would be a very different world.

Christians are enjoined to hold up and defend the truth at any cost. The truth of the gospel is our most precious heritage, for it reveals to us our blessed Saviour and what he has done for us, and what he expects of us. Could there be any greater reason for studying the Bible than to study it in order to defend it against all attacks, and present it to people who may have been deceived by seducing spirits? (1 Tim. 4: 1-5.) Contending earnestly for the faith which is the gospel is just as much a Christian responsibility as anything else. And yet many shrink from “contending earnestly” for the truth, and even censure those who try to divorce people from human traditions and philosophies and get them to accept the New Testament gospel. God speed the day when people will be concerned as to whether or not the Bible teaches what they believe and practice. The Bible does not teach conflicting doctrines as some have so vainly said. To say that God’s word is not a book of contradictory doctrines is to contend for the faith. All of the seeming discrepancies have been reasonably and rationally explained and shown not to be contradictions.

STUDYING THE BIBLE IN VIEW OF THE JUDGMENT

If you knew that on tomorrow you were going to take a test, or stand a trial that would determine whether or not you would succeed in some great venture, and if you knew what you were going to be tested or tried by, would you not carefully study the material by which you were going to be tried? Anyone of us, in such circumstances, would spend a great amount of the night trying to learn all he could about the standard by which he was going to be tested.

“He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” (John 12: 48.) Righteousness is revealed in the gospel of Christ, and righteousness is that standard of what God says is right. (Rom. 1: 17.) To the Areopagites on Mar’s Hill, Paul said: “Because he (God) hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” (Acts 17: 31.) Just as surely as Jesus has been raised from the dead, just that surely God will judge the world by the righteousness that is revealed in the gospel of his Son.

When one views the evidence that attests the resurrection of Jesus he cannot keep from believing that God has raised him from the dead. Those who scoff at this conclusion should give someone an opportunity to show that Jesus must have been raised

from the grave. Let the ones who say that he was not raised tell us what happened to his body. And when they tell us we will show that their answer cannot be right in view of the evidences and the facts that even the scoffers accept. Yes, the world is going to be judged by the Word of God, the Bible. Therefore, it behooves us to study it.

NEW TESTAMENT AND PSALMS

It has been called to my attention that several people think that the Psalms of the Old Testament are a part of the New Testament. Some think this because some copies of the New Testament contain the Psalms. If you have a New Testament with the Psalms in it, do not think that the Psalms are a part of the New Testament. To his disciples after his resurrection Jesus said: "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me." (Luke 24: 44.) Looking at the Old Testament in one way, the Jews divided it into "the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms."

Looking at the Old Testament in another way the Jews considered all of it as their law, or the law. In John 10: 34, the record tells us that Jesus quoted from Psalm 82: 6, and he called the Psalms "your law" in speaking to the Jews. In John 12: 34 the people speaking to Christ called the Psalms the law. They said: "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever." This was said in sev-

eral of the Psalms; e.g., Psalm 89: 4, 29, 36, 37; 110: 4. In John 15: 25, Jesus said: "But this cometh to pass that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." Here Jesus again referred to the Psalms as "the law of the Jews," or the law of Moses, for this is written in Psalm 35: 19, and 69: 4. When one studies carefully these passages in John and other passages in the New Testament, there can be no doubt in his mind but that the Psalms are not a part of the New Testament. Many like to read the Psalms, and for convenience some New Testaments contain the Book of Psalms also.

LIBEL ON THE BIBLE

A lack of consistent, sane and correct methods of Bible study has given birth to the proverb: "You can prove anything by the Bible." This proverb has also been stated like this: "In the Bible every man his opinion seeks; in the Bible every man his opinion finds." This is libel on the Bible.

Of this proverb, Mr. David Dobie, an eminent scholar, had something to say more than a hundred years ago. He said in his great book, *A Key to the Bible*, the following: "Let sound and true principles be adopted and this proverb will perish. The Bible can be interpreted consistently with itself, and in such a manner as to commend itself to the good sense and enlightened faith of all men. It is not the textbook of every error with which this world is infested. It can be correctly interpreted, so as to give unity and perspicuity to its doctrines,

just as truly as the ocean can be traversed by the help of the compass, through all its gulfs, bays and straits."

Little wonder that many are not interested in studying the Bible; they think that it teaches conflicting doctrines. But it does not. It takes work to handle aright the word of truth. That is why Paul told Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed handling aright the word of truth." The King James version says: ". . . rightly dividing the word of truth."

There are some basic rules that all should follow when studying the Bible. These rules can be found in any book on the subject of hermeneutics. However, most of the rules are just formal expressions of what we call "good common sense." Every writer of the Bible is in harmony as respects his meaning with all other writers of the Bible, and he is always in harmony with himself. We should study every passage in the Bible that says something about a particular subject; we should look at all the testimony, and then draw the conclusions. The interpretation that the Bible gives of its own meaning is in every case to be adopted. The Bible is an extended commentary on itself. Of all the books written on the Bible to explain it, the best, beyond any doubt, is the Bible itself.

If anyone would read and study the Bible with the care that it so much deserves; if everyone would be sure that what he thinks a passage means does not contradict another passage, the Bible would be to him the greatest storehouse of knowledge and

truth in the world. And if all would so treat the Bible, ere long we would realize that we can all see the Bible alike, and our Lord's Prayer for the unity of all believers would be meaningful to the masses. (See John 17.)

WHAT ABOUT THE APOCRYPHA?

In some Bibles in the Old Testament section there is a group of books called the Apocrypha. "Apocrypha" is from the Greek "apokryptein" and this word is from "apo" which is the preposition meaning "away," and "kryptein" which is an infinitive meaning "to hide." "Crypt" the name of an underground or hidden chamber is from "kryptein." Hence, "apocrypha" means what is hidden, doubtful, or spurious.

Many scholars like Archibald Alexander, formerly of Princeton, have given such reasons as the following why the Apocryphal books should not be accepted as inspired of God, and therefore have no part in the Holy Bible.

1. Just one of the Apocryphal books even claims to be inspired and it has internal evidences that prove it was not inspired of God.

2. The Apocryphal books were not written by prophets and inspired men but by writers who wrote of their labors in a way wholly incompatible with divine inspiration.

3. The Apocrypha abounds in stories that contradict the plain acknowledged doctrines of the Bible and the history of the Jews.

4. Jerome of the 4th century A.D. gave the

world the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible. This translation was acknowledged by the Council of Trent in 1546 to be thereafter the official Bible of the church that held that council. The same church added the Apocrypha to the Bible, but Jerome who made the Latin Vulgate translation rejected the Apocrypha as uninspired.

5. The Apocryphal books were never cited by any New Testament writer, and the New Testament abounds in references to the Old Testament.

6. The Apocrypha was not received as a part of God's word by the so-called "church fathers."

7. The Apocrypha has never been accepted by the Jews as being a part of the Old Testament; they are good judges of what belongs in the Old Testament.

While claiming to be the preserver of God's word one religious system has corrupted God's word by adding books to the Bible that have no place in it.

THE FRAGMENTARY HYPOTHESIS

The Bible has been attacked in many ways through the centuries. One of the text books that the writer used while a student at Eastern College is entitled: *Our Heritage of World Literature*. In a chapter on the Bible, the authors say that the first five books of the Old Testament were welded together out of ninth and eighth century B.C. materials in the fourth century B.C. This concept of the authorship of the Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Old Testament, is part of a theory regarding the authorship of the Old Testament known as the

“documentary hypothesis” or the “fragmentary hypothesis.” The theory holds that the Pentateuch is the product of various writers who lived many hundreds of years after Moses is supposed to have lived. It is affirmed that fragments of writings were compiled by various editors into what we call the Pentateuch. The fragments are supposed to have been written by various writers. Similar ideas are presented in the theory concerning the rest of the Old Testament. The exponents of this explanation of the origin of the Old Testament say that Moses, even if there was such a man, could not have written the Pentateuch about 1500 B.C., but that it was written instead hundreds of years later by unknown writers known by certain classifications. These classifications are abbreviated with the letters J, E, P, and D. These stand for the names of certain classifications of writers. Actually, J, E, P, and D, and their documents have never been discovered; they only exist in the minds of naturalistic theologians who needed some way to fit the Old Testament into the theory of evolutionary history they already accepted before they ever conceived of such a scheme by which to account for the Old Testament’s origin.

The fragmentary hypothesis is thought by some misled souls to be the scholarly approach to the origin of the Old Testament. However, the truth is that the hypothesis is not scholarly at all.

There are many classical works which defend the Bible, and which present the evidences that it was written by inspired writers. Many of these great classical works deal with the authorship of

the Pentateuch. Any who hold the fragmentary hypothesis surely could see the folly of that hypothesis by reading such works as: *The Authorship of Deuteronomy*, J. W. McGarvey; *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, by Dr. Edward Young; *The Pentateuch, Its Origin and Structure*, by Edwin Cone Bissell; *The Mosaic Origin of the Pentateuchal Codes*, by Gerhardus Vos; *Moses and the Prophets*, by William Henry Green; *The Problems of the Old Testament*, by James Orr; and *The Five Books of Moses*, by Oswald T. Allis. These are just a few of the host of classical works in this field of study. Most of these books can be obtained from religious bookstores. If they do not have them, probably they can order most of them.

DISCOVERIES THAT DESTROYED THEORIES

Some have objected to the Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Old Testament on the assumption that writing was unknown and not practiced at the time that Moses lived, about 1500 B.C. Several discoveries have made this objection invalid. Archaeological discoveries have proven that writing was a science not only around 1500 B.C., but hundreds of years before that.

In 1929 the Ras Shamra texts were discovered. These are conceded to have been written in the 15th and early 14th centuries before Christ. These texts prove that writing was practiced by the Canaanites by the middle of the 2nd millennium before Christ.

In 1935 there was discovered at a place called Mari in the Euphrates River Valley over 20,000 tablets, most of which belong to the early part of the second millenium before Christ. This proved that writing was practiced hundreds of years before Moses lived. These Mari tablets confirm the Biblical account that Israel's ancestors went to Palestine by way of the region of Haran. Many other confirmations of the accuracy of Bible history are given in these Mari tablets, and other unearthed instruments. Two critics, Wellhausen and Graf advanced the theory that Moses could not have written the first five books of the Old Testament because writing was not practiced when Moses lived. Their theory was exploded by the spade!

Others have argued that Moses could not have written the first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch, because there are words in those books that were not used in 1500 B.C. But scholars have proven that the words which some say were not in use about 1500 B.C., were indeed used about 1500 B.C. and even hundreds of years before that time.

Others say that moral and social laws of the Pentateuch reflect a moral and social level too high for the times referred to in the Pentateuch. This objection is based on the abominable assumption that man gradually developed his morality without any help from a beneficent Creator. God revealed moral principles to man evidently before he gave the Law to Moses. God instructed man how to live right from the very beginning when Adam and Eve were created by him. Man did not always live by

the standard of right that God gave to him, but the Old Testament, even the Pentateuch does reflect a high level of moral and social status. That is true because God revealed such a high level! Scholars say that archaeological discoveries reveal the same high level of living for the times referred to in the Pentateuch that the Pentateuch presents. Again, we insist that the spade of the scholar has confirmed the page of the inspired scribe.

VARIETY OF STYLE?

Those who deny that Moses authored the first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch, say he could not have written those books because the style of writing in those books varies too much. This is a weak objection, and the eminent scholar James G. Murphy, former professor of Hebrew at Belfast, said in his *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, the following: "Variety of style has been certainly found in the different parts of the book; but then it has been only such as the same author might display according to sub-divisions of his plan and subject. It cannot be demonstrably, or even probably ascribed to a medley of passages from different authors." Of course what Dr. Murphy here said of Genesis would apply to all the Pentateuch.

Commodore P. J. Wiseman wrote a book that was published in 1953 entitled: *New Discoveries In Babylonia About Genesis*. Commodore Wiseman re-

ported the finding of thousands of clay tablets in recent years in what was Old Babylonia in the Mesopotamian Valley. These tablets have writing on them which ante-dates the time Moses lived by many hundreds of years. Commodore Wiseman says: "Until recent times it was the general tendency to insist on the late appearance of writing; now the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction, and the present tendency is to thrust back the period for which written records are claimed to dates before 3500 B.C." (Page 35 in his book mentioned above.) The Commodore further says: A conservative estimate is that the pictographic forms of writing which have been found, may be dated from 3300 B.C. to 2800 B.C., therefore, cuneiform writing came into view. (Op. Cit., p. 36.) "Cuneiform" means "wedge form"; the stylus used in such writing had a wedge-shaped end.

Commodore Wiseman points out that the clay tablets discovered in such abundance in Old Babylonia have on them records of various interesting things. They contain letters and show that the Babylonians had a postal system hundreds of years before Moses was born. Commodore Wiseman said that about 250,000 of these clay tablets with writing on them have already been placed in museums all around the world. Next to stone, these clay tablets are the most durable form of writing material known to man.

Commodore Wiseman feels that the way the writing on these clay tablets is arranged indicates that much of the Book of Genesis was originally written on clay tablets by inspired writers who

lived in the Mesopotamian Valley. Wiseman believes that much of the Book of Genesis is arranged in precisely the same literary form that is found on the clay tablets. He feels that Genesis was written by Moses, but he feels that Moses used existing records which other inspired writers had originally written on clay tablets.

The Commodore certainly presents a strong argument showing that there were many kinds of writing as many as 2000 years before Moses was born. We may rest assured, and reasonably keep on believing that Genesis is indeed a part of God's word.

The Book of Genesis and all the rest of the Bible has withstood the attacks of Satan and his agents throughout the ages. The Bible is a book "too hard for the teeth of time." Despite all the attacks against it, the Bible is still true and speaks in hundreds of languages to the hearts of humans. It is the only true window of the world.

DANIEL AND HIS BOOK

Daniel was a Hebrew among the Hebrews in Babylonian captivity called the seventy years captivity, from 606 B.C. to 536 B.C. Daniel wrote the Book of Daniel which is in the Old Testament. In that treatise he gave a minute prophecy of the world kingdoms from his time to the time of the Lord Jesus Christ's sojourn on this earth. He told of the coming of the Messiah, Jesus the Son of God, and the establishment of his kingdom, the church of Christ. Those who deny that the Old Testament was written by men inspired of God say that the

Book of Daniel was written much later than the 6th century B.C. They admit that if Daniel did live in the 6th century B.C. and actually did write the Book of Daniel he must have been inspired to have given such a description of the kingdoms of the world. These critics think the Book of Daniel was written a few years before the Messiah, Jesus Christ, came, and that whoever wrote it actually wrote history and made it appear to be prophecy.

Many generations before the time these theorists say Daniel was written, Alexander the Great went out on his great conquering campaign. He went to Jerusalem and there he met the Jewish high priest whom he liked very much. The high priest gave Alexander the Book of Daniel and Alexander read from it in Jerusalem. (See Antiquities of the Jews, by the Jewish Historian, Josephus, page 350.) This is evidence that the Book of Daniel was written long before the critics of the Bible are willing to admit.

Jesus Christ quoted from the Book of Daniel; he said that Daniel predicted the fall and destruction of Jerusalem that occurred in 70 A.D. Jesus said that the abomination of desolation was spoken of by Daniel the prophet. (Matt. 24: 15.) Jesus was right in all that he said.

CAN ONE PROVE JUST ANYTHING BY THE BIBLE?

Some entertain the idea that the Bible is a book by which just about anything can be proven. One should not read the Bible with the idea that it

teaches a host of conflicting doctrines. The many conflicting doctrines of the religious world are making infidels and atheists. But the Bible is not responsible for this sad fact; men who carelessly interpret the Bible and make it mean things that it does not mean are responsible for this horrible condition. People say that the Bible is the best book in the world; they say it is God's inspired word; that it is God's message to man. But, some of these same people also say that one can prove anything by the Bible. Suppose you had a friend you liked very much, and suppose you were to brag about him and say all manner of good things about him, and then suppose you were to finally say of this friend that one can prove just anything by him! You would be saying that this friend is not dependable; you would be questioning his integrity and honesty.

When people say that one can prove just anything by the Bible, they are virtually saying of God, the author of the Bible, that he is not dependable! Never was there a more blasphemous statement made against God and the Bible than when it is said that one can prove just anything by the Bible. Certainly if one wrests a passage out of its contextual meaning, and makes it mean something that will contradict the obvious meaning of another passage in the Bible, then one can prove just about anything by the Bible. Using this method, one could prove that it is wrong to split wood, cut a watermelon, etc. For, Jesus said: "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder." (Matt. 19: 6.) But, Jesus was not talking about

wood and watermelons, he was talking about marriage. There is one thing that can be proven by the Bible on any subject upon which it speaks, and that is the truth! That is all! And truth does not contradict itself! "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 32.)

CHAPTER II

Sin

ARE WE BORN SINNERS?

Sin is not inherited, but committed! "The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." (Ezek. 18: 10.) Some say that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was conceived immaculately, or without "original sin." And certainly she was; so was I, and so were you! We are not born sinners as the creeds and councils of men teach. When we become responsible accountable individuals, we sin by transgressing God's law. (1 John 3: 4.) God is the Father of our spirits. (Heb. 12: 9.) We are the offspring of God. (Acts 17: 29.) If we are sinners when we are born, then God is responsible for our sinful condition, since he is the Father of our spirits, and we are his offspring! We do inherit the consequences of sin.

Some use the fifth chapter of Romans to try to prove that men are born sinners. But such an exegesis makes the Bible contradict itself! This chapter simply teaches that sin entered the world by one man, Adam, and that righteousness entered the world by one man, Jesus Christ. All men are sin-

ners, not just because sin entered the world, but because all men have sinned! (Rom. 5: 12.) Those who are righteous are not righteous just because righteousness entered the world, but because they do right. Being a sinner is conditional; being righteous is likewise conditional. To be a sinner one must sin. To be righteous one must do right. Peter, by the Holy Spirit, said: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." (Acts 10: 34, 35.) Another passage that is wrested in an attempt to prove that men are born sinful is Romans 3: 10-18. But this passage describes certain ones with the following terms: "They are all gone out of the way." "They are together become unprofitable." "Their throat is an open sepulchre." "With their tongues they have used deceit." "The poison of asps is under their lips." "Whose mouth is full of cursing." "Their feet are swift to shed blood." "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Obviously these expressions describe mature responsible people, not pure, sweet innocent babies. Preachers sin who use this passage to try to prove that babies are born sinners.

HOW BAD IS SIN?

When the above question is given its Bible answer, someone may say: "I do not see how sin could be that bad." We may not see how sin could be so bad. Only God is qualified to tell us how bad sin is. His appraisal of sin is seen in the consequences of sin. Because of the sin of Adam and Eve, God de-

creed many evil consequences. Keep in mind that these consequences resulted not from the sins of a world full of people, but from the sin of one man and one woman. He said the woman would bring forth children in pain, and the man would earn his living by working; and the soil would bring forth obnoxious plants to hinder prosperity, and to, perhaps, constantly remind him of his sin. Also, because of that one sin, God passed physical death upon the entire human race. (1 Cor. 15: 21, 22.)

If we could allow to pass under our close inspection just one glimpse of all the paleness and coldness of death; if we could hear for a moment all the sighs and cries wrought by death; if we could see the indistinguishable mass of putrid flesh that death has made; we would begin to see how bad sin is! God engulfed the world with a flood because of sin. (Gen. 6.) Look, with eyes of faith, upon the crested billows of that shoreless sea wherein all people but Noah and his family died, and you will see how bad sin is in God's sight! It was sin that caused God to depart from Israel, for whom he had done so much. (Isa. 59: 1.) Sin is so bad that the only offering for it that God accepts is his only begotten Son; nothing else will do! View the tragic scene of his death, and you will see how bad sin is. Sin must have its punishment. (Isa. 53.) Truly, Christ died for our sins. (1 Cor. 15: 3.) Sin is so bad that all who do not reach the benefits of the death of Christ will be lost eternally in hell. (Matt. 10: 28; 25: 46.)

We cannot reach the benefits of the death of Christ without being baptized into Christ and into

his death. (Rom. 6: 3, 4.) That is why baptism is for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38.)

SIN

Of all bad things, sin is the worst. If I could wish for just one thing as a gospel preacher, I would wish for the ability to adequately describe sin. Some think that the devil is a fallen angel; he may be. (1 Tim. 3: 16.) If he is, sin is worse than the devil, for sin made him the devil. The Bible was written on the subject of sin. If one says: "I thought it was written on the subject of the scheme of redemption," I would ask: "Redemption from what?" The answer would have to be: "Redemption from sin." Sin is real. No Bible writer was skeptical of its reality. Jesus did not try to prove that sin was real with philosophical arguments. In fact he did not try thus to prove anything he said. He was the divine dogmatist! He just told men that they were sinners, and there was no argument about it. (John 8: 7, 21, 24, 44.) Those Jesus called sinners were religious people; they were religiously wrong. Some of the worst sins that Jesus rebuked, were sins of religious error. When people do things in their religion that are a violation of God's standard as revealed in his word, they sin!

No amount of sincerity, conscientiousness, and honesty makes such sin any better. Perhaps, one of the greatest sins in the sight of God is the sin of substituting traditions, sentiments, and the commandments of men for God's word. It is a sin to

substitute sincerity and honesty for God's word. One must be sincere and honest if he is a member of God's family which is his church, but one can be honest and sincere, and still be wrong religiously. And when one is shown that he is wrong according to the plain teaching of God's immutable counsel, his word, and that one refuses to do anything about it because he has been sincere and honest, then he substitutes sincerity and honesty for God's word. The Bible is our only guide to heaven and when we substitute anything for it we sin grievously! Paul was honest, sincere, and thought he was right while he persecuted Christ and the church of Christ, but he was wrong! (Acts 22: 3, 4; 23: 1; 26: 9-11.) When Paul realized he was wrong he quit the wrong.

Men sin when they do that which God tells them not to do. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." Transgression of any of God's laws is sin. Many people who believe this seem to forget something else that the Bible teaches on the subject of sin. When one fails to do that which God requires of him, he sins. "Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4: 17.) The Bible teaches men to believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son; it teaches men to repent of their sins, and upon a confession of their faith to be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins. (John 8: 24; Acts 2: 38; 8: 35-39; 17: 30.) When people thus obey the gospel they become members of the church that we can all read about in the Bible. It does not matter with God how "good" a man may

be otherwise, if he does not do that which God tells him to do, he sins!

“WHOSE SOEVER SINS YE REMIT”

“Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” (John 20: 23.) Jesus said this to his apostles. A passage of scripture should be studied in light of all other passages that speaks on the same subject. Some affirm that the apostles had successors, and that there continues until the present a religious hierarchy consisting of men who are successors of the apostles, and that these men are endowed as were the apostles with power to forgive sins. It is said that through the “sacrament of confession” these clergymen forgive sins.

The Bible says nothing of confession as a “sacrament”; it says not one word about anything being a “sacrament.” The apostles did not have successors, and they could not have had successors. They were witnesses of the risen Christ. Witnesses cannot have successors, unless other witnesses of the same things succeed them. Matthias took the place of Judas who fell by transgression. Matthias was selected because he possessed certain qualifications. (1) He had been with the apostles while the Lord Jesus went in and out among them. (2) He was a witness of the resurrected Christ. (Acts 2: 21, 22.) The apostles revealed all truth as it was given them by the Holy Spirit. (John 16: 13.) That “all truth” is recorded for us in the New Testament, and therefore we do not need successors

to the apostles. The apostles "remitted sins" only in the sense that they preached to people the doctrine of Christ which when obeyed, God remitted sins. They remitted, or forgave sins only in the sense that they brought people to a knowledge of what God required of them in order to have sins forgiven. The apostles did not work through "the sacrament of confession" or any other so-called "sacrament."

"WHOSE SOEVER SINS YE REMIT" (NO. 2)

The apostles preached the truth, and when people believed the truth and obeyed it, God remitted their sins. Look into the lives of the apostles as recorded in the New Testament and see if that is not the only way they remitted sins. In the very same way, any man that now preaches what the apostles preached, remits sins! Peter told people to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38.) Peter told an erring child of God to repent and pray God that if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him. (Acts 8: 22.) Paul told Timothy to live in such a way, and to preach in such a way that he would both save himself and those that heard him. (1 Tim. 4: 17.) Yes, Timothy was told he could save himself and others. This could only mean that through godly living and through preaching the gospel, Timothy could save himself and others. Being saved, and having sins, remitted are the same. The apostles did not have any "special power" within themselves to remit sins in the

sense that some teach; they could only forgive, or remit sins in the sense that they preached the doctrine of Christ, which, when obeyed, brought God's forgiveness and salvation to the obedient. (Heb. 5: 8, 9.)

How did the apostles retain sins? "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized. . . ." (Acts 2: 41.) This implies that some did not receive the word, and were not baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2: 38), therefore, their sins were retained. The apostles retained sins only in the sense that they preached the way of salvation or remission of sins, and if one rejected that way, his sins were retained, or held against him by God in heaven. I challenge anyone to produce evidence that the apostles retained sins in any other sense.

CHAPTER III

Jesus Christ

THE BABY JESUS IN DANGER

Herod was troubled when he heard of the strange visitors in Jerusalem who said they had seen the star of him who had been born to be king of the Jews. He thought his throne was in danger. He acted through envy and fear. He summoned all the wise men he could muster to find out from them what the law of Moses said as to where the Messiah was to be born. He clothed his action and anxiety with religion. He acted as if he wanted to go and worship the new born king. The meanest deeds and maddest pranks have been disguised in the garb of hypocritical piety. Often men cloak their pernicious purposes under religious regalia, and deceive those who are really righteous. Evil men sometimes use the truly pious to perform their dastardly deeds. Men can deceive men, but men cannot deceive God. "The eyes of Jehovah are in every place keeping watch upon the evil and the good." (Prov. 15: 3.)

The plans of the wicked are often well laid. Herod was smart; he made many clever moves, but

he failed in the most important particular; he did not take God into account. Such is the folly of many men. Those who do not take God into account fail eventually. God warned the Magi; they went home another way, and they did not return to Herod to tell him where the Christ child was like he had asked them to do. Herod's plans were frustrated, for he had planned to have the baby Jesus killed when he found out exactly where he was. Herod's hopes were blasted; he was more confused than ever; he was "exceedingly wroth." The Magi mocked him! Is there any hope now for the baby in Bethlehem? Ah yes! God was busy too. As well might the Idumean monarch on Zion have tried to stop the raging billows of the Great Sea on the border of his domain, as for him to have tried to thwart the purposes of God as they were to be unfolded in that baby in Bethlehem. Hastily, God intervened and told Joseph to leave Bethlehem with the baby and its mother and go to Egypt. After Joseph and his family left Bethlehem, Herod in his madness murdered all the baby boys in Bethlehem and vicinity thinking he would surely kill the baby king. Nothing but divine intervention could have saved the baby Jesus from the wrath of such an awful man. The striking drama of it all moves me to write:

Ne'r did Herod's sword reach the place

Where shined that immortal face;

Nor plan, nor scheme reach far enough their rod

To frustrate the purpose of the eternal God.

JESUS WAS HUMBLE

Jesus personified all good qualities of character. Jesus was the personification of humility. He preached that all men should be humble, and his preaching on any subject was effective because he practiced what he preached.

It is said that at a meeting in a large northern city a man stood for a considerable time telling an audience what he had of this world's goods and what he had accomplished. He finally said he had everything. Whereupon, someone arose and said: "Sir, there is one thing you do not have and it is something you need, and that is humility." Many will doubtless be lost for lack of humility. Perhaps one of God's greatest tests for men is the test that determines whether one is humble or haughty. Jesus never met unimportant people. "The common people heard him gladly." (Mark 12: 37.) "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." (1 Cor. 1: 26.)

Many times Jesus took special notice of those who were ignored and neglected by the crowd. This truth is illustrated in the story of the certain Samaritan who assisted a fallen man; because he was a Samaritan, the crowd would have ignored this great deed. Others would have ignored humility and gratitude of the Samaritan whom Jesus healed and returned to tell Jesus: "Thank you." Jesus told the story of this man's gratitude and rebuked the nine others who were healed at the same time, by asking: "Were not ten healed? but where are the nine?" (Luke 17: 17.)

Jesus preached in mountains, by the sea side, and even in a boat in the sea. He began his sojourn to the cross in a stable! "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2: 8.) If Jesus were to come and be as he was when he was on the earth, how many religious groups would accept him? He was not a "sermonizer"; he was not a "pulpiteer." He did not speak just to fill appointments; he was very informal; he was not a "clergyman." Jesus spoke to influence lives with the truth. His doctrine was not his, but his Father's. (John 7: 16.)

HOW DID JESUS PREACH?

Jesus preached positively and negatively; he preached against that which was not in keeping with his Father's will. We cannot look into the hearts of people as did Jesus, but we are to know "them by their fruits." (Matt. 7: 20.) When we know that according to the Bible a man is wrong, then we are obligated to tell that man of his error. We should love one another to that extent. We must hate error and love souls; a doctor should hate the disease and love the patient. Jesus was not crucified because of any immoral conduct in his life; he was not killed because he misrepresented anyone; but he was put to death because he told the truth!

We may suffer for doing wrong; our Lord did all of his suffering for doing right and refusing to do that which would have been wrong! In the "ser-

mon on the mount" Jesus spoke out against all the common religious errors of his day. Often Jesus approached subjects negatively; he told the people that they should "not" do as some were doing, and then he told them what they should do. A classic example of this is in Matthew chapter six. One cannot preach Christ and his gospel without pointing out the difference in what men say and that which God has said. In his instruction to Timothy, a gospel preacher, the Holy Spirit said: "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, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17; 4: 1, 2.) Too many want preachers to just "exhort," but we must "correct" and "reprove," and "rebuke" also. This is how Jesus preached. But we must do this with "all longsuffering."

CHRIST AND MORALITY

The Bible teaches that the church is God's family, or God's house. (1 Tim. 3: 15.) The church is the body of Christ. (Eph. 1: 22-23.) There is but one body (1 Cor. 12: 20), therefore but one church of which Christ is head! The Bible does not authorize a multiplicity of opposing churches.

Instead, the Bible teaches that Christ established one church, and purchased it with his own blood. (Acts 20: 28.) Truly, "churches" are mentioned in the Bible, but these were different congregations of the Lord's one undenominational church. To these truths people object by saying: "There are good people in all churches." And this is true. There are even some good people who are not in any church. But just being "good" is not enough. One must be good morally to be a Christian, but he could be good morally and not be a Christian at all. To be a Christian one must come in contact with the saving power of the blood of Christ by being baptized into Christ and into his death, or into the benefits of his death. (Rom. 6: 3, 4.)

If a man has been saved by the blood of Christ he is in the church of Christ; the church that we read about in the Bible. In the days of the apostles the same thing that made a man a Christian at the very same time made him a member of the body of Christ, his church! (Acts 2: 47.) If one today will do just what people did when the apostles lived he will be just what the people then were. That is how one can now know he is in the same church that the apostles and others of their time were in. In the days of the apostles the faith that saved a man from his sins was the faith that caused him to turn from his sins and be baptized into Christ; into the body of Christ, the church! When one proves by the Bible that there is more than one body, and thus more than one church he can prove in the same passage that there is more than one Christ. (Eph. 4: 1-6.) He can also prove by the same passage

that there is more than one God! To be consistent, the preachers who speak of "the church of your choice" will have to speak just as freely of "the Christ of your choice" and "the God of your choice." Please read the Ephesian Epistle! These pointed lessons are designed to bring about the unity that Jesus prayed for, and to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" (Matt. 22: 41, 42.)

Everyone who hears about Christ has to think something concerning him. What one thinks about Christ determines his eternal destiny.

What did the masses living in Palestine when Christ lived there think about him? Some thought he was beside himself. "Beside himself" is from Greek "exeste" which literally means that one "stands out of himself." The English word "ecstasy" came from this Greek word. Jesus was accused of being out of himself, or out of his mind, or of being an ecstatic. (Mark 3: 21.) Others thought he was a deceiver. (John 7: 12.) Some said Jesus had a devil. (John 7: 20.) Herod thought Jesus was John the Baptizer risen from the dead. (Matt. 14: 2.) "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John

the Baptist: some, Elias; and other, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." (Matt. 16: 13, 14.)

Obviously, all of these were wrong in what they thought about Christ. None of these was consoled by Christ, or anyone else, by being told that it made no difference what he thought about Christ just so he thought or believed something about him. It is not believing that saves, but what we believe! People must believe the truth about Jesus to be saved. (Eph. 1: 13; 2 Thess. 2: 13; John 8: 32.)

In many cases people thought or believed things concerning Christ which were more difficult to believe than to believe the truth about him. To believe that Christ was John the Baptizer required believing that a man had been brought back from the dead and had his head put back on. Often unbelievers believe things more difficult to believe than what they are trying to keep from believing.

FAVORABLE WITNESSES

What did John the Baptizer think of Christ? When Christ came into the public scene, John already had a great following, but he pointed his followers to a great leader. The greatest trait of John as a leader was manifested by his leading his disciples to a greater leader than himself. John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3: 30.) He said that compared to Christ he was not good enough to untie the shoes of the Messiah. John knew his place! What a better world this would be if everyone knew his place. John said to his disciples when Christ came into view: "Behold,

the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

What did Christ's disciples think of him? They ate with him; slept with him; walked with him; they knew him. Even in this close association with the Lord there is no evidence they were ever disappointed in his moral conduct. They never shrank back to say: "We would think you were the Messiah but for the fact that you lied the other day; and before that you acted unbecomingly; and we remember that you cheated some men in a deal." Such was never the language of those who knew Christ best in this world. Instead, they confessed the very unpopular view that Jesus was the Christ, the son of the Living God. This view brought about their own destruction at the hands of their enemies.

What did Judas think of Christ? He sold him for thirty pieces of silver, but later returned the money exclaiming: I have sinned because I have betrayed the *innocent* blood." (Matt. 27: 4.) This would have been a great opportunity for Judas to have added: "Yes, I have sinned, and so did Jesus." Perhaps, there is a sense in which the testimony of Judas was the strongest of any of the apostles because he had betrayed and so severely offended his Lord, and yet he said: "I am the sinner, Jesus is innocent."

MORE FAVORABLE TESTIMONY

Pilate, what think ye of Christ? If ever a man searched in his soul for an excuse to condemn a man, and to find something wrong with a man, it

was when governor Pilate sought to find something wrong with Jesus. But, he had to confess: "I find no fault in him." Pilate was more on trial than was Jesus. It is a pity but that all men in this twentieth century could see Jesus as well as Pilate saw him. The most urgent need of this complex, crumbling, sinful world is its need to see Jesus, not just as Pilate saw him, but it needs to see him as its Saviour, and its only Saviour!

If you could have walked out to Calvary that dark afternoon when Jesus was dying, and if you could have asked one of the thieves dying with him: "What think ye of Christ?", he would have said: "I think that I and this other thief deserve to be dying here, but not this man in the middle; he has done nothing amiss." (Luke 23: 40, 41.) Even this thief knew enough about Christ Jesus to say that he had done no evil.

If you had remained at Calvary until Jesus was dead, and if you had asked one of Caesar's centurions who stood by: "Sir, what do you think of Christ?", you would have heard that heathen say: "Certainly, this was a righteous man." (Luke 23: 47.)

What think ye of Christ? No question can be fraught with more eternal consequences. What you think of his word is what you think of him. (John 12: 48.) What you think of his church is what you think of him. (Acts 8: 3; 9: 1-4.) What you think of his work is what you think of him. (Matt. 25: 34-46; 1 Cor. 15: 58; 16: 1-3.) He will save you by his grace if you will obey him. (Heb. 5: 8, 9.)

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

To Christians, the Spirit said: "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation (manner of life) received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Pet. 1: 18, 19.) The beasts and the elders in the vision that John saw on Patmos, sang this song of Christ, the Lamb: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. 5: 9.) The writer to the Hebrew brethren asked this question to contrast the blood of animals and the blood of Christ: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9: 14.)

Paul told the Ephesian brethren that they were once away from God because of their sins, but that they had been made nigh to God by the blood of Christ. (Eph. 2: 12, 13.) "In whom (Christ) we have redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1: 14.) These are only a few of the many passages of Holy Writ that affirm the necessity of the blood of Christ in human redemption. Without controversy, precious is the blood of Christ! Because he died and shed his blood we can have the remission of our sins. But, to be saved by his blood there are certain conditions that we must meet. If there were no conditions

then all would be saved, because Christ died for all. (John 3: 16; 1 John 2: 2.) When God's children sin the blood of Christ will cleanse their sins, if they repent of them, confess them, and ask their Father's forgiveness. Those who are not children of God can be saved from their sins by the blood of Christ if they believe the gospel of Christ, and if they repent of their sins, and are baptized for the remission of their sins. (Acts 2: 36-41.) When people thus obey the gospel they become members of the blood purchased church that we can read about in the New Testament. (Acts 20: 28.)

WHERE DOES THE BLOOD OF CHRIST SAVE?

God's Son died and shed his blood, and this suffering is accepted by God as punishment for our sins, if we meet his conditions of pardon. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. . . ." (Isa. 53: 5.) It is because Jesus shed his blood that God pardons the sinner who obeys his will. (Heb. 5: 8, 9.) That is why we can joyfully exclaim: "The blood of Christ saves!" But, where does the sinner reach the saving power of the blood of Christ? The Bible says that redemption by the blood of Christ is in Christ. (Eph. 1: 7; Col. 1: 14.) Hence, no one can be saved by the blood of Christ out of Christ! It is not enough to tell people that the blood of Christ saves; we must also tell them with equal clarity where the blood of Christ saves, and how to reach the place where it saves!

To get into Christ where the blood of Christ saves one must believe that Christ is the Saviour. (John 8: 24.) Those who thus believe must also repent of their sins, and then be baptized into Christ where they can be saved by the blood of Christ. "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.) "Know ye not that so many of us were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death. Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6: 3, 4.) One cannot reach the benefits of the death of Christ until he is baptized into his death. This is exactly why we urge people to obey the gospel; we urge them to be baptized into Christ and into his death. Baptism puts one into Christ, or into his body which is his church. (Eph. 1: 22, 23; 1 Cor. 12: 13.) The same obedience that makes one a Christian at the same time makes one a member of the church of the New Testament. Gospel obedience will not make one a member of a denomination, but of the Lord's church. The blood saves in the body of Christ, his church.

WHERE IS HAPPINESS?

Happiness is not to be found in unbelief. It is said that the great infidel, Voltaire, said: "I wish I had never been born."

True happiness is not found in sinful pleasure.

Lord Byron lived a life of worldly pleasure and finally said: "The worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone."

Money does not bring happiness. Jay Gould was a millionaire. It is said that while he was dying he uttered these words: "I suppose I am the most miserable man on the earth."

Position and fame do not produce happiness. Lord Beaconsfield had more than his share of both. Yet, he is quoted as having said: "Youth is a mistake; manhood a struggle; old age a regret."

Military glory cannot make one happy. Alexander the Great conquered the known world. Then he wept in his tent and lamented: "I cry because there are no more worlds for me to conquer."

Where, then, is happiness to be found? The answer is simple: In Christ! He said to those who loved him: "In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33.) Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4: 12.) If you are not in Christ, you ought to be baptized into him soon. (Rom. 6: 3.) Then you will be truly happy and find the peace which passes all understanding. (Phil. 4: 7.)

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

In one way or another the Bible speaks of the return of Christ hundreds of times. When he returns, therefore, we will be without excuse for not being prepared for him, for God has sufficiently in-

formed us of his return. Please note some of the things said of Christ's return.

1. Literally, as he went away—Acts 1: 11.
2. Visibly, every eye shall see him—Rev. 1: 7.
3. Audibly, we will hear his coming—1 Thess. 4: 16.
4. On the clouds—Rev. 1: 7; Acts 1: 11.
5. With his mighty angels—2 Thess. 1: 7.
6. In flaming fire—2 Thess. 1: 8.
7. Without warning—Matt. 24: 42.
8. At an unexpected time—Matt. 24: 44.
9. As a thief in the night—1 Thess. 5: 2.
10. To raise all the dead—John 5: 28, 29.
11. Death will be conquered—1 Cor. 15: 24-26.
12. Will judge all men—2 Tim. 4: 1.
13. Will sit upon his judgment seat—Rom. 14: 10.
14. Will reward the righteous—John 5: 29.
15. Will punish the wicked—John 5: 29; 2 Thess. 1: 8, 9.
16. The earth will be destroyed—2 Pet. 3: 10.
17. Time will be no more—1 Cor. 15: 24.
18. The living will be changed into immortal beings—1 Cor. 15: 51.
19. The saints will be like Christ—1 John 3: 2.
20. He will give back to the Father his authority and rule—1 Cor. 15: 22.

All the events of all history combined would in no way compare with the return of Christ in the last day and the things that shall happen then.

CHAPTER IV

The Resurrection of Christ

WHAT EVIDENCE DO SKEPTICS HAVE?

The skeptics who say that Jesus was not raised from the dead and did not ascend to heaven are obligated to tell us what did happen to him. Let them give us some reference even in the writings of enemies of Christianity who lived about the time of Christ and the apostles that suggests that Jesus was still around after the time the Bible says he ascended. Let them give some reference that affirms that some person, or persons made contact with Jesus, or saw him, or even looked for him. I challenge every skeptic beneath the stars to give this a try.

If Jesus did not die on the cross as the Bible says he did, it seems that when he did finally die, his enemies would have published the fact abroad to disprove the story of his resurrection. Where is the skeptic that will affirm that anyone even tried to do such a thing? The fact that there is no historical record of such action on the part of enemies is proof enough that Jesus died on the cross, was buried, raised, and ascended to glory.

Even if there could be some historical record

produced that would suggest that anyone looked for Jesus after the time the Bible says he ascended, or that anyone saw him, heard him, or knew where he was, another problem would remain for the skeptics. They would have to prove that such a record, or records were true and accurate, but that the Bible record is not true. That would be a big task to undertake! So big that there is not a man on earth that could perform it!

I rejoice in the fact of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. God has arranged these facts in his great scheme in such fashion that it is easy to believe them, and impossible to disbelieve them when the evidence surrounding the reality of these momentous events is honestly and fairly considered.

DID JESUS DIE ON THE CROSS?

Some skeptics say that Jesus did not really die on the cross. Some of these skeptics are religious leaders. The theory that Jesus did not die on the cross is called the swoon theory and was proposed by the German rationalist, Venturini in the 18th century. Paulas and Hase of the same century also advocated this theory. The theory holds that Jesus only became unconscious, and after being placed in a tomb he soon revived, went past the Roman guard to his disciples. If one admits as many of the facts as are admitted in the swoon theory he is faced with other things in the record which he cannot consistently deny. The theory admits the fact of Jesus and his ordeal on Calvary; it admits that Jesus was scourged and nailed to the cross and that his side

was pierced with a Roman spear by one of Caesar's servants.

Two thieves died near the man of Nazareth. Out of respect to the Jews and their holy day that drew near, the Roman authorities hastened the deaths of the thieves by breaking bones in their bodies. The soldiers did not break a bone in the body of Jesus, for they observed to their amazement that he was already dead! These soldiers were not trying to prove anything; they were impartial witnesses. How could Venturini, Paulas, Hase, and others have been qualified to testify concerning the body of Jesus seventeen hundred years after the ordeal of Golgotha? Which were the better qualified to speak concerning the body of Jesus, the 18th century prejudiced critics, or the soldiers of Caesar who inspected the Galilean's mortal form? These soldiers decided that Jesus was dead; they knew he was. The testimony of these soldiers is more acceptable than that of Venturini, Hase, and Paulas.

THE EMPTY TOMB

The first attempt to escape the fact of the resurrection of Jesus was the attempt of the chief priests who tried to explain why the tomb was empty! The guards reported to the priests, and even these Jewish leaders did not question the report that the tomb was empty! They did not even go to see if the tomb was really empty; they knew it was! If they did go to the tomb to see, there is no record of such a trip. Suppose they did go to see

for themselves, would they not have found it either empty, or sealed with the body still in it? If they had found the tomb with the body of Jesus still in it, this would have been glorious news to them; and who can doubt that they would have published such news abroad? If they had gone and found the body still in the tomb they would have forced the disciples to see the same, and we would have never heard that Jesus was raised from the dead.

But, the Jewish preachers who had Christ killed did not go to see if the tomb was empty; they were strongly persuaded by the soldiers that it was. If they had any doubt about whether the tomb was open and empty, or sealed with the body still in it, why did they tell the soldiers to say that the disciples stole the body? Before telling this infamous lie, why did those Jewish rulers not go to the tomb and see for sure that the tomb was empty? If they had gone and had discovered that the tomb was still closed with the body still in it, they could have saved some money, for they paid the soldiers to say the disciples stole the body. They paid the soldiers to say that while they were asleep the disciples came and stole the body. Desperate men make such foolish blunders and ridiculous statements. Imagine those soldiers on the witness stand telling about that which happened while they were asleep. How could they have known what happened while they were asleep? The empty tomb must be dealt with by those who deny the resurrection of Christ. "The rending tomb proclaims his conquering arm."

DID THE DISCIPLES STEAL THE BODY?

There are those who deny that Jesus was raised from the dead. Many young people are becoming skeptical because they have not considered the evidences surrounding the fact of Christ's birth from the tomb. Bribed servants of Caesar first preached that the disciples of Jesus stole the body of Christ from its guarded garden grave. Celsus, an infidel of the second century tried to account for the fact that the body of Jesus was gone from the grave on the third day with the same story the soldiers were bribed into telling. If the disciples did steal the body, why did the soldiers have to be bribed to tell it? These soldiers told that they were asleep when Christ's disciples took his body out of the grave. If they were asleep, why were they not punished for being asleep, and how did they know what happened?

If the disciples stole the body of Jesus from the senator's sepulchre, this means that they preached a kingdom of truth based on what they knew to be a lie. It means that the apostles not only preached what they knew to be a lie, but that they also suffered physical torture, and final death for preaching it. If the disciples stole the body, their subsequent action is as hard to explain as the resurrection. There is no way of accounting for the conduct of the disciples, if they stole the body of their Master from its resting place in the rock! We might easily imagine men making up a false story, and we can think that men would preach what they knew to be false. But, it is difficult of apprehension that

men would die for telling that which they knew to be false!

DID THE ENEMIES STEAL THE BODY?

Some have said that the enemies of Christ stole his body. Of course those who say this do not believe the Bible to be the word of God. They do not accept all that is said in the Bible. The truth is that God raised Jesus from the grave, but I am dealing with the question concerning Christ's mortal form on the basis of the facts admitted even by those who do not believe all that the Bible says.

Had the enemies of Christ even intended to steal the body of Jesus they would not have begged from Pilate a guard of Roman soldiers to watch the grave where lay the body they intended to steal; soldiers which they would have had to overcome in order to have carried out such pernicious plans.

But, if enemies of Christ took his body, what did they do with it? Did they destroy it? Surely, they would not have stolen it to destroy it. If they had destroyed it they would have been worse off than if they had left it in the tomb. If they had destroyed the body, the disciples could have told that it was raised by God's power, or they could have told anything else about it, and the enemies could not have disproved their story by presenting the body as evidence. If the enemies had stolen the body they would have been the last ones on earth to have destroyed it.

The only motive that the Jews could have had for stealing the body of Jesus was that they might

present it as evidence against the doctrine of its resurrection. By presenting it they could have silenced those who preached that it was raised from the dead.

If enemies stole the body, they did a poor job of announcing their deed, for many thousands of the Jews were convinced by the apostles that the body was raised from the dead. If enemies stole the body, it seems that in some way they could have convinced their fellows not to believe the resurrection story. No, the enemies of Christ did not steal his body; God raised it from the dead!

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

Some contend that Jesus only became unconscious on the cross, and that after he was in his tomb a little while he revived and walked out.

If Jesus did not die on the cross, when and where did he die? To avoid the miraculous, some deny the resurrection, and for the same reason they refuse to believe the story of the ascension of Jesus. If Jesus did not die on the cross as reported in the New Testament, and if he did not ascend to heaven, when and where did he die? If Jesus revived from a swoon and did not ascend, what happened to him? If he lived on in or near the land of Palestine, why did not his enemies capture him and make a public spectacle out of him and thus disprove the story of his resurrection that was widely proclaimed? The Jews used every means available to stop the preaching of Christ's resurrection. If Christ had still been living the Jews would have used Christ him-

self as their greatest weapon to defeat the doctrine that he was raised from the dead; they would have needed no other proof; all other methods and schemes for stopping the preaching of the resurrection would have been unnecessary.

What skeptic who thinks that Jesus did not really die on the cross will produce the least bit of historical evidence that any Jew, or anyone else, ever looked for Jesus after the ordeal of Calvary? Yes, it is possible that Jesus could have secluded himself from the Jews, but they would have looked for him. Where is the record that says anyone looked for him? If Jesus did not ascend, what happened to him? He ascended; there can be no doubt about that.

JUSTIFIED BY CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

To be justified is to saved from sin. Of Christ our Lord, Paul wrote: "Who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4: 25.) Why could Paul say that we are justified by the resurrection of Christ? He also said we are justified by the grace of God. (Rom. 3: 24.) He said we are justified by faith. (Rom. 5: 1.) In Romans 5: 9 he said we are justified by the blood of Christ. Paul surely did not mean that we are justified by the resurrection of Christ only. For, if it were by his resurrection only, everybody would be justified. Paul did not mean that we are justified by faith only, for James said: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (James 2: 24.) Man has to do what God

tells him to do to be saved by faith, for faith that avails is faith that works by love. (Gal. 5: 6.)

Of being in Christ, or in his body, the church, Paul said: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Salvation is by God's grace in the Lord's body or church. By faith we are baptized into Christ where God saves us by his grace through the atoning power of the blood of his Son. This is why baptism is "for the remission of sins"; in being baptized one enters into the relationship where the blood saves; where God saves by his grace. (Acts 2: 38.) This is why Peter said baptism saves us by the resurrection of Christ. (1 Pet. 3: 21.) There is no conflict between being justified or saved by faith and being saved by being baptized. So, we are "justified by the resurrection of Christ" because with faith in his resurrection we are baptized into the relationship where we can be saved. This is why "baptism saves us by the resurrection of Christ."

On the day of Pentecost, Peter convinced a great many that God had raised Christ from the dead. These asked what they must do, and Peter told them that believed that Christ had been raised to repent and be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38.) "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added about three thousand souls." (Acts 2: 41.) They were thus justified by the resurrection of Christ; by the grace of God; by the blood of Christ; by faith; by doing what God told them to do!

CHAPTER V

Faith or Belief

JOHN 3: 16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” When gospel preachers insist that all alien sinners must be baptized in water to have their sins washed away by the blood of Christ, some object and say: “Well, what about John 3: 16?” As if to say that John 3: 16 contradicts Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 38, and other passages which affirm that baptism is essential to salvation. One cannot find the meaning of scripture by arraying one passage against another. Some insist that baptism is not essential to salvation because it is not mentioned in John 3: 16. But by the same reasoning one could conclude that it is not necessary to repent of sins, because repentance is not mentioned in John 3: 16 either.

John 3: 16 is a summation of the scheme of redemption. The clause, “that he gave his only begotten Son” does not refer to just one act, but is a summation of all that God and Christ have done for lost man. “That he gave” embraces every act, every deed, every privation of the man of sorrows who

was acquainted with grief. The clause, "that whosoever believeth in him" is a summation of all that man must do in order to get in the place where God will save him by his grace and the blood of his Son. This clause also sums up all that God requires of a man in living the Christian life. The people on the day of Pentecost (1) heard the gospel, (2) believed it, (3) repented of their sins, (4) were baptized for the remission of their sins, (5) were thus added to the Lord's church (not a denomination), and (6) continued stedfastly in the teaching of the apostles, etc. (Acts 2: 42.) After all of this they are referred to as "they that believed." Truly, believers will be saved, but what kind? The obedient kind is the only kind. Dear reader what kind are you? Have you obeyed the gospel? The Lord Jesus will take vengeance on them that do not obey his gospel. (2 Thess. 1: 8.)

BELIEVERS OBEYED

The believers mentioned in Acts 2: 44 were believers who repented and were baptized for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38, 41.) When they did this the Lord added them to his church. (Acts 2: 41, 47.) Therefore to believe in the Lord as taught in John 3: 16 is to obey the gospel. If this is not true, the Bible contradicts itself, and is not, therefore worth the paper on which it is written. Furthermore, when one believes in the Lord as taught in John 3: 16 he becomes a member of the church which Jesus established on the Pentecost

following his resurrection. One cannot be saved as taught in John 3: 16 without becoming a member of the church that Jesus built. (Matt. 16: 18.) The record of the New Testament shows that the same thing that saved a man made him a member of the Lord's family, his church. Forget about denominations, reader, and concentrate on the New Testament and Christ and his church you can read about therein. Nobody can become a member of a denomination by following the teaching of John 3: 16, or any other passage in the Bible. This may sound like "narrow-mindedness" to some, but it is true just the same. God help all to see this truth!

This writer challenges anyone to produce one passage in the Bible that instructs anyone to belong to a denomination. The passage cannot be produced. The church that Jesus built is not a denomination, and no part of one. Religious division is condemned in the Bible just as murder, adultery, and all other sins. (1 Cor. 1: 10; 3: 2-3; John 17: 20-23; Gal. 5: 20.) Such expressions as "the church of your choice" are out of harmony with the truth expressed in John 3: 16 and all the rest of Christ's word. The church of the Bible is God's family; God is displeased with division in it. You can know you are a member of the church of Christ the same way you can know Christ is your savior. You can know Christ is your savior by what the Bible says about his being your savior. You can know you are in Christ's church by what the Bible says as to how one gets into the Lord's church.

SALVATION BY FAITH

Some preachers affirm that an alien sinner is saved "at" the point of faith, or "at" the very moment he has faith in Christ. These preachers usually quote such passages as John 3: 16 to try to prove their doctrine. But John 3: 16 does not teach that an alien is saved "at faith"; instead, it teaches that he is saved "by faith," and there is a big difference between "at faith," and "by faith." Man is saved by faith when his faith leads him to do what God commands him to do to be saved. For, faith without works is dead, and it is as dead as a body is dead without a spirit in it, and that is mighty dead! (James 2: 14-26.) Some think they have been saved and will go to heaven on a faith that is as dead as a corpse! Man is saved by faith, but he is not saved by faith without repenting of his sins. (Acts 17: 30.) And he is not saved by faith without being baptized into Christ where the blood of Christ saves. (Acts 2: 38; Rom. 6: 3; Eph. 1: 7.)

Those who are God's children cannot be saved from the guilt of the sins they commit while they are God's children, by faith alone. Their faith must lead them to confess their sins, and to repent of them, and to pray that their Father will forgive them. (Acts 8: 22; 1 John 1: 9.) To be saved in heaven at last, a child of God must by faith worship God regularly in spirit and in truth. (John 4: 24). And, he must go about doing good. It is "faith that works by love" that saves. (Gal. 5: 6.) "Blessed are those that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may

enter in through the gates into the city." (Rev. 22: 14.) Indeed, salvation is by faith. Some had faith in Christ, but refused to confess their faith because they feared they would lose their position and prestige. (John 12: 42.) No one can be saved by that kind of faith. In all the cases of conversion recorded in the Book of Acts, those saved were saved by faith, but in every case they were saved by faith when they obeyed the gospel by repenting of their sins and being baptized into Christ. Friend, if you have been led to believe you have been saved "at" faith, you have been misled! Think! Read the Bible! Obey it!

"THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE"

Perhaps the Bible's greatest enemy is preaching; preaching that makes the Bible appear to be a book of conflicting, contradictory doctrines. Robert Owen, the notorious atheist said in controversy with Alexander Campbell that the reason he was an atheist was because he had read so many conflicting doctrines all of which claimed the Bible as their source, so he decided the Bible was no good.

Jesus prayed that all his disciples would be one as he and the Father are one so the world would believe that God sent him into the world. Adding human creeds and doctrines to the Bible is fatal; not only fatal to those who do the adding, but fatal to those deceived by such false teachings. The Bible does not teach many of the doctrines which men say it teaches. Jesus prayed that all his disciples be one through the word of the apostles (in-

spired men). (John 17: 20.) But the word of the apostles is God's word. (John 17: 8, 14.) Therefore, those who reject the word of the apostles, reject God's word. One reason there are atheists, infidels and skeptics is because multitudes of preachers have left the impression that God's word contains all the conflicting doctrines taught in the religious world. But, God's word does not contradict itself; God's word teaches just the truth on any subject. If it is not handled aright it may be wrested into meaning that which it does not actually say.

We in the church of Christ are pleading for people to exile, burn, bury, destroy the human doctrines that divide men, and which the Bible does not teach so that people will respect the Bible for what it is. It is a book of harmonious truth and contains the soul saving gospel which if obeyed by all, nothing more, nothing less, will bring about the oneness Jesus prayed for, and will cause the world to realize that God sent Jesus to save sinners.

THE BELIEF OF UNBELIEF

Courses are taught in some state schools in which impressions are made that it is not scholarly to accept the Bible as a divinely inspired book, and Jesus as the Son of God, one born of a virgin. Some professors skillfully weave into their teaching ideas which reflect on the fundamentals of the Christian religion. They make such statements as: "Students in college should think!" "Is there any proof that the Bible is a revelation of God?"

“What proof is there that Jesus was any different than any other man?” “How do you know he was born of a virgin?” etc.

Such professors should study some of the many classical books that call attention to the overwhelming evidences that attest the fact of the deity of Jesus and the Bible's being the word of God.

If one does not believe that Jesus was the Son of God, this means that he does believe that Jesus was just another man. So, he does believe something, therefore he does not discard faith, even though he may think he does. When Jesus is properly considered one will find that it takes more credulity to accept Jesus as just another man than is required to accept him as the Son of God!

If one says he does not believe the Bible is the Word of God, he does believe it is the word of men. Then the question is: Which requires more faith, believing the Bible is the word of God, or accepting it as the word of men? If one says it is the word of men he is faced with problems with which he cannot cope. If we accept the Bible as the word of God, we do not have to explain how such a book could have been written. If there be an all-wise mind or spirit, by whom all things were created, it is not impossible that that great and glorious being has revealed himself and his will to men and that these men have written this revelation in a book called the Bible.

Our inability to describe such a transaction is no just argument against it. The action of the mind of God upon the mind of men denoted by the word inspiration is no more inconceivable than the regular

action of the human mind upon the body. If every thing be banished which we cannot comprehend there will be little left in this world.

Those who hold that reason must be exalted and faith banished fail to recognize that they can not reason without using principles, truths, and axioms in which they have implicit faith. One can not reason without faith. Faith is the most reasonable thing in the world.

CHAPTER VI

The Conscience

IS CONSCIENCE A SAFE GUIDE?

“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Prov. 16: 25.) There are many who think that it does not matter what one believes or does in religion, just so he follows his conscience. But this philosophy exalts one’s conscience above the word of God; this philosophy makes one’s conscience his guide instead of the Bible. Instead of conscience being a safe guide, it must be safely guided by the word of God. Conscience approves, or disapproves as it has been instructed. If conscience has been instructed wrong, it may approve of things that are wrong, or even disapprove of things that are right. A misguided conscience can mislead; this is often the case.

Surely, almost all of us have had the experience of honestly taking the wrong road in traveling, going several miles, feeling all the time that we were on the right road. Just to feel that we are right in religion does not make us right. We have to check the “road map” to heaven, the Bible, to find out what is really right. If we do not do this,

and instead just follow conscience, we thus exalt conscience above God's word. Conscience must be properly instructed by God's word before it can guide correctly. If one travels in his car on the wrong road, he turns around when he discovers he is on the wrong road, and proceeds to find the right road. He would surely not get angry at the person who told him he was on the wrong road, but would likely be grateful to him. Friend, do not just depend on your feelings; look in God's road map, the Bible, and see if you are on the right road. "For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matt. 7: 13, 14.)

PAUL'S CONSCIENCE WAS MIS-GUIDED

Conscience was not a safe guide for Paul. Before he became a Christian he persecuted Christ by persecuting his church. (Acts 9: 1-4; 8: 3.) "For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it." (Gal. 1: 13.) "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many saints in prison, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme, and

being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities." (Acts 26: 9-11.)

"And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prison both men and women." (Acts 22: 4.) "Though I was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Tim. 1: 13.) Many more passages describe the awful action of Paul (Saul) against the church of Christ before he became a member of the church. But these are sufficient to show that he was a devastating character. While he was all this, he was very religious; he was a member of a church called the sect of the Pharisees. (Acts 26: 3-5.) He was well educated while he persecuted the church. (Acts 22: 3.) While trying to destroy the church, he had a good conscience. (Acts 23: 1.) He thought he was right in killing Christians. (Acts 26: 9.) This all proves that one's thinking he is right; one's having a good conscience, etc., does not prove that he is right.

GOD'S WORD SHOULD GUIDE THE CONSCIENCE

Conscience is the faculty of one's being that approves and disapproves of matters that come to his mind. Conscience is developed through teaching. One's feeling, or conscience, on any matter comes as a result of what he hears, reads, etc. If one hears that which is untrue, and believes it, thinking it is true, his conscience will accept it as true, even though it is false.

Jacob was told by his sons that their brother, Joseph, was evidently slain by an animal. To make their lie sound more like the truth they showed Jacob Joseph's coat of many colors which they had dipped in the blood of an animal. Jacob believed the lie; for twenty years he felt that Joseph was dead. But, Joseph was very much alive! He was in Egypt, and prospered rapidly in that great land. (Gen. 39-50.) Jacob felt the same during the twenty years as he would have felt had Joseph actually been dead. His feelings deceived him because he believed something that was not so! His conscience misled him, because it was misled by a false report of his own sons.

Likewise, some think they are saved from their sins when they are not. Some are told they can be saved from past sins and become Christians without being baptized. If they believe this, they believe something that is not so. But, because they believe it, they feel that they are all right. Their consciences thus mislead them, because their consciences are misled by doctrine that is not in keeping with God's word. God's word teaches that those who believe that Christ is God's son, must repent of their sins and be baptized for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 36-41.) Let God's word guide your conscience.

CHAPTER VII

Baptism

“ONE BAPTISM”

The Holy Spirit besought Christians to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. He also taught that the unity of the Spirit is that unity resulting from following the teachings of the Holy Spirit which we have in the Bible. The unity of the Spirit is summed up in these words: “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.” (Eph. 4: 4-6.)

In about A.D 62 Paul wrote: “There is one baptism.” How may we reconcile this statement with the fact that there are other baptisms mentioned in the Bible? John’s baptism was effective before baptism in the name of Christ was first administered on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus. These two baptisms are clearly distinguished in Acts 19: 1-6. We also read about Holy Spirit baptism. (Acts 1: 4, 5; 10: 44; 11: 15.) The twelve apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth, and Cornelius, and his household, the first Gentile converts were

baptized in the Holy Spirit so that Jews would be convinced that Gentiles should have the gospel preached to them. These are the only instances of Holy Spirit baptism mentioned in the Bible. Holy Spirit baptism was never a command to be obeyed, but a promise to a few for special purposes. The baptism (overwhelming) of Christ's suffering is mentioned in Matthew 20 and Luke 12. The baptism of fire, evidently a description of the punishment of the unrighteous in the judgment day is mentioned in the Bible. (Matt. 3: 11.)

Paul said in A.D. 62 "There is one baptism." He did not say there always has been one baptism, for there had been others. He did not say there would never be another baptism, for there will be the baptism of fire at the judgment. But in A.D. 62 he said: "There is one baptism." This was obviously the one baptism of the great commission that was to last "always, even to the end of the world." (Matt. 28: 18-20.)

BAPTISM IS A BURIAL

A modern dictionary may define "baptism" as being a rite of immersing people, or pouring, or sprinkling water on people, because the dictionary defines words in keeping with the way they are used and understood. But, the Bible definition of "baptism" is not as inclusive. The New Testament was written in the Greek language. The Greek word from which we get the word "baptism" is defined in any reliable Greek lexicon as being an immersion, or burial. The Greek lexicon defines words as they

were used in the New Testament. The Bible says that baptism is a burial. (Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12.) The practice of sprinkling and pouring water on people for baptism was begun many years after the apostles were all dead by an apostate church which became what we know as the Catholic Church. This denomination and some others still administer sprinkling and pouring for baptism. Such practice is done by human tradition, or denominational dogma, and not by Bible teaching.

With sprinkling and pouring, men have made of "none effect, the commandment of God." (Matt. 15: 6.) Some may say: "What difference does it make?" Dear reader, it is all a matter of accepting by faith what God says. God puts our faith to its real test in seemingly insignificant, little matters more than anywhere else. Many say: "How one is baptized, or whether he is baptized at all does not matter, what counts is whether one treats his fellow man right, etc." To be a Christian one must treat his fellows right, and be a good moral man. But that is not all; such a conception of the gospel makes it purely a "social gospel" and is devilishly designed to dethrone Christ and cause men to ignore his authority. Both the one who baptized and the one who was baptized went down into the water in the case recorded in Acts 8: 35-40. Some insist that Phillip on that occasion led the eunuch down into the water and poured some water on him. Why do not preachers who sprinkle people today immerse about half of one's body in order to sprinkle the other half. You may say: "Common sense

would keep them from doing that." Did Philip have any common sense?

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED

Only those who have faith in Christ, and who repent of their sins, and confess their faith in Christ, can be baptized as the Bible teaches. The apostles were told to baptize people who were first taught God's word. (Matt. 28: 19.) Faith comes by hearing God's word. (Rom. 10: 17.) Baptism must be preceded by faith in Christ as being the Savior from sin. This is the reason why it is folly to baptize an infant. Sprinkling and pouring are not baptism in the Bible sense of the word. However, even if sprinkling and pouring were baptism, it would not be right to baptize infants. For, those who are baptized must first be taught God's word. So-called "infant baptism" is a practice wrought by human tradition, and not by God's word.

Baptism saves us. (1 Pet. 3: 21; Acts 2: 38; Mark 16: 16.) Baptism saves because it puts us into Christ where the blood of Christ saves. But, babies are not lost, therefore, infants are not fit subjects for baptism, even if sprinkling were baptism. Many honest souls are going through life thinking that they have been baptized scripturally, and yet they had a little water sprinkled or poured on them when they were either too young to remember it, or too young to be accountable to God. Doubtless such people are sincere, but they have been misled by some preacher who either did not know what God's

word teaches about baptism, or did not care. People who are thus misled must repent of their sins and be immersed for the remission of their sins, and that will make them members of the church they can read about in the Bible. (Acts 2: 38, 41, 47.) If all should do the will of the Catholic Church there would not be another believer on earth immersed for all would be sprinkled while in infancy while incapable of being believers.

THE PARABLE OF BAPTISM AND EATING

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16: 16.) Preachers, and others have insisted that baptism is not essential to salvation from sin because Jesus did not say: “He that believeth not, and is baptized not shall be damned.” Truly, Jesus did not say this, and frankly, I am glad he did not. If he had we would have room to seriously doubt his capability to express himself sensibly! Suppose a physiologist should say: “He that eats and digests shall live, but he that eats not and digests not shall die.” Eating and digesting are both essential to living, for eating without digesting would be worse than not eating at all. But anyone knows that if one does not eat there will be no digestion, and hence not eating is all that is necessary to dying. But eating is not all that is necessary to living! Failing to believe the gospel is all that is necessary to being condemned, but believing the gospel is not all that is necessary to being saved!

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Those who say that baptism is not essential, are virtually saying: “He that believeth and is not baptized shall be saved.” But that is the opposite of what Jesus said!

There have been many objections made to the doctrine that baptism is essential to being saved from sin. These objections have not changed what the Bible teaches about baptism at all. Often people say things about baptism which are contradictory to what the Bible actually says on the subject. Be careful and look in the Bible and see for yourself.

BAPTIZED TO BE SAVED?

The New Testament teaches that the one baptism of Ephesians 4: 5 is the baptism of the Great Commission of Christ, and that this one baptism is water baptism. (Acts 8: 36-39.)

The New Testament is clear and positive on the subject of water baptism. Erroneous ideas prevail in many minds about water baptism. It is difficult to conceive of how these ideas got started since the Bible is so clear on the subject; it certainly is not responsible for the confusion.

Some ask: “Is baptism essential to salvation from sin? Is it essential to one’s becoming a child of God?” Baptism is essential to becoming a child of God, and that means it is essential to one’s getting rid of his alien sins; the sins one commits before becoming a child of God. Jesus said: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned.” (Mark 16: 16.)

If he had said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be given a thousand dollars, no one would think of asking if it were necessary to be baptized in order to get the thousand dollars! If one can see this with reference to a thousand dollars, why can he not see it with reference to the salvation of his soul from sin? Those who want to, and are not prejudiced with false teaching concerning baptism, can see this.

The baptism that is essential to being saved from sin is not for those who have no sins, like infants, and irresponsible people. The baptism we read about in the Bible that is essential to salvation is not a so-called "sacrament" through which blessings are conveyed regardless of whether one exercises his will in being baptized or not. The Lord blesses with forgiveness of sins those who exercise their wills in being baptized.

BAPTISM IN WATER

There is a baptism mentioned in Matthew 28: 19, 20 that is obviously the "one baptism" that is to last "always, even to the end of the world." (Eph. 4: 5.) What is the baptism of the Great Commission of Christ? "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Amen." "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized

shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16: 15, 16.)

The day that the apostles began to carry out this commission was the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection. (Acts 2.) On that day the Holy Spirit guided Peter to say to the crowd that was convinced that Jesus was divine, and that God had raised him from the dead: "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2: 38.) Therefore the baptism of the Great Commission was a command of God to be obeyed by those who needed the remission of their sins. But, neither from the Great Commission, nor from the record in Acts 2: 38 can we determine what element was employed in that baptism. Luke says that they who gladly received Peter's message were baptized (Acts 2: 41), but he does not say what element was used in their being baptized. The book of Acts is a record of the work of preachers who diligently carried out the Great Commission of Christ. In Acts chapter eight Luke tells us that water was the element used when people were baptized in keeping with the command of the Great Commission. For he tells about a man who heard the gospel, believed that Jesus is the Son of God, and was baptized in water. This proves that the baptism of the Great Commission is water baptism.

NOT MY OPINION

I have been told this: "It is just your opinion that baptism is essential to being saved from sin."

However, those who say this are wrong, for it is not my opinion. Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) And that is not my opinion. Through the apostle Peter, the Holy Spirit said: "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2: 38.) And that is not my opinion. I do have some opinions about various matters but I would not use precious space here to present them. I must use this space to tell you what God's word says, and not what my opinions are. My opinions could not redeem one soul from sin, but God's word is able to save the souls of men. (James 1: 21.)

Saul of Tarsus was told to arise and be baptized to wash away his sins. (Acts 22: 16.) He later said we are baptized into Christ. (Rom. 6: 3.) He also said that in Christ we have redemption through the blood of Christ even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of God's grace. (Eph. 1: 7.) These verses could only mean that when Saul was baptized he reached the atoning efficacy of the blood of Christ, for he was baptized into Christ where the blood of Christ washes sin away. And this is not my opinion; it is what the New Testament teaches. Read the foregoing verses and see for yourself.

There is a great difference between a thing being one's opinion and a thing being a matter of faith. An opinion is that which one may think about something that is not said in the Bible. A matter of faith is that which the Bible says. John 3: 1 says that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night.

The fact that he went to Jesus by night is not my opinion, or anybody's opinion. However, it is a matter of opinion as to why Nicodemus went to the Master at night. It is a matter of opinion as to where one should be immersed, for the Bible does not say where one has to be baptized. It is not a matter of opinion as to why one is to be baptized, because the Bible says why one is to be baptized.

A CHRISTIAN AND BAPTISM

To be a Christian one must belong to Christ. One cannot belong to Christ without being baptized in the name of Christ. Therefore, one cannot be a Christian without being baptized in the name of Christ. The proof for this is found in many Bible texts; one of these is 1 Corinthians 1: 10-13. Paul wrote: 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 you 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 of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

Some of the Corinthian Christians said they belonged to Paul. To show them that they did not belong to him, Paul asked three questions: "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" No one knew any

better than the Corinthian brethren that the emphatic answer to each of these questions was "NO". Paul virtually told these brethren that they should not say they belonged to Paul, unless Paul had been crucified for them, and unless they had been baptized in Paul's name! The reason they did not belong to Paul, and therefore the reason they should not say they were of Paul, was because Paul had not been crucified for them, and they had not been baptized in Paul's name. This could only mean that before one can belong to Christ (be a Christian) two things must be true: (1) Christ must have been crucified for him, and (2) he must have been baptized in the name of Christ (upon his authority). It is not enough just to tell people that Christ has been crucified for them; people must be told that they must be baptized in the name of Christ before they can belong to Christ. Preachers who say that baptism is not essential to salvation in Christ mislead many people. Study your Bible and you will see that this is true.

HOLY GHOST BAPTISM AND WATER BAPTISM

The Lord said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16: 16.) Some say they believe that "baptism" saves, but that it is "Holy Ghost baptism" that saves. But, the baptism of the foregoing scripture is not "Holy Ghost baptism," but water baptism. Not very many people were ever baptized with the Holy Ghost. The twelve apostles,

and Cornelius and his household were overwhelmed, or baptized with the Holy Ghost. (See Acts 1: 1-6; 2: 1-5; 11: 15.) Baptism in the Holy Ghost was such a rare occurrence even in the days of the apostles that Peter was amazed at its occurrence at the house of Cornelius. The fact that Peter said that the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius and his household, "as on us at the beginning" is evidence that it was not a common event. (Acts 11: 15.) (The "beginning" was the Day of Pentecost; the "beginning" of the Christian dispensation; the beginning of the church.) If Holy Ghost baptism was a common event, why did not Peter compare the case at the house of Cornelius with cases more recent than the one that had happened about ten years before in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost?

Holy Ghost baptism was designed for special purposes in the apostolic age. By it, the apostles were guided into all truth. (John 16: 13.) By it, Jews were convinced that Gentiles were gospel subjects. (Acts 10: 45.) No one was ever baptized with the Holy Ghost to be saved. The Lord saves men when they follow the directions of the Holy Ghost as given in the Bible. Holy Ghost baptism was a promise of the Father to certain ones for certain purposes. (Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 4, 5.) The baptism of the Great Commission of Christ (Mark 16: 16) is a command of God to be obeyed by people that they may reach the blood of Christ and have their sins remitted (Acts 2: 38). A thing cannot be a command and a promise both! Men were to administer the baptism of the Great Commission, and they did administer it, and it was baptism in

water! (Acts 8: 35-39.) Only our Lord administered Holy Ghost baptism. (Matt. 3: 11; John 1: 33.) Holy Ghost baptism had ceased when Paul wrote the Ephesian Letter, which was about A.D. 64, for he said: "There is one baptism," referring to water baptism. (Eph. 4: 1-6.)

WHO SHOULD NOT BE BAPTIZED

If you have not been baptized, you should not be baptized if any of the following is true of you.

If you do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, you should not be baptized. For: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16: 15, 16.)

If you are unwilling to repent of your sins, you should not be baptized. For, believers were told: "Repent, ye, and be baptized, everyone 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.)

If you are unwilling to confess Christ you should not be baptized. For: "The eunuch said, See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." (Acts 8: 36-38.)

If you do not want your sins forgiven, or washed away in the blood of Jesus, you should not be baptized. "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be

baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22: 16.)

If you want to hurt God and disappoint Jesus you should not be baptized. The devil works hard to do something to hurt God. If the devil can get you not to believe you must be baptized to be saved by the Lord Jesus he will thereby be hurting God. The devil cannot do anything to lessen God's power; he cannot rob God of his majesty, or remove him from his authority, but the devil can hurt God by keeping people from being saved, for God wants all to be saved. (1 Tim. 2: 4.)

DID YOU SEE IT?

A very popular weekly magazine had a picture on its front cover of a preacher pouring water on the head of a crying infant which was being held by a woman, presumably its mother. And this picture is supposed to represent the action of "Christian baptism." What a deceiving picture! No wonder so many think that sprinkling or pouring water on one is baptism. No wonder so many think that infants are subjects for the baptism authorized by Christ! The baptism of the Great Commission of Christ cannot be administered by pouring water on a subject, or by sprinkling water on a subject. Infants cannot be baptized by the authority of Christ.

The baptism of the Great Commission of Jesus Christ is a burial in water. (Rom. 6: 3, 4; Col. 2: 12; Acts 8: 35-39.) Those baptized by the authority of Christ must first be believers. (Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 36-38.) You may say: "What difference

does it make?" Reader, it is a difference that will determine whether you are faithful and loyal to Christ, or faithful to your own inclinations; whether you wholeheartedly subscribe to Christ and his word, or to the creeds and traditions of men. The difference is the difference in reaching the blood of Christ by obeying him who is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him, or failing to reach the blood of Christ and remission of sins!

Remember, we cannot include in Christianity, or call a thing Christian that is not taught in Christ's word. Let us be fair with Christ and not say that he taught something which he did not teach. Pouring or sprinkling water on an infant or on anyone else is no part of Christianity. There are many who refuse to be baptized on the ground that they were "sprinkled" or "poured" when they were too young to even remember it. If all were to succumb to the traditions of men it would not be long until there would not be a believer immersed on God's earth. Read the Bible!

BAPTISM IN ACTS 2: 38

Some have insisted that the baptism of Acts 2: 38 is Holy Spirit baptism. However, Holy Spirit baptism was a "promise of the Father" to certain ones for special purposes. (Acts 1: 4; 11: 14, 15.) A promise of the Father cannot also be a command of the Father! The baptism of Acts 2: 38 was a command of God; it is to be obeyed by lost, convicted sinners.

Others have urged that "remission of sins" in Acts 2: 38 means "because of remission of sins." They say it means one is to be baptized because his sins have already been remitted or forgiven. Even if this were true, baptism would be none the less essential, for if God commanded people, whose sins were already remitted, to be baptized because their sins were remitted, they would have to be baptized to obey God. One cannot hope to be saved who disobeys God! However, "for remission of sins" in Acts 2: 38 could not mean "because of remission of sins," for that would mean that repentance would be "because of remission of sins." Peter said: "Repent and be baptized." The coordinate conjunction "and" connects things of equal rank in sentence construction, therefore, whatever baptism is "for," repentance is also "for" in Acts 2: 38. Furthermore, scholarship will not allow that the Greek preposition *eis* translated "for" in Acts 2: 38 can mean "because of," but instead it means "in order to," "unto," etc., and is so rendered in some translations.

If we should remove from Acts 2: 38 "and be baptized" (and some have been trying to for years) it would then say: "Repent every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." What would "for" mean in this kind of Acts 2: 38? Whatever "for" means with "and be baptized" removed from the text, it also means with "and be baptized" in the text!

Even if "for the remission of sins" were not in Acts 2: 38, baptism would be just as essential, because Peter was guided by the Spirit of God in what

he said to those pierced hearts of convicted sinners who cried out and asked what they should do. If the Holy Spirit's answer to them had just been: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ," both repentance and baptism would have been essential to their salvation. If God told us to do something and did not tell us what we would get out of doing it, we would still have to do it to obey God! Without obeying God we cannot hope to receive his mercy and grace by which to be saved.

CHAPTER VIII

What Is A Christian

"CHRISTIAN" USED TOO CARELESSLY

Indeed, the term "Christian" is used too loosely; the following story illustrates this fact. Some men in a life boat finally landed on an island. They crept slowly inland until they heard voices and wondered if these voices were the voices of cannibals or Christians. Finally they came close enough to understand the men they heard. The men they found were cursing, gambling, drinking, and telling ugly stories. It was then that one of the group from the life boat sighed: "Thank God they are Christians." Perhaps, to some people a man is a Christian just so he does not eat other men. But, the word "Christian" is not as inclusive as some would allow. Many educated men are not able to answer the question: "Who is a Christian?"

A man in New England died, he had willed his estate to the Christians in the community. Attempt was made to probate the will. The lawyers could not decide who the Christians were. Five of the best religious scholars in the area were called in; they could not decide who the Christians were. They finally said: "It would take the wisdom of

Solomon and the patience of Job to decide who a Christian is." There is so much confusion in the religious world that many cannot decide who a Christian is. The Bible is not responsible for the confusion. Mishandling God's word is the cause. The problem would vanish if people would allow the Bible and nothing else to inform them as to who a Christian is, and what it means to live the Christian life. As long as men allow sentiments, human traditions, sectarian dogmas, and what people say to be their standard instead of the Bible they will remain confused. Some think that if one were to reject Catholicism he would reject Christianity; but he would not.

Others think that if one were to reject Protestantism he would reject Christianity; but he would not. The Bible will not make one a Catholic and it will not make one a Protestant; it will only make one a Christian. Everyone who follows the Bible will be in the one body which is the Lord's church. The Bible, and it alone produces unity; it just makes Christians.

JUST GOOD MORALS DO NOT MAKE ONE A CHRISTIAN

Some think that one is a Christian if he is a good moral person. However, just because one pays his debts, loves his family and friends and is a good neighbor, does not mean he is a Christian. Truly one must be good morally to be a Christian. Christians should grow in their good qualities. But to become a Christian one must believe and obey the

gospel; he must do this regardless of how good he is. The eunuch that Philip baptized was a good man in many respects before he reached the blood of Christ and had his sins washed away. He was a man of great authority; he had the charge of all the treasury of a great nation, he was doubtless well educated; he was obviously intellectually adept; he was a religious man; he had been to worship and on his way home he was reading his Bible; he was honest; he was a gentleman; he was an inquiring humble man; but he was a lost man! (Acts 8: 26-40.) He was lost in spite of all these good traits. Even though all these things were true of the eunuch, he had to hear the gospel, believe it, and go down into the water and be baptized into Christ where he could reach the blood of Christ.

That which has been shown concerning the eunuch is also true of others in the New Testament record like Saul of Tarsus, and Cornelius. (Acts 9, 10.) But they too had to obey the gospel before they belonged to Christ. Many today are depending on their good qualities to save them, and they think they are Christians because they are good morally. But before they are Christians they will also have to humbly submit to Christ and be baptized into him. If you have not obeyed the gospel, you should! If you have not obeyed the gospel like the eunuch and others you are not a Christian. (2 Thess. 1: 7-9.)

ALL BELIEVERS ARE NOT CHRISTIANS

Just believing in God does not make one a Christian; if it did devils would be Christians. (James 2:

19.) Truly, in order to be a Christian, one must believe in God, but just believing in God does not make one a Christian. One must be a man to be a husband, but just being a man does not make one a husband. As surely as the Bible is the word of God, there are many who think they are Christians who are not really Christians! There are multitudes who believe in God, but who are not Christians because they reject Christ! They have no promise of eternal life. There are also multitudes who believe that Christ is the Son of God, but they are not Christians because they have not obeyed him. (Heb. 5: 8, 9.) Just believing that Christ is the Saviour does not make one a Christian. The Jews on the day of Pentecost who cried out: "Men and brethren what shall we do?" were believers in Christ. But they were not saved believers until they repented of their sins and were baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38.) When those people thus obeyed Christ's gospel they were added to his church. (Acts 2: 41, 47.)

One cannot be a Christian without believing that Christ is God's son; without believing that Jesus Christ came down from the Father. (John 8: 19-25.) One cannot be a Christian by just believing that Christ was a good man; one must believe that Jesus was more than a "good man"; he must believe that he is the only begotten son of God. If Christ is not the Son of God, then he was not a good man, for he said he was the Son of God many times. If he was not, then every time he said he was, he lied. And if he lied he was a not a good man! What think ye of Christ? Have you obeyed him?

A CHRISTIAN

The term "Christian" is used far too loosely by both the educated and the illiterate. "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11: 26.) "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." (Acts 26: 28.) "Yet if any man suffer, as a Christian, let him glorify God in this name." (1 Pet. 4: 16, R.V.) The foregoing passages are the only passages in the Bible where the word "Christian" is found. In each of these passages the word "Christian," or "Christians" has reference to those who had heard the gospel, who had believed the gospel, and who had repented of their sins and had been baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins. They had thus become members of God's family.

A Christian is a child of God, and the same thing that makes a person a Christian, makes him at the same time a member of God's family, the church of our Lord. (Acts 2: 37-47; 1 Tim. 3: 15.) One cannot be a Christian without being in the church of which Jesus is the head. The only church that one can be in if he follows Christ is the church we can all read about in the Bible. There are hundreds of churches in the world that are not mentioned in the Bible. I have had people tell me they were Christians, but not members of the church. However, this is impossible. The word "church" means "the called out"; and with reference to God's church, it means "the called out of God." God calls people out of the world by the gospel. (2 Thess. 2: 14.) Please get into Christ by

obedience to the gospel. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death." (Rom. 6: 3.) One is not a Christian who has not left the world and entered Christ. When one is baptized into Christ God delivers him from the power of darkness and translates him into the kingdom of his dear son, and he thus becomes a Christian. (Col. 1: 13.) To be in Christ is to belong to Christ, or to be a Christian.

A CHRISTIAN AND DIVISION

Religious division is rampant in the world, but condemned in the word of God. (1 Cor. 1: 10; 3: 3; John 17: 17-24.) What many people think to be Christianity is not Christianity at all. The confusion wrought by a failure to follow the Bible is responsible for much infidelity and atheism. We should understand full well why men have looked upon the religious world that calls itself "Christianity," and have said in disgust: "If that is Christianity, we want none of it." The truth is that such confusion; such a conglomeration of divided and striving sectarian bodies is not Christianity at all. Men like Voltaire, Payne, Owen, and Ingersoll did not attack Christianity, they attacked what men called Christianity.

But many things that "great scholars" say are not in harmony with what the Bible says. The Bible is the only book that speaks with any authority on the subject of Christianity. The dictionary cannot be the authority for defining Bible topics for it says what the people say. As people get new

ideas and use them, then the dictionaries are made accordingly. The only way to know who a Christian is, and what should be included in Christianity is to study the Bible, for the answer cannot be found elsewhere. If men had not added to, and subtracted from God's word there would be no human creeds and division. "Christianity" is a word that should not be used except to refer to the teachings of Christ and those whom he inspired. To include in Christianity that which Christ did not teach, or that which he taught against is to be unfair to him, and such teaching can deceive souls.

A CHRISTIAN AND THE MIRACLES

Many are called Christians who do not believe the record of miracles found in God's word which were performed by Christ and especially endowed men. It is a matter of record that many preachers in the denominations do not believe all of the miracles; it is difficult to believe that such preachers believe any of the miracles if they reject some of them. One scholar has said that 85 per cent of the religious people in the United States do not believe all the miracles recorded in the Bible. If this be true, how can it be said that this country is a Christian nation? There is just one Christian nation, and it is the "holy nation" of 1 Peter 2: 9 which is the Lord's church. Not very many of the religious people of the world believe all that the Bible says. No one can be a Christian and deny just one of the miracles of our Lord. I read from a prominent scientist in a very popular American magazine who

said that the miracles recorded in the Bible are "poetic exaggerations and ancient interpretations of events that we would not now consider as being miraculous." What blasphemy! Such a statement is unscientific! According to this "scientist" the narrative concerning the virgin birth of Christ is a "poetic exaggeration," and according to him the story of the resurrection of Christ is a myth! And yet there are multitudes running loose today who think they are Christians, but do not believe what the Bible says about Christ. There are some who say they are Christians who may themselves believe the miracles of the Bible, but who fellowship and call others Christians who do not believe the miracles.

The man who denies the miracles of the Bible has not considered the evidence that attests that they actually occurred. A long time ago those who denied the Bible and its miracles were defeated by able men in the field of evidences. The "scholars" who deny the Bible today just need to study some in the field of Christian Evidences. There is more factual evidence attesting to the resurrection of Christ than to any event of ancient history. One needs only to consider the evidence; when he does, he will have to believe.

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

If we learn what "Americanism" is we will have to consult the American Constitution. If we discover what "Darwinism" is we will have to study the books written by Charles Darwin. Americans

do not think that something not taught in the Constitution is "Americanism," and we would not be unfair enough even with Charles Darwin to include something in "Darwinism" that Charles Darwin did not teach and believe. But why will men include in Christianity that which Christ does not include in it in his word? Should we not be as fair with Christ as with Darwin? No man has any right to call a thing "Christian" that he cannot read about in the blood sealed covenant of Christ! No one has a right to say that he is a Christian unless he has done that which people in the days of the apostles did to become Christians. No one should say he is living the Christian life unless he does that which Christ teaches him to do. For a practice and belief to be Christian it must be found in Christ's covenant.

Christ did not teach and endorse "denominational Christianity," therefore religious division should not be called Christianity. One cannot be a Christian and be a partaker of that which is no part of Christ's program. Christ established one church which must have unity; it must endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4: 3-6.)

Religious hierarchies and super-ecclesiastical organizations that govern and rule over a plurality of churches are not "Christian," for they are not authorized in the teachings of Christ. Christians cannot encourage and condone such systems. Christ has not failed, and his system of teaching we call Christianity has not failed. What men may call

Christianity that is really not Christianity may often fail.

ONE'S FEELINGS NOT PROOF HE IS A CHRISTIAN

The way one feels does not determine that he is a Christian. Just because one is religious does not prove that he is a Christian. Our feelings can deceive us. The people who crucified Christ were religious. Many religious people through the ages have persecuted the Lord's church. An emotional upsurge and a "religious experience" are not proof that one is a Christian. The heart of man is deceitful above all things. (Jer. 17: 9.) The way that one can know he is a Christian is the same way that he can know that Christ is the Saviour. We know that Christ is the Saviour by the instruction and information that we find in the Bible. We know in the same way that we are Christians. When we do the same things that the people of the Bible text did to become Christians, then, and only then, we will know that we are Christians.

One certainly feels good if he has the assurance of God's word that he has obeyed the Lord. Certainly, nothing could make one feel any better. But even one's feelings are then not the proof that he is a Christian, but the proof is God's word. The fact that one has obeyed the gospel of Christ is the proof that one is a Christian! Many think they are Christians who say they "got saved" by faith only and experienced an emotional upsurge, and they say after they were saved they were baptized into some

human denomination. One cannot be saved before being baptized into Christ, and the baptism that Christ commands will not put one into a denomination, it will put one into his body which is his church. In the Bible believers were commanded to be baptized in order to be saved; in order to reach the precious blood of Christ. They were not told to be baptized because they were already saved. One's feelings come as a result of what he believes, and what one believes comes as a result of what he hears. One might hear false doctrine, and believe it, and feel just as good as the one who hears, believes and obeys the truth. Have you obeyed the truth? (1 Pet. 1:22.)

CHAPTER IX

The Church

THE WORD "CHURCH"

"I speak concerning Christ and the church."
(Eph. 5: 23.)

Evidently, the New Testament was originally written in Koine Greek which was the dialect common to the masses of the Greek world. The Koine word "ekklesia" is used in the New Testament to refer to what the English text calls "the church." The word "church" is from Middle English "chirche," which came from Old English, or Anglo-Saxon "cyrice." The latter came into Anglo-Saxon from a Teutonic (Germanic) word which was derived from Greek "kuriakos." This word was used to refer to that which belonged to, or pertained to the Lord. Greek "kuriakon deipnon" in 1 Corinthians 11: 20 means "the supper belonging to, or instituted by the Lord." "Kuriakos" ("church" in English) was also used by the Greeks to refer to "the house belonging to the Lord." Indeed, "church" is a very appropriate word to use in translating "ekklesia."

In the English New Testament "church" is found referring to a congregation of the Lord's peo-

ple assembled in one place. (1 Cor. 14: 19, 23.) It is used to refer to a congregation whether assembled or not. (1 Cor. 1: 2.) And it is used to refer to all of God's people in all the world. (Matt. 16: 18; Eph. 5: 32.) In the Father's sight the church is always an assembly because the church consists of those who by the gospel have been called out of the world and are gathered together in Christ. (2 Thess. 2: 14; Eph. 2: 21, 22.)

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3: 15.)

THE CHURCH OF THE BIBLE

The church that you read about in the Bible is not a denomination. No one has any Bible authority for belonging to a denomination. Denominations were brought into existence by men, not by God. Religious division is condemned in the Bible. (John 17: 17-23; 1 Cor. 1: 10; 3: 3; Phil. 1: 27.) Obviously, the masses do not know what the church of the New Testament is. The only way to know what the church is, is to study the only book that speaks with authority on the subject, the Bible. There are several terms used in the Bible that refer to the church. The expression "the church" is used in the Bible more than any other term to refer to the church of our Lord. It would be sectarian to use any one of the terms used in the Bible referring to the church to the exclusion of the other terms used.

Reader, dismiss from your mind the fact that there is a church of any kind in the world; and try to forget about churches, and study the Bible and you will see what the church is. The reason that many people do not learn what the church is, is because they are blinded by the existing mass of confusion and sectarianism fostered by scores of denominational churches about us. It should be the desire of all who want to go to Heaven to please God, and to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4: 1-6.) The church that we read about in the Bible is God's family, or house; it is the spiritual realm over which Christ is head. (1 Cor. 3: 9; 1 Tim. 3: 15; Col. 1: 18.) No responsible person can get into the church without believing the gospel, repenting of his sins and being baptized into the body of Christ which is the church. (Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 38; Gal. 3: 26, 27.) When people ask: "Must one be in the church to be saved?", they thereby confess that they do not know what the church is. To ask this would be the same as asking: "Must one be in God's family to be saved?" Certainly one must be in God's family to be saved. The church that one can read about in the Bible is the only church that one can be in if he follows in religion nothing but the Bible.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

People often ask if the church of Christ is one of the "Pentecostal" denominations; they ask if the church of Christ is the same as the "Church of God," etc.

Anyone who reads the Bible knows that the Bible teaches that on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, the church of Christ was established in the city of Jerusalem upon the first day of the week. (Acts 2.) Jesus had said he would build his church. (Matt. 16: 18.) Jesus purchased the church with his blood; he paid the price for it on the cross. (Acts 20: 28; Eph. 5: 23-25.) The church we read about in the Bible is God's family or house. (1 Tim. 3: 15.) In the days when inspired men lived people became members of the Church of Christ by hearing the gospel; by believing the gospel; by repenting of their sins; and by being baptized upon a confession of their faith in Christ. They were thus baptized into Christ for the remission of sins; for, in Christ there is remission of sins through his blood. (Eph. 1: 7; Acts 2: 36-47; Rom. 6: 3, 4.) In the days of the apostles, the obedience that saved one from sin at the same time made him a member of the church of Christ, the family of God. The church of Christ that we read about in the Bible, and the church of God that we read about in the Bible are the same church.

The inspired men instructed the early church how to worship God in spirit and in truth. (Acts 2: 42; John 4: 24.) The same inspired men predicted that men would not always endure sound teaching, but would forsake the Lord's way and turn to human doctrines, and a perverted gospel. (Acts 20: 28-32; 1 Tim. 4: 1-6; 2 Tim. 4: 1-6; 2 Thess. 2: 1-12.) These departures were gradual and subtle. Religious denominationalism resulted. About 1800 A.D. men sought for and plead for a re-

turn to the New Testament order of things, and the doctrine and unity of the one church that we read about in the New Testament was restored. Since that time the church of Christ has been pleading for a return to God's way and order. The church of Christ is not a denomination; it is not a "Pentecostal group," or a sect of any kind. If you have obeyed the gospel like people did in the time of inspired men, you are a member of the church those people were in, and you ought to take your stand with those of us who are pleading for the unity that Christ prayed for. (John 17.) Let us hear from you.

SALVATION IN CHRIST IS SALVATION IN HIS CHURCH

"Therefore, I endure all things for the elect's sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." (2 Tim. 2: 10.) Salvation is in Christ Jesus. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4: 12.) Salvation from sin can be had nowhere except in Christ Jesus.

To be in Christ is the same as being in the church of Christ. "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: . . . And let the peace of God rule in your hearts to the which ye are called in one body." (Col. 1: 2; 3: 15.) Those at Colosse who were in Christ were in one body. But that one body is the church. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the begin-

ning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." (Col. 1: 18.)

Christ is the Savior of all men in the sense that all men who want to be saved can be saved. Only those will be saved by Christ who do what he tells them to do in the New Testament to be saved. "Though he were a Son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; being then made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." (Heb. 5: 8, 9.) When a person obeys Christ he believes the gospel; he believes that Jesus is the Son of God. (1 John 3: 23.) He repents of his sins. (Acts 17: 30.) He is baptized into Christ. (Rom. 6: 3.) When one thus gets into Christ, he is saved by Christ, for, salvation is in Christ. That is why baptism is necessary; baptism puts one into Christ. (Gal. 3: 27.) That is why Peter said: "Repent and be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2: 38.)

HOW CAN ONE KNOW HE IS IN THE CHURCH?

The church we read about in the Bible was made up of people who had believed the gospel, repented of their sins, and upon a confession of their faith had been baptized into the body of Christ which is the church of Christ, the undenominational church of which Christ is the head. (Acts 2: 36-47; Rom. 6: 3; Col. 1: 18, 3: 15.) No one is in the Lord's church unless he has thus obeyed the gospel. That is why it is so necessary to obey the gospel. Peter asked: ". . . what shall be

the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Pet. 4: 17.) Paul tells us what shall be the end: ". . . the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 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 from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1: 7-9.)

One cannot get into God's family and have the remission of his sins, without obeying the gospel. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men." (2 Cor. 5: 11.) Many may think they are in the Lord's church; but thinking that one is in the church does not prove that one has come into the spiritual realm where Christ saves. Christ is the Saviour of the body which is his church. (Eph. 5: 23-26.) The only way to know that one is in the Lord's family; that one is one of God's children, is for that one to obey the Lord's gospel. This is the only way one can know he is saved. Jesus said that he that believes the gospel and is baptized shall be saved. (Mark 16: 16.) One can know he is saved; can know he is in God's family, the same way he can know that Christ is the Saviour. We know Christ is the Saviour because the Bible tells us so. We know we are saved when we do the will of Christ as revealed in the Bible. Human feelings are deceptive; the heart of man is deceitful above all things. (Jer. 17: 9.) Reader, depend on God's word!

THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

Christ is the head of his church. (Col. 1: 18.) The prophets said that Christ would have to be heeded if people were saved by him. (Deut. 15: 18; Acts 3: 22.) Christ rules over his church by the rules and regulations found in that which God has spoken through him. (Heb. 1: 1, 2.) Christ spoke this message through inspired men, for he sent to the apostles the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit guided them into all truth. (John 16: 13.) Each congregation of the Lord's church must be governed by his word; otherwise the church could not please the head. When there are men qualified, Christ has authorized that there be a plurality of men to rule, or lead in each congregation of his church. Every congregation should work toward the development of such men. Such men are called in the New Testament by such terms as: "bishops," "elders," "pastors," "presbyters," "overseers," etc. These terms do not signify different offices in the church. A man who is an elder in the church of the living God is a pastor; he is a bishop; he is an overseer. (Acts 20: 17, 28; Titus 1: 5-7.)

There is no Bible authority for one being "the pastor" over a congregation of the Lord's church. There must be a plurality of "elders" or "pastors" over each church. (Acts 14: 23; Phil. 1: 1; Tit. 1: 5; 1 Pet. 5: 1-5.) Truly a pastor could preach, but a preacher is not necessarily a pastor. No preacher should rule over a congregation of the Lord's church as its "pastor"; he cannot do so by the authority of the head of the church. There is no Bible

authority for one man being "the bishop" or "the head," or "the pope" of the church all over the world. Christ has not authorized a group of men to be the "bishops" over a group of churches, or a group of men to be the "bishops" of the world wide church. The super-ecclesiastical structure that governs in Protestantism and Catholicism or any other "ism" are contrary to the directions of Christ the head of the church. Every congregation of the church of Christ is self-governing and independent. This is according to the pattern in the New Testament!

FOLLOWING THE HEAD

Christ is the head of his church. (Col. 1: 18.) If one follows Christ he will live by the word of Christ. One cannot respect and follow Christ without doing his will. The way to reject Christ is to reject his word. (John 12: 48.) If one follows Christ he will by faith turn away from his sins, confess his faith in Christ and be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins through his blood. (Acts 2: 38; Rom. 6: 3.) He will then worship and serve God through Christ and in his spiritual body the church. To be in subjection to the head of the church, those in the church must pray regularly, and give thanks always for all things. (1 Thess. 5: 17, 18.) To follow Christ, those in his church will have to give of their means as they have been prospered. (1 Cor. 16: 1-3.) Those in the Lord's church will meet on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's supper, if they follow Christ their head.

(Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 11.) Those who follow Christ as their head will sing praises unto God in Christian worship. (Col. 3: 16; Eph. 5: 19.) One is not following Christ the head of the church when he sings in worship with a mechanical instrument of music; instead he is following himself or some other man, for Christ, the head has not authorized the use of such instruments in worship. Worship is not a matter of what the people want, but what is authorized by God through his son the head of the church. We must worship in spirit and in truth. Jesus emphasized what God seeks in worship, not what man seeks. (John 4: 23, 24.) Nowhere does the truth authorize the use of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship.

Those who follow Christ will study his word and teach the gospel to others. (Eph. 5: 17; Col. 3: 16; Acts 5: 42.) Everyone who follows Christ will care for the needy, and they will do such as Christians, as members of the body of Christ. Those who follow Christ will not do good in the name of some lodge, or fraternity, but they will do it in the name of Christ. (Col. 3: 17.) I have heard people say that being in a lodge made one a better Christian. If that were true that would mean that such a lodge makes people better than Christ and his church makes them!

THREE QUESTIONS

The Bible teaches that God's people must be united on the teachings of inspired men. (John 17: 17-23.) The Bible teaches the oneness of the

church, and that division is sinful. Denominations exist without any Bible authority. The people in denominations, including their preachers, almost without exception, will answer negatively the three following questions. (1) Does one have to be in your denomination to receive the remission of sins? (2) Does one have to be in your denomination to live a Christian life? (3) Does one have to be in your denomination to go to heaven? Since nearly any denominationalist would say "NO" to each of these three questions, it is well to ask another question. And that is: If one does not have to be in a denomination to receive the remission of sins, to live the Christian life, and go to heaven, just why do denominations exist? Could one want any more in religion than the remission of sins, to live the Christian life, and to go to heaven? Surely not! Yet many say they do not have to be what they are religiously to receive any of these! Why are they what they are?

If you were to ask a member of the church of Christ the above three questions about the church he is in, he would have to say "Yes" to all of them. Because the church he is in is the church that we can read about in the Bible; it is God's family! One has to be in God's family to receive the remission of sins, to live the Christian life, and to go to heaven. When one says that he does not have to be in the church that he is in, he thereby admits that the church that he is in is not the church that we read about in the Bible. The church that we read about in the Bible is not sectarian, and denominational. One must be in that church to be one of God's peo-

ple; and those in that church must worship "in spirit and in truth" to please God. (John 4: 24.) Some insist that the church is not essential; they say that Christ is the Saviour, not the church. Truly, Christ is the Saviour, but he saves in the church! (Eph. 5: 23.)

"NOW IT IS DIFFERENT"

A very popular denominational creed book says that in the days of the apostles there were no differing denominations, but instead just one church. This is Bible truth, even if it is in a creed book of one of the biggest denominations on the earth. The same creed book says on the same page: "Now it is different." Indeed so, but what made things different? Creed books have helped as much as anything else to make things different from what they were when the apostles lived.

One of the choice expressions of our day is: "The church of your choice." No longer is it a matter of what God wants. Many men futilely attempt to defend a multiplicity of churches simply because they exist, and not because the Bible authorizes their existence. Not only was there one church in the days of the apostles which began on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, but also that one church was rebuked any time there was division in its ranks. (1 Cor. 1: 10; 3: 1-3.) Everybody got into the church of the Bible one way; they believed the gospel, turned away from their sins, and upon the confession of their faith were baptized into the body which is the church.

To please God, everybody in the church of the Bible had to worship in the same way. Their worship was limited to singing praises unto God; praying; studying God's message to them; and upon the first day of the week they met to break bread (the Lord's supper) (Acts 20: 7); and they were commanded to give of their means as they had been prospered upon the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2). If everybody would obey the gospel as taught in the New Testament, and worship God as is outlined in the New Testament, there could be only one church and the unity of the Spirit as taught in the Word of God would prevail. The church of Christ is striving to bring about that condition, and thus restore New Testament Christianity.

"CHURCHES" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament teaches that there is one church, and only one, authorized by God and pleasing in his sight. Perhaps some may object to this contention on the ground that the New Testament speaks of "churches." Truly, the New Testament speaks of churches in the plural. However, the obvious meaning of "churches" as used in the New Testament is far different to the use of the word "churches" as many people use that term today. When the term "churches" is used in the New Testament it has reference to different congregations of the same church. "Churches" in the New Testament does not refer to different fighting denominational bodies, each teaching doctrines that contradicted what the other taught. That is often the con-

dition under consideration when the term "churches" is used now. The apostles taught the same things in every one of the churches with which they labored. (1 Cor. 4: 17.) God, through the Holy Spirit, gave the apostles that which they taught. Hence, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." (1 Cor. 14: 35.)

The churches of Christ in and around Corinth, Greece were mentioned by Paul when he wrote a letter from Corinth to the church at Rome. (Rom. 16: 16.) In this passage different congregations of the church that belonged to Christ were mentioned. Seven churches are mentioned in the first three chapters of the Book of Revelation. But, they were not seven denominations. When these seven churches were mentioned individually they were called: "the church at Ephesus"; "the church at Sardis"; "the church at Pergamos," etc. Any division among the "churches" of the Bible was condemned by the Lord. Hence, "churches" in the New Testament and "churches" as many people today use the term are quite different. Some say that it does not make any difference which church one is in, because Christ, they say, is in all of them. The ones who say this would call anyone else a hypocrite for joining a different church every week until he got in all of them! If one's being in many "churches" would make a hypocrite out of him, why would not the same thing make a hypocrite out of Christ? Dear reader, you surely cannot seriously think that Christ endorses and condones the division and confusion and contradictions of the denomi-

national world. He does not endorse anything except the undenominational church over which he is head.

WHAT COULD I PREACH?

“For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body.” (Eph. 5: 23.)

Suppose I should want to preach on some subject pertaining to Christ but not talk about the church, what could I preach?

If I should preach about the headship of Christ, I would have to tell about that of which he is the head, and that is his church. (Col. 1: 18.)

If I should preach about him as our Savior, I would have to tell that he is the Savior of the body which is his church. (Eph. 1: 22, 23.)

If I should decide to preach about his blood, I would have to tell that his blood was the purchase price of his church. (Acts 20: 28.)

If I should preach about his giving spirit, I would have to tell that he always gave and said it is more blessed to give than to receive; I would have to tell that he finally gave himself for the church! (Eph. 5: 25.)

If I should preach about being subject to Christ, I would have to report that it is the church that is subject unto Christ. (Eph. 5: 24.)

If I should preach about the love of Jesus I could not afford to leave out the fact that he loved the church and gave himself for it. (Eph. 5: 25.)

If I should tell about his sanctifying and cleansing power I would have to tell that Christ sancti-

fied and cleansed the church with the washing of water by the word. (Eph. 5: 26.)

If I should preach about the care and concern and the sustaining power of Jesus, I would tell that he nourishes and cherishes the church. (Eph. 5: 29.)

Obviously, one cannot preach Christ without preaching what the Bible says about his church.

CHAPTER X

Apostasy

GOD'S CHILDREN WHO FALL AWAY

There are many passages in the Epistle of Hebrews which show that "holy brethren" can become "unholy" and be lost. Scholars recognize that the Revised Version of the Bible which was first published in 1901 is the best version of the Bible. Here is Hebrews 6: 4-6 from the Revised Version. "For as touching those who were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." This text doubtless describes Christians who fell away, and who went so far in sin that it was impossible to get them to repent.

If you believe the doctrine that a child of God cannot be lost, you may have been listening to a preacher who told you the doctrine was true, and all the time you should have been studying your Bible to see if it were true. How could anyone expect a student of the Bible to believe that doctrine?

Again, to the Hebrew brethren, the writer said: "A man that hath set at naught Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be counted worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing." (Heb. 10: 27, 28.) The Hebrew Epistle was written to keep brethren from going back to Judaism and thus leaving Christ and being lost. Note that the writer referred to one who "was sanctified" and the possibility of his falling and being lost.

CHILDREN OF GOD MUST KEEP ON HEARING

There are texts used by the exponents of the doctrine of the impossibility of falling from grace from which they try to prove that the doctrine is taught in the Bible. Note some of these texts, and see that they do not teach the impossibility of falling from grace. Remember, if there is a passage that teaches that a child of God cannot be lost, that passage contradicts about 2500 other passages in God's word which teach that a child of God can be lost; in fact some passages say that some were lost!

Here is a favorite "proof text" for the advocates of the doctrine of the impossibility of a child of God's being lost. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto

life." (John 5: 24.) Notice that this text states conditions. The person that shall not come into condemnation is the person that (1) hears the word of Christ, and (2) believes on God.

"Heareth" and "believeth" of the foregoing text are from Greek "akouon" and "pisteuon" respectively and both are present active participles and can be literally translated: "keeps on hearing" and "keeps on believing" for present tense in Greek is progressive. But this text does not say that such a person cannot stop hearing the word of Jesus, and believing on God. A believer can become an unbeliever. (Heb. 3: 12.)

Furthermore, if John 5: 24 teaches the impossibility of falling from grace, John 3: 36 teaches the impossibility of an unbeliever ever entering into life. For that text says: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life." Of course this means that as long as one remains an unbeliever he has no hope of ever seeing life or going to heaven. And the believer, that is an obedient child of God, shall not come into condemnation, if he remains faithful according to John 5: 24.

CAN A CHILD OF GOD BE LOST

There are some religious people who teach that once a person becomes a child of God he has nothing to worry about, for he cannot be lost. People say this in spite of some 2500 passages in the Bible that teach that a child of God can so act as to be finally lost in hell. There are some passages which are

used as proof texts of the impossibility of falling from grace, but not a one of these "proof texts" actually teaches that it is impossible for a child of God to be lost. If one of them did teach such, it would contradict about 2500 other passages which teach a child of God can be lost. But the Bible does not contradict itself! If it does, it is not the Word of God.

It is not a question of whether or not a faithful child of God will be saved, for we know the Bible teaches that all faithful children of God will be saved in heaven. The question is: "Can a faithful child of God quit being faithful?" We know that a faithful Christian can stop being faithful, and if he does not repent he will be lost. To brethren, the apostle wrote in Hebrews 3: 12: "Take heed brethren lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." These brethren were called "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," and Christ was their high priest. (Heb. 3: 1.) Therefore, let not some preacher say that they were not really saved! To these same "holy brethren" the Spirit said: "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. . . . Let us labour, therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." (Heb. 4: 1, 11.)

FALLING AWAY FORETOLD AND FULFILLED

One can read in the New Testament about one

church; the Lord's church. (Matt. 16: 18.) Paul said there is one body which is the church. (Eph. 4: 1-6; 1: 22, 23.) When there was division in the church we read about in the Bible it was condemned. (1 Cor. 1: 10; 3: 3.) The apostles predicted there would be a great falling away from the gospel truth. (1 Tim. 1: 3; 4: 1-5; 2 Tim. 4: 1-6; 2 Thess. 2.) To leave the truth is to leave the Lord. (John 14: 6.) "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.) Hence, to leave the teaching of Christ on any point is an offence fraught with eternal consequences.

Paul told the elders (bishops) of the church at Ephesus that from among themselves there would be men to arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. (Acts 20: 30.) The perversion of God's order began when one bishop took charge of a church and considered himself as being "over" the other elders of the same congregation. God's order is that each church have a plurality of elders or bishops. (Acts 14: 23; 20: 17, 28; Phil. 1: 1; Titus 1.) After one elder ruled over a church, it was not long until one bishop was ruling over more than one church. This "falling away" from God's order kept a steady pace until it reached its climax in 606 A.D. when Boniface III, bishop of Rome announced himself as the bishop (pope) over the church all over the world. It is difficult to conceive of an arrangement that would be farther from God's order than this. For, Christ is the head of the body, the church, and he must have all preemi-

nence. (Col. 1: 18.) Christ did not set up the office of "pope"; it is of human origin.

"HE CANNOT SIN"

Children of God can so act as to be finally lost. Some who do not believe this say that 1 John 3: 9 teaches that one who is born of God cannot sin, and that this means it is impossible for a born of God person to sin. In that verse, John said of the born of God person: "he cannot sin, because he is born of God." If this verse teaches that it is impossible for a Christian to sin, it contradicts hundreds of other Bible passages, some of which are in 1 John. John wrote to children of God in 1 John, and in that epistle he presented a marvelous contrast between the born of God person and the person not born of God. He said to Christians: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children these things I write unto you that you sin not, and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 1: 7-10; 2: 1, 2.) Anyone who can read the foregoing scripture and still say that he thinks that

1 John 3: 9 teaches that it is impossible for a child of God to sin is just stubborn and does not want to know what the truth is.

The writer once told one of his sons: "You cannot climb that tree." This does not mean that I thought it was impossible for him to climb the tree. To the contrary, I told him this because I knew he could climb that tree. In fact he did climb it and he fell out and suffered ill consequences. We tell our children they cannot do things we know they can do; things that would be harmful; things, the doing of which is inconsistent with the relationship that our children sustain to us as parents. Even so, God says his children "cannot" do some things because he knows they can do them, but they cannot do such things without being held accountable for their action, and without suffering for their evil and if children of God do not confess their sins and ask God's forgiveness they will be lost. (1 John 1: 7-10.)

WHAT A CHILD OF GOD CAN DO

1. Fail of the grace of God. (Heb. 12: 15.)
2. Be led away with the error of the wicked. (2 Pet. 3: 17.)
3. Err from the truth. (James 5: 19.)
4. Turn aside after Satan. (1 Tim. 5: 15.)
5. Fall from stedfastness. (2 Pet. 3: 17.)
6. Perish. (1 Cor. 8: 11.)
7. Forsake the right way. (2 Pet. 2: 14, 15.)
8. Turn from holy commandment. (2 Pet. 2: 21.)
9. Fall into condemnation. (James 5: 12.)
10. Be a Castaway. (1 Cor. 9: 27.)

11. Be cast forth as a branch and burned. (John 15: 1-6.)
12. Die if walk after flesh instead of after the Spirit. (Rom. 8: 14.)
13. Be spoiled through deceit. (Col. 2: 8.)
14. Be moved away from hope of the Gospel. (Col. 1: 23.)
15. Deny the Lord who bought him. (2 Pet. 2: 1.)
16. Do despite unto the spirit of Grace. (Heb. 10: 29.)
17. Depart from the living God. (Heb. 3: 12.)
18. Come short of God's promise. (Heb. 4: 1.)
19. Believe in vain. (1 Cor. 15: 3.)
20. Fail to keep self in love of God. (Jude 21.)
21. Count the blood of Christ an unholy thing. (Heb. 10: 29.)
22. Depart from the faith. (1 Tim. 4: 1.)
23. Be carried about with strange doctrine. (Heb. 13: 9.)
24. Be beset by sin. (Heb. 12: 1.)
25. Draw back from salvation. (Heb. 10: 38.)
26. Fall after example of others who fell (23,000 fell in one day). (1 Cor. 10.)
27. Fall after same example of unbelief by which others fell. (Heb. 4: 11.)
28. Become worse than an infidel. (1 Tim. 5: 8.)
29. Refuse God who speaks from heaven. (Heb. 12: 25.)
30. Have an evil heart of unbelief. (Heb. 3: 12.)

But in spite of all the possibilities of being lost a child of God can certainly go to heaven if he does not allow such things as mentioned above to happen

to him. All the warnings in the Bible to children of God to show them they can be lost are not designed to discourage a child of God and cause him to think he cannot be saved. Instead, these warnings are given to cause a Christian to realize the danger of losing his promise of eternal life.

CHAPTER XI

Music In Worship

WORSHIP WITH OR WITHOUT?

A preacher once told me that he could worship with an instrument or without one; many other people have told me this. While that preacher was telling me that, he was turning to one of the Psalms which he said contained instruction to the church for the use of instruments of music in worship. Of course there is no such Psalm! But, I told that preacher that if that particular Psalm contained such a command, he could not worship without instruments! But, he said he could worship with one, or without one! If God commands Christians to use instruments, they cannot worship acceptably without using them. If God does not command Christians to use instruments in worship they cannot worship acceptably by using them.

Some contend that the Greek word "Psallo" is authority for instrumental music in worship. This word is the only authority that some present for the use of instruments in worship. It is found in one of the forms in the following passages; Romans 15: 9; James 5: 13; 1 Corinthians 14: 15; Ephesians 5: 19. It is translated in these passages into these

English expressions: "sing"; "sing psalms"; "making melody" (in the heart). Many of those who say "psallo" includes, or means the playing of instruments, will also say that they can worship with instruments, or without them. However, if playing on instruments is embraced in the word "psallo" as it is used in the New Testament, we cannot worship without such playing! If playing on instruments is not included in "psallo" we cannot worship acceptably with instruments. The New Testament names the instrument to be "psalloed" in Christian worship and that is the heart.

James said: "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms." (James 5: 13.) "Sing psalms" in this passage is from a form of "psallo." If "psallo" includes playing on a mechanical instrument, one could not do what James said do without using such an instrument, regardless of how merry he might be!

ARE INSTRUMENTS IN WORSHIP A LITTLE MATTER?

Some people think it strange that anyone would say that it is wrong to use mechanical instruments of music in worship. For centuries after Christ was on earth it would have been just as strange for one to have said that instruments ought to be used in worship!

The best way that one can show genuine interest in people is by telling them the truth of God's word. "Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4: 16.) "You shall know

the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 32.) What people think and do is not the standard by which we can determine whether instruments should be used in worship or not. The word of God is our standard; by it and by it alone can we determine what God wants in worship! Jesus pointed out to the Pharisees (the most popular religious people of his day) that their worship was vain because they practiced things taught in human traditions. "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the traditions of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition." (Mark 7: 7-9.) Observe that the practices that made their worship vain were "little things." Some insist that instruments in worship are "such a little matter" that we should not be disturbed over their use. But, not so! With God there are not any "little matters" when it involves respecting his word and the authority he has vested in his Son.

WE BELIEVE IN HAVING MUSIC

It is not right to say that the church of Christ does not believe in having music in its worship. To say such is comparable to saying that a man does not have children just because he has only girls, and no boys. There are two kinds of music, (1) vocal, and (2) instrumental. The church of Christ does

have music in its worship. We do not believe that we could worship scripturally without music! But to be scriptural worship, the music must be the kind that God has designated us to make, and that is vocal music. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God." (Col. 3: 16.) "Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5: 19.)

Instruments of music are right within themselves. This is not the issue. What is right in worship is the issue. Some have argued that what is good in the home is good in worship. Surely they know better than this. Think of all the things in the home that you would not want in worship. Ham and eggs are good in the home, but are there any liberal enough to say that ham and eggs, would be all right in worship on the Lord's table?

Worship in the Christian age (in the church) must be in spirit and in truth. (John 4: 24.) An act of worship can be engaged in conscientiously, zealously, and in spirit, and still be wrong because that is not all that must characterize Christian worship. That which is done must be "in truth." What else could this mean except that worship must be done as the truth directs? God's word is the truth. (John 17: 17.) All truth was revealed by the apostles, but in revealing all truth they did not tell Christians to use mechanical instruments in worship to God.

There is no record in the New Testament concerning the use of instruments in Christian worship. They were not used for several centuries, according to the best historical records. They were introduced several centuries after the apostles by the apostate church. The fact that New Testament Christians did not use instruments in worship is not because there were no instruments; it is not because there were none to play them, but it is because God did not want them in Christian worship!

INSTRUMENTS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Instruments are mentioned time and time again in the Old Testament. Instruction was given for their use in the worship of the law of Moses. Why is there such a sudden silence concerning them when you begin reading God's order for worship in the New Testament. It is not because the New Testament writers had forgotten that there were such instruments; it is not because there were no longer any instruments, but it is because God did not want Christians to use them, hence they did not. Therefore, the New Testament is silent concerning their use in Christian worship even though they had been used in the worship of the Old Testament era, and even though their use is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament.

Some justify their use of instruments because of what the Old Testament says. In going to the Old Testament for authority to use instruments one admits by so doing that there is no authority for their use in the New Testament. If there is authority in

the New Testament, why go to the Old Testament? There is a difference in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Christians live under the blood sealed covenant of Christ, the New Testament and not under the covenant of Moses which was sealed, not with the blood of the Son of God, but with the blood of animals. If one can see the difference between an animal and the Son of God, he can see the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. A great portion of the New Testament deals with the subject of the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

In Paul's day some Christians went back to the Law of Moses for authority for circumcision. Paul wrote concerning this error many times. The Book of Galatians was written to show this error, and to point out the truth that to try to justify practice in the Christian religion by the Law of Moses was to fall from grace. (Gal. 5: 4.) The reason we do not use instruments in our worship, is because we do not want to fall from grace. Someone may say: "Well, it is such a little matter, you surely do not think that could cause one to fall from grace?" But, such an one errs not knowing the scriptures. Circumcision was a "little matter," but to practice it as a religious rite in Christianity and justify it by the law of Moses was to fall from grace.

WHAT ABOUT "PSALLO"?

To defend the use of instruments in worship some have made an argument from the Greek word "psallo." (The New Testament was written in the

Greek language.) "Psallo" in one of its forms is found in following passages: Romans 15: 9; 1 Corinthians 15: 14; James 5: 13; Ephesians 5: 19. In these passages the word is translated "sing," "sing praise" (or "sing psalms"), and "make melody." "Psallo" means, "to rub," "to wipe," "to pull out," "to pluck off," "to strike," etc. The Greeks used the word "psallo" in various ways. One could "psallo" his beard by pulling out some hair; one could "psallo" a tree by striking it with a stick. The word was also used with reference to striking and twanging the strings of an instrument. These definitions are from Mr. Henry Thayer's Lexicon (one of the most classical works on the subject). Mr. Thayer adds that in the New Testament the word "psallo" means "to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song." (See Thayer's Lexicon, p. 675.)

The use of the word "psallo" necessarily implies an object or an instrument "psalloed." But, the object, or instrument has to be named! The instrument is named in the New Testament! "Making melody" in Ephesians 5: 19 is from a form of "psallo." Paul named the instrument; he said that in our singing we are to make melody with our hearts. The heart is the instrument to be used in singing, not the harp! This "heart" is not the blood pump, but it is the spirit. Dear reader, pay attention to Christ's word, not to human traditions. The heart is the instrument to be used in singing. Therefore, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (1 Cor. 14: 15.) When Christians sing they must strike the chords of their hearts; one must put all his heart into the singing

of praises unto God. God demands this of his people. He will not accept a substitute in the form of mechanical instruments.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AND CHRIST'S AUTHORITY

Some assert that we make too much of an issue out of music in worship. This is because these have succumbed to the subtle, satanic philosophy that says it matters not what is done in worship if those who worship are sincere, and if they are just and fair in their dealings with one another. Men do have a responsibility toward one another. If followed, the law of Christ will regulate the conduct of men toward each other. No one can be a Christian who does not live by this part of Christ's law! But, the gospel contains more than the code that regulates the conduct of men toward one another. The same Bible enjoins proper conduct on men in their relationship to one another, with equal emphasis and clarity tells men their responsibility to God!

God has given instruction as to how he wants to be worshipped. He who ignores these instructions forgets that God is a jealous God. Christ said that God seeks true worshippers. He said that true worshippers are those who worship in spirit and in truth. He affirmed that "they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4: 23, 24.) "True worshippers" infers "false worshippers." One is a "false worshipper" who does not worship in spirit and in truth. Worship must be done in keeping with the truth which is God's word. (John 17: 17.)

He who does not respect God's order of worship surely does not realize how important it is to respect the authority of Christ. The music issue will not be dealt with lightly by those who respect the authority of Jesus. He has all authority in heaven and on earth; he must be heard in all things; he must have all preeminence. (Deut. 18: 15; Acts 3: 23; Matt. 28: 18; Col. 1: 18.) The music in worship issue is inseparably hinged to the matter of Christ's authority. It is vain for people to be religious who do not respect his authority. Those who do not respect his authority will be lost anyway. The music issue is important only to those to whom the authority of Jesus Christ is important.

GLORY TO GOD

Recently, a person told me that it does not matter what people do in worship just so they glorify God. This attitude ignores the teaching of the Bible. The Bible teaches that God can be glorified only when we do what he tells us to do. Worship that consists of acts performed without instruction from God is vain worship. (Matt. 15; Mark 7.) God cannot be glorified with vain worship. To glorify God we must do what he says do. Even if it is a "little" matter, we must still do it if he is glorified, for he may test our loyalty, faith and trust in him with a "little" matter more than with a "big" matter. Worship, and the whole Christian religion is nothing more than a matter of respecting the authority that God has vested in his Son.

Music in worship is inseparably hinged to the authority of Christ. This is why the church of Christ does not use mechanical instruments of music in worship. We seek to glorify God. God has not told Christians to use instruments in worship. To do so is to go onward and is a failure to abide in the doctrine (teaching) of Christ. Those who do not abide in the doctrine of Christ have not God. (2 John 9, 10.)

Many say: "But God does not say we cannot use instruments in Christian worship." This is a favorite "argument" of those who defend the use of instruments. However, it is not a sound and valid argument. There are two laws governing worship. We respect these laws in other areas of life. They are: the law of inclusion, and the law of exclusion. If you tell your child to go to the store and buy certain items, these two laws govern the child's obedience to your instruction. You want the child to get all the items you send after; thus the law of inclusion operates. You want the child to get only the things you send after; thus the law of exclusion works. If the child were to return with a number of commodities which you did not send after, and were you to reprimand him for it, he might say: "You did not tell me I could not get these things." This is the very kind of "argument" that some make when they say: "The Bible does not say we cannot use instruments in worship." Even preachers make this "argument." Surely, the preachers who read this will not make it any more!

WHAT ABOUT SONG BOOKS?

In defense of instruments in worship some have said they are just as scriptural as song books, a song leader, a baptistry, a meeting house, etc. However, instruments in worship are not parallel to these. We can use song books, a song leader, etc., because we have a command to sing. To carry out the command to sing we can use our judgment as to who will lead the singing, and we can decide on what spiritual songs we use, and whether they are in a book, or whether we sing them from memory. In doing all this we obey the command to sing.

To carry out the command of God to meet for worship, we can erect a meeting house. Erecting a meeting house and meeting in it are involved in obeying the command to meet.

God commands us to baptize the lost into Christ. (Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 38; Rom. 6: 3, etc.) The Bible does not say where to do the baptizing. Baptism is a burial. (Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12.) Therefore, if we immerse people in water, and raise them to walk in newness of life, it does not matter where the water is. We have the same authority for building a baptistry as we have for erecting a meeting house, and for making and using song books. We have a command to baptize, but not where to baptize, therefore we can use our own judgment as to where to baptize. We have a command for worship, but we do not have a command that tells us where to meet, therefore we are allowed to use our own judgment in selecting the place to meet.

We have a command to sing, but we do not have

a command that tells us how the songs are to be arranged, therefore we can use our own judgment in this matter; we can memorize the songs, or we can use a book of songs in the song service, in either case we would only do what God said do; we would sing!

We do not have a command to play on instruments in worship! We must first have a command for doing something in worship, before we can talk about how it is to be done! If we had a command to use instruments in Christian worship, then we could decide on how the command was to be carried out; we could decide on the kind of instruments to be used; we could decide on who would play, etc. These matters involved in carrying out such a command would be parallel to song books, a baptistry, a meeting house, etc. Surely no reader of this column will say any more that mechanical instruments in worship are parallel to song books, baptistries, meeting houses, etc.

LAWS OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

Remember, there are two laws that govern our lives, viz., (1) the law of inclusion, and (2) the law of exclusion. God told Noah to build an ark out of gopher wood. If God had just told Noah to build an ark, Noah could have used any kind of wood, or he could have used other kinds of material. Suppose Noah had used other kinds of wood, and then argued that God did not tell him he could not use other kinds. He would have sounded like those who

say that we can use instruments in worship because God did not tell us we cannot use them!

Jesus wants Christians to eat the Lord's Supper by eating bread and drinking the fruit of the vine. Suppose some were to put ham and eggs and coffee on the Lord's Table and argue that the Bible does not say that we cannot use them! The law of inclusion makes us use bread and fruit of the vine on the Lord's Table on the first day of the week. (Acts 20: 7.) The law of exclusion keeps us from using ham and eggs, and coffee, or anything but bread and fruit of the vine.

Suppose one goes to his doctor and gets a prescription, and then takes the prescription to his druggist, and the druggist puts into the compound every item the prescription calls for, but he adds a deadly drug that it does not call for; what would happen to the druggist? We are confident as to what would happen to the one that would take the medicine! After his funeral there would doubtless be a trial. The druggist might try to defend himself; he might say that he put into the compound every item that the prescription called for. Upon careful inspection it would be discovered that the druggist put in a death dealing drug that the prescription did not call for. He might then argue that the prescription did not say that he could not put in that deadly drug. If he were to argue this, he would sound just like those who argue that instruments in worship are all right because the Bible does not say that Christians cannot use them in worship.

HISTORY OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP

Absence of instruments of music in the worship services of churches of Christ astounds some visitors. However, instruments are just as conspicuously absent in the New Testament's instructions for Christian worship. There is not in the New Testament an account where mechanical music was used in the worship of any congregation of Christians. Church historians, such as Eusebius, Neander, Mosheim, Jones, Schaff, and Fisher, make no mention of the use of instruments in worship for hundreds of years after Christ. A head of the apostate church, Pope Vitalian, is related to have introduced organs into some of the Western European churches about 670 A.D. But, the earliest trustworthy account is that of an organ presented by the Greek Emperor Constantine Copronymus to Pepin King of the Franks about 757 A.D. This organ was placed in the church of St. Corneille at Compiègne. (See: *The American Cyclopedic*, Vol. 12, p. 688, and *Chambers Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7, p. 112.)

Erasmus, a contemporary of Martin Luther (early 16th century) and the most accomplished classical scholar of his time, said this commenting on 1 Corinthians 14: 19: "We have brought into our churches a certain operose and theatrical music: such a confused, disorderly chattering of some words, as I hardly think was ever heard in any of the Grecian or Roman theaters. The church rings with the noise of trumpets, pipes, and dulcimers;

and human voices strive to bear their part with them. Men run to a church as to a theatre to have their ears tickled. And for this end organ makers are hired with great salaries, and a company of boys, who waste all their time in learning these whining tones."

Many religious scholars since Erasmus such as, John Calvin, John Wesley, Adam Clarke, Theodore Beza, and Alexander Campbell gave their voice against the use of mechanical music in worship. They based their objection on the fact that the New Testament order of worship does not include the use of mechanical instruments of music. To use them is to ignore Christ's authority.

WORSHIP AND THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

The Christian religion is not just a "man to man" affair; it also embraces a "man to God" responsibility. By interpreting Christianity to be only a "man to man" religion, some have reduced the Christian religion to nothing but a social affair. The gospel of salvation from sin has been interpreted by some to be nothing more than a "social gospel." Such is blasphemy! Some critics attempt to pass off lightly the matter of music in worship as if it were a matter of no significance. These critics insist that we ought not to be concerned about such, but that we should be concerned about treating our fellowman properly; living a good clean life; etc. We should be deeply concerned about living good moral lives; about loving our neighbors as ourselves; etc. However, we cannot afford to overlook the fact

that the Christian religion also demands that we worship God in the way that he directs.

God is a jealous God; he demands and seeks worship that pleases him. (John 4: 22-26.) To overlook this is to reduce the religion of Christ to nothing more than a social system. But, it is more than that. To go to heaven men must be more than good people socially and morally; they must worship and serve God as he says, or be lost. One of the most deceptive and subtle weapons of the devil is the doctrine of the "social gospel"; the doctrine that says that all that is important and vital is the good moral and social life, and that heaven awaits those who are socially and morally adjusted. This doctrine is deceptive because the Bible abounds with instruction for men to worship God, and in the way he directs! The person who does not believe this has not a ray of hope. Those who do believe this all important truth will not pass lightly the matter of music in worship; they will instead be concerned about the kind of music God has prescribed for worship. Remember, what satisfies you or me is not the issue; what pleases God is the primary concern of those who "fear God and keep his commandments." (Acts 10: 34, 35.)

WITH WHAT ARE WE TO SING?

Christians are commanded to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. (Eph. 5: 19; Col. 3: 16.) If this command embraces playing on instruments, all who are commanded to sing are commanded to play! But, the command to sing does not include playing instruments.

Christians are taught to sing with a number of things. They are taught to sing with grace in their hearts. (Col. 3: 16.) They are instructed to sing with their hearts. (Eph. 5: 19.) Christians are to sing with the spirit, and with the understanding. (1 Cor. 14: 15.) But, God's word does not tell Christians to sing with a piano, or an organ, etc.

When the Jews used mechanical instruments in worship they were not used as "aids," but their use was worship! (2 Chron. 29: 25-28.) Observe in this passage that the worship service included singing, playing on instruments, and offering burnt offerings. The inspired historian says that those who played on instruments, worshipped, just the same as the singers worshipped, and just the same as the ones who offered the burnt offerings worshipped; they all worshipped! If we use instruments in Christian worship because the Jews used them in Jewish worship we will not use them as "aids," but as worship. If we use the Old Testament as authority for the use of instruments in Christian worship, to be consistent we will have to offer burnt sacrifices in worship. Were we to use the law of Moses as authority for any conduct in Christian worship we would fall from grace. (Gal. 5: 4.)

Some contend that the Psalms are no part of the law of Moses, or the law that the Jews lived under. For this reason some say that Christians can use instruments in worship because of the instruction in the Psalms concerning the use of instruments. Those who say this err, not knowing the scriptures. Jesus said that the Psalms are a part of the law of Moses. (John 10: 34; 12: 34; 15: 25.)

CHAPTER XII

Catholicism and Related Subjects

“CALL NO MAN YOUR FATHER”

Jesus said: “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ.” (Matt. 23: 8-10.)

We believe in religious freedom, and we are willing for others to express themselves candidly as to what they believe to be right. However, this does not mean that we believe a doctrine is right, just because we respect the convictions of those who may espouse it. Neither does our respect for the convictions of others mean that we believe that others will be saved if they believe and practice false doctrine. We must put principle before person. No people are interested in the truth more than the people in the church of Christ. We believe in open frank discussion and expression.

Often Catholics state why their priests are addressed with the title “father.” If the Bible teaches that preachers of the gospel are to be called “father,” then we preachers in the church of Christ

ought to be addressed with this title. However, the Bible does not teach that the title "father" should thus be used. And we feel that we owe it to the public to tell them why the title "father" is not thus used in the church of Christ. It is argued that one may call his paternal parent "father," and this is quite right; Jesus said we could. (Matt. 15: 4, 5.) Therefore, when Jesus said, "call no man your father," he must have meant that we are not to use "father" as a religious title. It would be disobedience to Christ for a Christian to apply such a title to a gospel preacher. Some may say: "What difference does it make?" This is the attitude that has caused wholesale departure from God's truth; this is the attitude that causes multitudes to do as they please and refuse to bow to the authority of Jesus Christ. He must have all preeminence. (Col. 1: 18.)

DID THE CATHOLIC CHURCH GIVE US THE BIBLE?

Spokesmen for the Catholic Church very boldly assert that the world is indebted to the Catholic Church for the Bible. This claim is one of many being made in a very strong propaganda program designed to exalt the Catholic Church and to define that institution as being the true church of Jesus Christ, and the giver and preserver of God's word. Much of the power in this claim is in the forthright manner in which it is made. It is made as if there were no question about its being true.

By the end of the fourth century A.D. the

church had so far departed from the New Testament teaching that it was not the true church that we read about in the New Testament. However, by that time the church had not changed as much as it did later. In 397 A.D. the church held a council at Carthage in North Africa. Some claim that it was at this council that the bishops who were present decided on what books should go into the New Testament and consequently the Catholic Church gave the world the New Testament.

To say the Catholic Church gave us the New Testament is like saying the Administration of Richard Nixon gave us the Declaration of Independence. The New Testament existed long before the Catholic Church existed. No man can put his finger on the date that the Catholic Church began because it came into being gradually by a departure of the true church from the New Testament order and teaching. The first official pope was named in the year 606 A.D. when Boniface III, "bishop" of Rome became "universal head of the church." This presumptuous act was not the beginning of the falling away of the church that was predicted in the New Testament, but it officially enthroned the "man of sin" of Paul's prophecy. (2 Thess. 2: 3-12.)

There are no known existing autographs of the New Testament scriptures. By "autographs" is meant the actual texts written by inspired writers. However, there are many hundreds of copies of the inspired writings which are reproductions of the autographs. The oldest of these copies of the New Testament scriptures dates to the third century

A.D. This copy existed more than a hundred years before the council was held at Carthage where the Catholic Church is said to have officially determined what books should go into the New Testament.

All religious writers from the second century until now have freely quoted from the Bible, including the New Testament scriptures. Scholars say that practically all the New Testament has been found in the writings of the first three centuries A.D. This is mighty good evidence that the New Testament existed at least around three hundred years before the Council of Carthage was held.

MORE REASONS FOR NOT BELIEVING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH GAVE US THE BIBLE

Before the date of the council wherein it is said that the Catholic Church decided what books should go into the New Testament there were copies of the Old and New Testaments in many places of the world. (For well documented evidence of this see: Canon of Scripture, by Archibald Alexander.) As early as sometime in the second century several translations of the Old and New Testaments were made from manuscripts of the sacred books. Some of these translations were: (1) the Coptic (Egyptian); (2) the Old Latin; and (3) the Peshito Syriac. These translations are mentioned to prove that the New Testament scriptures existed as a compiled volume in the second century. It would not be right to say that the Catholic Church has not made any

contribution to the existence of the Bible as it exists in many translations today, but it would be manifestly erroneous to say that had it not been for the Catholic Church there would be no Bible.

To try to offset the effects of the great Reformation Movement started by Martin Luther and others in the early part of the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church held a council on the southern declivity of the Alps in the city of Trent. This council was called by Pope Paul III in 1545 A.D. It met intermittently through 1563 A.D. In 1546 the Council of Trent decided that Jerome's translation of the Bible called the Latin Vulgate would be the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church in all its services. It is strange that the church which claims to be the giver and preserver of the Bible was so long deciding the text of the Bible it would use in its services.

The Bible does not stand on the endorsement of the Catholic Church or any other church. It stands on itself; it stands on its own unrefuted merit and quality. It stands on its messages of miracles; its prophecies and their fulfillment; its accurate geography and history; its scientific revelations; its doctrines of holiness; and its effects on human conduct and character. "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Pet. 1: 24, 25.)

“WHO IS MY MOTHER AND MY BRETHREN?”

“And a multitude was sitting about him; and they say unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answereth them and saith, Who is my mother and my brethren? And looking round on them that sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother.” (Mark 3: 32-35.)

Obviously, Jesus taught that those who do God's will sustain a relationship to him that is more valuable than the relationship that he and Mary sustained as mother and son. This certainly places a lot of emphasis on the importance of doing the will of God. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father who is in heaven.” (Matt. 7: 21.) To enter heaven at last we will have to do God's commandments. (Rev. 22: 14.) God's mercy is extended to those who remember his commandments to do them. (Psalms 103: 18.)

Jesus had a mother, and brothers and sisters. “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon; and are not his sisters here with us?” (Mark 6: 3.) Jesus was the first of several children; he is called Mary's “firstborn son” in Luke 2: 7. As dear as the ties in his family were, Jesus taught that those who do the will of God are his “mother and brethren” in

a dearer sense than those who were literally his flesh kin. Those who do the will of God become members of God's family, the church that we read about in the Bible. Being in that family is more important than anything else in the world. Those in God's family have to do God's will to have the promise of going to heaven. (2 Pet. 1: 5-11.)

MORE BLESSED THAN MARY

"And it came to pass as he said these things, a certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck. . . And he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and do it." (Luke 11: 27, 28.)

Here again, Jesus placed a lot of emphasis on the importance of doing God's will. He taught that the person who does God's will sustains a more blessed relationship than Mary enjoyed by being the mother of Jesus. This may be difficult for those who have not learned the importance of doing God's will to understand. It is not difficult for the person who has experienced the meaning and value of doing the will of God.

When Mary's cousin, Elizabeth had spoken good words to her, Mary gave utterance to a wonderful speech, or perhaps a song. In this joyful mood she said: "For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." (Luke 1: 48.) It is right for us to say that Mary was indeed a blessed woman and enjoyed an unusual privilege. But, more blessed is the person that does God's will.

Reader, if you will believe the gospel concerning Christ as God's Son if you will turn away from your sins; if you will confess Christ before men; if you will then be baptized into Christ and thus become a member of God's family and receive the remission of your sins, you will thus enjoy a relationship that is more blessed than the relationship Mary enjoyed by being the mother of Jesus. That is what obeying the gospel will do for you. Contact the church of Christ nearest you if you are interested in obeying the gospel.

GOD'S CLERGY

When Jesus said: "Call no man your father" (Matt. 23: 9), he counteracted the attitude and practice of contemporary religious leaders of whom he said: "They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi." (Matt. 23: 6, 7.) Jesus detested the formality and emptiness of much of the religion of the Jews. If Jesus is the product of a fiction writer, as some have said, who tried to create a national hero of the Jews, that writer miserably failed, for Jesus was not an ideal Jew of his time, or of any time! He opposed the human traditions and formality of the Jews. He objected to the use of religious titles as they were being used by the Jews.

Catholics say that it is proper for all whom a priest "converts" to call him "father." But there are reasons why this conclusion is not right. Catholic priests expect not only those whom they

“convert” to address them with the title “father”; they expect all other Catholics to thus address them. They even expect those of us who are not Catholics to address them this way. Truly, Paul called Timothy and others his “sons” in the gospel. (1 Cor. 4: 14-17.) He considered himself as the father in the faith of those whom he converted to Christ. But he was not addressed as “father Paul” by them, or anyone else.

For the same reasons that we disallow the use of “father” as a title, we also repudiate other titles such as “reverend” which so many use addressing preachers. Remember, Christ said: “All ye are brethren.” (Matt. 23: 8.) We should not use the word “brother” as a title applied to preachers only. There is no such thing in the Bible like the modern distinction between “the clergy and the laity.” “All ye are brethren!” God’s people are called “God’s heritage.” (1 Pet. 5: 3.) The word “heritage” in this passage comes from the Greek word “kleros” from which we get the word “clergy.” The whole church is God’s clergy, and not just the preachers.

LENT

The name “Lent” was derived from the Old English word “lenten” which meant “springtime.” Several denominations observe Lent, a forty day season beginning Ash Wednesday, and ending Easter. There is nothing in the Bible about Lent, Ash Wednesday, or Easter; all are based on human traditions. The reason the church of Christ does not observe Lent is because it would have to follow

human traditions to do so; and if it were to do this, its worship would be in vain. When Christ lived many of the Jews were more concerned with human traditions than with God's commands. Of them he said: "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15: 9.) He also told them that by keeping human traditions they made God's word of no effect. (Matt. 15: 6.) As powerful as God's word is, it is rendered powerless when men put in its place human traditions.

Lent is supposed to be a season of privation and sacrifice. However, Christians are commanded to deprive themselves of things evil at all times. There may be times in the life of a Christian that he will neglect even the things that are good for the body because of some trying circumstance, and attend wholly to things of the soul. Christians are taught to present their bodies a living sacrifice at all times. (Rom. 12: 1.) They are taught not to pattern their lives after the evil influences of the world. (Rom. 12: 2; 1 John 2: 15.) God's people are required to make sacrifices at any time; sacrifices of work, time, money, etc. Worship, the praise and fruit of the hearts and lips of Christians is sacrifice. Singing and prayer are sacrifice. (Heb. 13: 15; Col. 3: 16, 17.) Every Christian is a priest and should faithfully offer his all upon the altar of Christian service and worship at all times. (1 Pet. 2: 5.)

EASTER

During the "days of unleavened bread" which was the Passover feast of the Jews (Luke 22: 1),

Herod the King killed James the brother of John. Because he saw this pleased the Jews, he also put Peter in prison. . . . "Intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people." (Acts 12: 4.) Unfortunately, the Greek word "pascha" which means "Passover" was translated "Easter" by the translators of the King James Version of the Bible which was first published in 1611 by the authority of King James of England. The Revised Version of 1901 contains the word "Passover" instead of the word "Easter" in Acts 12: 4. This is the only place the word "Easter" is in the Bible, and it ought not to be there because of the foregoing facts! It was not respect for a Christian holy day, but respect for a Jewish holy day, the Passover, that Herod postponed the death of Peter, another leader among the Christians. If there had been such a day as "Easter," and had that day been a special religious day of the Christians, it seems that Herod would have gone to the limit to kill and persecute Christians on that very day! Herod was willing to wait until the Jewish religious day called the Passover was past before killing any more Christians.

There is no Bible authority for the observance of Easter. Any religious significance attached to Easter is deeply rooted in the traditions of men. Easter with all its religious pomp and pagentry is of pagan and papal origin; it came to the present generation by way of the papacy. For this reason Christians should not attach any religious significance whatever to Easter. The Bible does not give the specific date of the resurrection of Christ, except that it teaches he was raised on the first day of

the week (our Sunday). (Luke 24.) Early Christians met on the first day of the week to break bread. (Acts 20: 7.) Every congregation of the church of Christ still meets upon the first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper. If you will visit a church of Christ on what is called Easter Sunday, you will not witness a special "Easter service," but you will witness a simple New Testament worship service in "spirit and in truth." (John 4: 24.) You will be welcome!

NEITHER CATHOLIC NOR PROTESTANT

At the beginning of the 16th century Martin Luther broke away from the Catholic Church and started a movement that resulted in the Lutheran Church. In 1534 Henry VIII of England broke from the Church of Rome and formed the Church of England (Episcopal Church in America). Out of the Church of England came several denominations; the Baptists in 1607; the Methodists in 1729. In the early 19th century men like B. W. Stone and Alexander Campbell preached that denominational divisions were wrong. They preached the gospel of unity as found in the Bible. They got people to believe in Christ, turn away from their sins and be baptized into Christ's body, his church so they could be saved by his blood.

Men have been, and still are preaching these same principles because the apostles preached the unity of the Spirit; they preached one church. The result is that there are many thousands of churches of Christ in America today, and many in foreign

lands. We do not constitute a denomination, and cannot as long as we follow nothing but the word of God. We are neither Catholic nor Protestant in the popular sense of these terms. We are "catholic" in that the Lord's church is world wide in scope; we are "protestant" in that we protest all that is not in keeping with the teachings of King Jesus. In this sense we are the most "protestant" of all. We are the only group in the world trying to stop the "fight" that is raging in the form of religious confusion and division. This is why we are pleading with people to leave Catholicism and Protestantism and take their stand with us so that we may work together to the pleasing of the Lord and the salvation of souls in the one church which Christ shed his blood to establish.

We offer a sane and serious challenge to all not in the church of Christ. We challenge anyone to show one thing which the Bible teaches that one would have to give up by his becoming a member of the church of Christ and one thing which he would have to accept which is not taught in the Bible.

FALSE CLAIMS ABOUT PETER

Anyone who makes claims should be able to prove them before he expects anyone to believe them. If upon the examination of one's claims, there is no evidence presented, or proof given to uphold the claims, he should expect his claims to be discredited. If one were to teach that the apostle Peter was made the head of the church on earth, and that he has successors, he should either prove

those claims by the word of God, or quit making them. The Book of Acts is an inspired history of the early church. This book mentions Peter many times, and relates many of his travel experiences. But this book does not mention, or even infer that Peter went to Rome and there set up his office, the "Holy See." In fact the Book of Acts does not say anything about Peter being the head of the church, or that anyone except Christ was head of the church. What would you think of a history of England that did not even mention its kings? What would you think of a history of the United States that did not mention its presidents? Such histories would not be accepted by many people, if any. Can any man discover in the Book of Acts, or any part of God's word any organization of which Peter was head except his family? Is it possible that the inspired writers wholly overlooked Peter's headship over the church which, if it were a fact, was the most important fact of the times?

It is also claimed that Christ built his church on Peter. This claim is based on a perversion of Matthew 16: 18. The reason I know this passage has been perverted is because Paul plainly said that Christ is the foundation of the church and that no other can be laid. (1 Cor. 3: 11.) The Bible says that Christ is the head of the body of the church, and that he must have all preeminence. (Col. 1: 18.) Peter had unusual ability, but he had the same authority that all the other apostles had. (Ability is not authority!) They were all guided into all truth as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance; the word which they gave us in the Bible is our standard of

authority; it is inspired testimony. Through that word all men can believe and be one as Christ and God are one. (John 17: 21, 22.) And through that word all the apostles in one sense "rule" or "judge" over God's spiritual Israel, the Church. (Matt. 19: 28; Luke 22: 30; Gal. 6: 16.)

WAS PETER THE HEAD?

There are multitudes of people who believe and teach that the apostle Peter was appointed by Christ to be the head of the church on earth. They say that Christ conferred on Peter special honors, and jurisdiction, and authority in the government of his whole church, and that the same authority has always resided in the popes, or bishops of Rome as being the successors of Peter. I am called upon to believe these claims; you, dear reader, are called upon to believe these matters concerning the apostle Peter. In the interest of human souls, I challenge any man to prove either, or all of the following claims:

(1) That Jesus Christ established such an office as that of "Pope";

(2) That Peter was the first incumbent of such an office even if Christ established it;

(3) That Peter established himself in Rome, or that he was ever in Rome;

(4) That Peter had successors, even if he were the first Pope;

(5) That the Popes of Rome are those successors!

There is nothing harsh or unkind about the fore-

going challenges. Neither of the foregoing claims can be proven by the Word of God, but they would have to all be proven before the claims concerning the supremacy of Peter could be maintained. In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul mentioned several Christians that were at Rome, and he mentioned them by name. But he did not mention Peter. According to the popish claims Peter was in Rome when Paul wrote this letter. Strange indeed that Paul did not mention Peter. Peter never claimed any relation to Rome. Paul wrote several letters from Rome, but in none of them did he mention Peter even once! The book of Acts tells us about some of the travels of the apostle Peter, and mentions his going to small, relatively insignificant towns and villages, but it does not mention his going to Rome. There is no Bible evidence that Peter ever saw Rome. Indeed it teaches that he was in other places when the traditions of men say he was in Rome.

CHAPTER XIII

The Sabbath and The Law

WHAT ABOUT THE SABBATH?

The Lord God gave to a family of people called the Israelites a law. In the Old Testament this law is called: The law; The law of God; The law of Moses; etc. (Nehemiah 8.) This law was given through Moses on Mount Sinai about 1500 years before Christ was born. The central structure of this law was the ten commandments. One of these ten commandments concerned the keeping of the seventh day of the week as a sabbath day for the Israelites. The word "sabbath" is from the Hebrew word which meant "day of rest."

Some contend that we as Christians should still observe the seventh day of the week as the sabbath. When we insist that the Lord Jesus took the law of Moses out of the way and nailed it to his cross when he died on Calvary, it is argued that Jesus did do away with the law of Moses, but he did not abrogate the law of God, which is the ten commandment law. Therefore, these say that since one of the ten commandments concerns the keeping of the seventh day of the week as the sabbath, we are to still keep the seventh day.

The Bible makes no distinction whatever between the "law of Moses" and the "law of God." (Remember Nehemiah chapter 8.) To defend a false doctrine some write long chapters and make long speeches trying to make a distinction which God's word does not make. The law concerning the keeping of the seventh day as the sabbath was abolished in the death of Jesus. (Eph. 2: 11-17; Col. 2: 14-17.) Christians met on the first day of the week (Sunday) to break bread. (Acts 20: 7.) Jesus was raised from the dead on the first day of the week. (Luke 24.)

WAS THE SABBATH OBSERVED BEFORE THE EXODUS?

It is contended that we should keep the seventh day sabbath because it was kept even before the law of Moses was given at Mt. Sinai. It is argued that the sabbath was kept from the time of Adam and Eve. To prove such a contention this verse is used as authority for such an argument: "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." (Gen. 2: 3.)

Moses wrote the foregoing about 1500 B.C. In this verse, Moses does not say when God sanctified the seventh day, but he does tell why he sanctified it. He sanctified it because "in it he had rested." This is past tense. God did not sanctify the seventh day as a day for people to observe at the time he rested in it, but he sanctified it at a later time because in it he had rested! Actually, God sanctified

the seventh day and gave it as a day for his people to observe at Mt. Sinai. In a prayer of some Levites recorded in Nehemiah chapter nine we learn when God blessed and sanctified and made known the sabbath. "Thou comest down also upon Sinai and spakest with them from heaven, and gave them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: and made known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandest them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant." (Neh. 9: 14.) Before the law was given at Mt. Sinai the people did not know about keeping the seventh day as a sabbath, otherwise God could not have made it known unto them. At Mt. Sinai God sanctified or set aside the seventh day as a sabbath for the Israelites because in the seventh day he *had rested*.

"DEAD TO THE LAW"

"Wherefore, my brethern, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him that is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. 7: 4.) Compare this with the preceding verse and you will see that we as Christians are loosed from the law of Moses just as a wife is loosed from her husband when he dies.

It is argued that it is the law of Moses that we are dead to, and not the law of God, or the ten commandment law, and that since the law concerning the keeping of the seventh day sabbath is one of the ten commandments, we are therefore still to observe the seventh day sabbath, because the ten

commandment law was not abolished in the death of Jesus.

This argument is false because there is no distinction in the Bible between the law of Moses and the law of God. Both of the titles are used over and over to refer to the same law. For a classic example of this read Nehemiah chapter eight.

The law from which we are loosed that is mentioned in Romans chapter seven is the law that said: "Thou shall not covet." (Rom. 7: 7.) But, this command is one of the ten commandments. So, we are dead to the ten commandment law, or we are loosed from it. This does not mean that we as Christians can covet, steal, etc. We have a new law, the gospel. In the gospel we are taught not to covet, not to steal, etc. But we are not taught in the gospel to keep the seventh day sabbath. There are some laws in the gospel which were in the law of Moses. But, we live by them because they are in the blood sealed covenant of king Jesus, and not because they were a part of the law from which we are loosed. There are many laws in the gospel which were not in the law of Moses.

PAUL AND THE SABBATH

In the Book of Acts several references are made to the apostle Paul's entering into the Jewish synagogues in various places on the sabbath day and preaching. This action is held by some as proof that Paul kept the sabbath. However, Paul did not enter the synagogues to keep the sabbath, but to teach the people that they were no longer to keep

the law of Moses which Christ abolished in his death. (Col. 2: 14-16; Eph. 2: 12-16.) As a result of Paul's preaching in the synagogues such reports as the following were made by Luke: "And Crispus the chief ruler of the synagogues believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized." (Acts 18: 8.) Crispus was baptized too. (1 Cor. 1: 14.) "Believing on the Lord" to the saving of the soul includes being baptized. The Book of Acts abundantly demonstrates this fact.

Paul continued in Corinth a year and six months teaching the people the word of God. (Acts 18: 11.) The Jews made insurrection against him and charged that he taught the people to worship God contrary to the law. (Acts 18: 13.) This is proof that Paul was not in the synagogues to observe the Jewish sabbath; but he was in them to teach the people to quit following the law that Christ abolished in his death, and to teach them to start following the law of Christ which is the gospel. If people follow the law of Christ they cannot follow the law of Moses and keep the seventh day sabbath.

THE SABBATH IN PAUL'S LETTERS

Paul wrote at least thirteen letters in the New Testament. He mentioned the sabbath just one time in these letters. In this one reference he told brethren in Christ not to keep the sabbath.

Speaking of what Christ had done, Paul said: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took

it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days." (Col. 2: 14-16.) "Sabbath days" of this text is translated from Greek "sabbaton" which is genitive plural and literally means "of sabbaths." It is argued by some that there were sabbaths other than the seventh day sabbath, and that Paul had reference to these instead of the seventh day sabbath. However, since Paul used the plural "sabbaths" and did not except the seventh day sabbath he must have included it in his plural "sabbaths."

Jesus blotted out and nailed to his cross the ordinances which bound certain obligations on the Jewish people with respect to certain meats, drinks, holydays, new moons, keeping of the sabbath, etc. That is why Paul told the Colossians not to allow any man to bind upon them such laws, or judge them with respect to such.

Christ was raised from the grave upon the first day of the week. (Luke 24: 1, 7, 13, 21.) Christ established his church upon the first day of the week. (Acts 2.) The disciples met upon the first day of the week to break bread. (Acts 20: 7.) Christians were commanded to give in the cause of Christian service on the first day of the week. (1 Cor. 16: 1-3.) The first day of the week is now called Sunday.

CHAPTER XIV

Miscellaneous

PREDESTINATION

God has predestined that those who are disobedient to him shall be eternally lost. (Matt. 25.) God predetermined the way people could be saved through his Son Jesus Christ. When one meets the conditions of pardon outlined in the gospel of Christ he is saved like God predetermined that men could be saved. Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him. (Heb. 5: 8, 9.) "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2: 38.) When men thus obey Christ they are saved like God planned or predetermined that men could be saved. Men cannot be saved in any other way except the way that God planned or predestined. Such statements as: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable with him" (Acts 10: 34, 35), prove that God did not predestine individuals to be eternally lost or saved, but that each man determines his own des-

tiny. Anyone who wants to be saved can be saved. The gospel of Christ is a "whosoever will" gospel.

Many people go through life thinking that they will be saved if God wants them to be saved regardless of what they do about it, and that if God intends for them to be lost they can do nothing about it. Such false conceptions concerning salvation will cause many to be lost. God is not willing that any should perish. (2 Pet. 3: 9.) God would have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2: 4.)

God predestined that righteous people who live faithfully to him unto the end shall be saved eternally in heaven. (Matt. 10: 22.)

PRINCIPLE BEFORE PERSON

Many judge whether a thing is right or wrong on the basis of the number who think it is right or wrong. Some religious teachings are accepted only because others accept the teachings. With many it is not a matter of whether the Bible teaches what they believe and practice; they think that if multitudes believe and practice a thing that is the proof that it is right. God speed the day when more and more people will stand for what the Word of God teaches; for what is right, regardless of how many may not accept it, or may not think it is right. God speed the day when more and more people will stand against that which is unauthorized by Christ; that which is not right, regardless of how many may be for it. To go to heaven people must stand for what God teaches. Yielding to the sentiment of the

masses, when the masses are wrong will cause many to be lost in hell.

Some think that one does not have the spirit of Christ if he talks of hell. But the Bible tells us much about hell, and Jesus Christ said more about it than any other Bible spokesman! Some of his most graphic language was used in describing hell! He taught that hell is real! He taught that hell is eternal! He taught that after death and the judgment men would go there who did not put him and his cause first. Do not be swerved by opinions and popular concepts, dear reader, but study the Bible to see what it teaches. Do not study it to see if you can make it mean that which will fit the ideas and practices of men who do not follow the Bible. If you do this you will wrest the scriptures to your own destruction. (2 Pet. 3: 16.) Jesus said much about putting him and his cause first in our lives. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and these things shall be added unto you. He that loveth Father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. He that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." (Matt. 10: 37.) To go to heaven you will have to put Christ and his truth, and his kingdom (church) first! You will have to put principle before person. People may turn against you if you stand for what is right; that may be one of the greatest sacrifices you will have to make in order to go to heaven.

"OLD TIME RELIGION"

Much is said about "old time religion"; people

say they want "the old time religion," and some think theirs is that kind when it may not be as old as they think, or it might be older than they realize. Religion can be too old, and it can fail to be old enough. Most people mean by "old time religion" the kind where people get excited, and have emotional upsurges and feel exceedingly happy. The religion of many people is too old. They practice things that were authorized by God in the law of Moses, such as the playing of instrumental music in their worship, but which are not authorized by Christ in his blood sealed covenant. The law of Moses was abolished in the death of Christ. Much of the New Testament was written to show this fact. The Book of Hebrews, for an example, was written to show this truth; so was the Book of Galatians. If Christians try to justify their practices by the law of Moses, they fall from Grace. (Gal. 5: 4.) If people practice in their religion that which was commanded in the law of Moses, but not in the law of Christ, then their religion is too old!

Others practice things in their religion that originated in the dark ages, at the time when the Bible was not in the hands of the common people, but locked in the confines of a diabolical system with headquarters in Rome. Therefore, the people did not know what God wanted them to know! When people do not have the light of the Bible there is no way of telling what they may do. The excitement and confusion that characterizes many religious services is without Bible backing. Much of that done in religion today originated in the minds of men who lived in the dark ages, a time when the Bible

was little known; a time when many hardly knew such a book existed. Such religion is not old enough. Denominationalism and the "mourner's bench" system of "getting saved" came out of the dark ages. There is no Bible for either. Much of the religion of today is either too old, or not old enough.

RELIGION THAT IS JUST OLD ENOUGH

Just because religion may be "old time religion" does not prove that it is right in God's sight. Religion can be too old, or not old enough. The religion that is just right, or that is just old enough, is the religion that is patterned after God's order in the New Testament. One does not "get religion" if he follows Christ but his religion is that which he does in obedience to Christ. (James 1: 27.) The religion that pleases God, that is just old enough, that is pure and undefiled before God, is that which a man lives when he follows the gospel of Christ. The literal meaning of religion is: "to bind again." We bind ourselves to God, and keep ourselves bound to him, only as we do his will as revealed to us through Christ's gospel. (Heb. 1: 1.)

For your religion to be just old enough you will have to hear the gospel of Christ; you will accept the fact that he is God's Son, and that you are lost in sin without him. You will have to, upon this faith, repent of your sins (turn from them) and be baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins. (Acts 2: 38.) When you have done this you will be a Christian, a member of the church that Christ es-

tablished; a member of God's family! (Acts 2: 38-47.) You will then have to continue steadfastly as a servant of your Master. You will meet regularly with your brethren and worship God in Spirit and in truth. (John 4: 24.) You will teach others and try to bring them to Christ and help them to understand the undenominational religion of the New Testament. As a member of God's family, when you sin, you will confess that to your Father, and through Christ ask God to forgive you, and he will. (1 John 1: 7-10.) You will contend earnestly for the one gospel and the one way of salvation that is revealed therein. (Jude 3.) You will not belong to a denomination, for Christ condemns religious division. If your religion is just old enough you will be just a Christian, and the way for you to know how to be just that is outlined in the New Testament.

THREE SALVATIONS

Some people think that when one is saved he is saved in such a way that he can never be lost. However, the New Testament teaches three salvations.

(1) One is saved from past, or alien sins when he by faith does what God requires of him. That is the salvation Jesus was talking about when he said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) It is the same salvation that the Holy Spirit by the mouth of the apostle referred to when he told believers to "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins." (Acts 2: 38.) It is the salvation of Acts 22: 16 where Saul was

told to "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." After one is thus saved from his alien sins, or after one thus becomes a Christian, he can still sin.

(2) When a child of God sins, he must ask the Father in heaven to forgive him. A child of God who sinned was told by the apostle Peter to repent and pray that he might be forgiven. (Acts 8: 22.) Of Christians the New Testament says: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1: 9.) Some preachers tell alien sinners to confess their sins and ask God to forgive them, and then quote 1 John 1: 9 as a proof text for such instruction. But this passage sums up the responsibility of erring children of God. Alien sinners were told by inspired preachers to believe the gospel, repent of their sins, and be baptized for the remission of their sins. When a child of God errs from the truth he must turn from the error of his way back to the Lord if he expects to be saved in heaven. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (James 5: 19, 20.)

(3) Jesus said: "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." (Matt. 10: 22.) Being saved in Heaven is the third kind of salvation under consideration. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give dilligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you

abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1: 10, 11.)

YOU SHOULD HEAR THE GOSPEL

Some of the world's most daring adventures have been centered around the lives and tasks of those who have preached the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible contains many passages that put great stress on the preaching of the gospel. Men have endured much to preach the Lord's word. Why should the gospel be preached, and why is it such an urgent work? Why should people hear the gospel of our Lord?

You should hear the gospel because:

1. It is God's power to save. (Rom. 1: 16.)
2. Therein is revealed God's standard of what is right in moral and religious life. (Rom. 1: 17.)
3. It is the word that endureth forever. (1 Pet. 1: 25.)
4. It was given by God's grace; therefore when one is saved by the gospel, he is saved by God's grace. (Acts 20: 24.)
5. It tells the story of Jesus; the greatest story ever told. It tells us about Jesus living the perfect life; about his dying the shameful death at the hands of sinful men. The gospel relates the glorious story of his resurrection and his ascension to heaven. Indeed, the gospel is the greatest story of love that man has ever heard. (1 Cor. 15: 1-4.)
6. It contains what man must do to be saved. It tells man that he must obey God. Man must obey the gospel. (2 Thess. 1: 7-9.)

7. It contains hope for those who are not moved away from it. (Col. 1: 23.)

8. It is so important that Jesus commanded that it be preached to every person in every nation. (Matt. 28: 18-20; Mark 16: 15-16.)

9. It is so important that neither angel, apostle, or any man can change it without being accursed. (Gal. 1: 8, 9.)

10. You will be lost eternally if you do not hear it, obey it, and thus become a member of the church that it tells you about. The only church in which you can be a member if you follow nothing but the gospel is the church that you can read about in the gospel as revealed in the New Testament.

THE ROLE OF KNOWLEDGE

The Christian religion is a religion of learning. One's participation in the blessings of God as manifested and made available through Christ and his gospel is proportionate to his knowledge of the things that God wants him to know.

When the law of Moses was in effect, God's people were often in distress because of a lack of knowledge. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." (Hos. 4: 6.) This destruction did not come for lack of knowing what they could not know, for the same text says: "Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you."

We should not be as concerned about the unknowable, or the unimportant things, as we should be about what we can know but do not know because we have not used our opportunities to know.

Hambone is credited with having said: "Sum pepul wury bout things they don't understan in de Bible, but ah wurries bout what I duz understan." Are we doing as well as we know?

Being made free from sin is inseparably connected to knowing. Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 32.) Perhaps, "knowing" in this verse embraces more than just grasping facts; it must include knowing the truth in the measure that one knows it by obedient experience by which is proven to him the priceless value of the truth.

Faith that saves is connected with knowledge. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10: 17.) Faith that does not come like this is the kind to get rid of.

Being baptized right is an impossibility without the knowledge of certain truths. "Go teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28: 19.)

KNOWLEDGE IS INDISPENSABLE

Doing what the Lord expects the baptized to do involves knowing. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world?" (Matt. 28: 20.)

Effective and proper zeal is exercised only when one knows the right things. Paul said his Jewish brethren who had not accepted Christ had a zeal for God, but that it was not according to knowledge.

(Rom. 10: 1.) The zealous who did not know the right things have caused more grief and pain than those who had no zeal. It is not enough just to be zealous; it is not enough just to be workers. Termites are workers!

God's grace and peace are multiplied through our knowing certain matters. "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ our Lord." (2 Pet. 1: 2.)

All things that have to do with life and godliness are connected with knowledge of God and his word. (2 Pet. 1: 3.)

We have to know some things before we can be made free from or escape the pollutions of sin. (2 Pet. 2: 19.)

President James Madison said: "Knowledge will ever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." Thomas Jefferson is supposed to have said: "If a people expect to be free and ignorant at the same time, they expect that which has never been." Even political, economic and domestic freedom are joined to knowledge. The blessings of God we enjoy in a free society, we enjoy in spite of those who "reject knowledge." To the extent that people are ignorant of what they need to know, to that same extent they are enslaved. Let us not enslave ourselves!

The foregoing facts concerning the role of knowledge are opposed to the philosophy of one preacher a brother told me about. This preacher was preaching for some sectarian group and he was bragging about his ignorance and said he prayed

the Lord would make him "ignorerter." Whereupon, a man spoke from the audience and said: "Now, Lord, you have a job on your hands."

KNOWLEDGE IS NOT ENOUGH

The church of Christ ought to be the greatest teaching institution in the world; it also ought to be the greatest practicing institution in the world.

Studying the Bible several hours each day for many years can be a very rewarding experience, provided it is accompanied with the practicing of what is learned. Preachers should not become so involved with learning that they never learn the art of personal contact with people whom they can influence with what they learn. We are to learn in order to save ourselves and those that hear us. (1 Tim. 4: 16.) We have to make contact with people and gain their respect and confidence before we can expect them to learn from us.

The person who boasts of how much he has read in the Bible but has to be begged to be faithful to the Lord, and still is not faithful, has nothing to boast about, but rather should fear. He may be worse off in the judgment than he who knew little or nothing about the truth.

The Lord Jesus was not just a teacher, he also practiced what he taught. "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach." (Acts 1: 1.) The reason Jesus could teach others how to pray was because he often prayed. He could tell others that it is more blessed to give than to receive because he was

always giving, and he finally gave himself. He could teach others to love their enemies because he loved his. He loved the ones who killed him. He loved those whose spit dried in his face while he carried the cross upon which their madness made him die.

THE WAY

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14: 6.) There is more in the Bible about "the way" than what is in this verse. Jesus also said: "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7: 14.) Some seek to discredit the necessity of being in the Lord's Church by saying that the church is not the way, but Jesus is the way. But, those who reason like this do not know what the Bible teaches about the way. They do err, not knowing the scriptures. (Matt. 22: 29.)

One cannot be in the way without being in the body of Christ, his church. (Col. 1: 18.) Paul said he persecuted "this way," and he meant the church. (Acts 22: 4.) For, he persecuted the church. (Acts 8: 3.) Therefore, when Paul persecuted the church he persecuted the way. After Paul was converted he preached the way that he had persecuted. At Ephesus he disputed and persuaded the things concerning the kingdom of God. (Acts 19: 8.) But the next verse says: "But when divers (different ones) were hardened, and believed not, but spake of that way before the multitude, he departed from them; . . ." (Acts 19: 9.) Here it is seen that the

way and the kingdom are the same. From all these passages we must conclude that "the way," "the church," and "the kingdom of God" are all the same. One cannot be in the way without being in the Lord's church which is his family, the undenominational church that we read about in the Bible! One cannot go to the Father except through Christ, and the way to go through Christ is by being subject to him. But one cannot be subject to him without obeying his gospel. One must believe the gospel, repent of his sins, and be baptized into Christ, into his body which is his church. When one has thus obeyed the gospel he will be in the way, and not until then. (Mark 16: 16; Acts 2: 38.)

The way which is the church is not broad, but it is narrow; it is the way wherein all must worship in spirit and in truth, and not as men may think or say. It is the way wherein all are to be one, as the Father and Christ are one. (John 17: 17-23.)

THE TRUTH

Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth and the life . . ." (John 14: 6.) There is more in the Bible on the subject of "the way" than is found in John 14: 6.) This is also true with the subject of "the truth." Jesus could say: "I am the way" because he is the head of the body, the church. (Col. 1: 18.) This church is called "the way" in Acts 8: 3 and Acts 22: 4. Jesus could say: "I am the truth" because he was "full of grace and truth." (John 1: 14.) He brought the truth which is the gospel. (Eph. 1: 13.) Jesus lived the truth. (John 6: 38;

17: 17.) Hence he could say: "I am the truth." But the Bible teaches more than this about the truth. The truth is God's word. (John 17: 17.) The truth is the gospel of salvation. (Rom. 1: 16; Eph. 1: 13.) Jesus said: "He that doeth the truth cometh to the light . . ." (John 3: 21.) This just means those who obey the gospel come to the light, or come to Christ who is the light.

Peter told some of God's people this: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (1 Pet. 1: 22.) Peter told these same people that they had been saved by being baptized. (1 Pet. 3: 21.) Peter told the people on the day of Pentecost who believed the gospel to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38.) Hence people purify their souls by being baptized into Christ where the blood Christ shed saves from sin, or purifies. The truth has been given to us by inspired men. They received it from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles to guide them into all truth, hence the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of truth." (John 16: 13.) This is why Peter said that obeying the truth is through the Spirit. (1 Pet. 1: 22.) The Spirit gave the world the truth through men who wrote by the Holy Spirit's guidance. (1 Cor. 2: 10-13.) Jesus said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 32.) No man can be made free by Jesus who will not believe and obey the truth.

THE LIFE

Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14: 6.) John 14: 6 does not contain all that the Bible says about the way and the truth. Also, observe that there is more in the Bible on "the life" than is said in John 14: 5. Speaking of Christ, John 1: 4 says: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." The kind of life that leads to everlasting life is in Christ Jesus. Christ said: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6: 63.) What Jesus said produces spiritual life; his gospel is the only thing that will produce life in one who is dead in sin. When others quit him, the Lord asked the apostles if they were going to quit also. Then Peter said: "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6: 68.) In John 5: 28, 29, Jesus told about the resurrection of the physical body, or those dead physically. But in John 5: 25, Jesus spoke of the resurrection of those dead in sin. He said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Before a man who is dead in sin can live, or have the life that is in Christ, he will have to hear the voice of the Son of God, which is the gospel of the Son of God.

The gospel is God's power to save. (Rom. 1: 16.) That is why Jesus said: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that

believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16: 15, 16.) An angel came to Cornelius and told him to send for a preacher, the apostle Peter; and the angel told Cornelius that Peter would tell him words whereby “thou and all thy house shall be saved.” (Acts 11: 14.)

Peter preached Jesus to Cornelius and his house and commanded them to be baptized in water in the name of Christ, and that was in order that they might have the remission of sins. (Acts 10: 47, 48; 2: 38.) We are baptized into Christ where life is. “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Rom. 6: 3, 4.)

CALLED OF GOD

No man can be saved without being called of God. Paul addressed the Roman Christians as: “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints.” (Rom. 1: 7.) Saints were living people. Saints are Christians. Any person who is a Christian is a saint. “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful.” (Col. 3: 15.) God does not call people into many different bodies; he does not call people into denominations, but into the one body which is the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Col. 1: 18.) The word church comes from the Greek word that means “the called out,” hence, one

cannot be one of God's "called out" without being in the Lord's church. In fact at the same time one is called of God he becomes thereby a member of the Lord's church. It is right and proper to talk about obeying the gospel, or to talk about being saved. But we should just as freely speak concerning God's calling people. When one is saved from his sins we can correctly say that God has called that one into his family, the church that we can read about in the Bible. Paul said this of God: "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling." (2 Tim. 1: 9.) There are many passages that affirm that God calls people.

How does God call people? Paul answered this question: "Whereunto, he (God) called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thess. 2: 14.) It does not matter how God may do a thing; the fact remains that God does it. God calls people in this Christian age in one way only, and that is through the gospel of his Son. This call is found in the Bible; even though this call is found in a Book, it is nonetheless God's call. God called the people on the Day of Pentecost by the preaching of the gospel; God is still calling people by the preaching of the gospel that was preached then. A perverted gospel is not God's call, but the devil's. After telling the crowd on Pentecost to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Peter then said: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2: 39.)

Those who are called should act in keeping with

the dignity of their calling. They should realize that God has called them! They should not have to be urged to attend the services of the church; they should instead be anxious to meet regularly with their fellow saints and worship God in spirit and in truth.

GOD'S POWER

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Rom. 1: 16.) Because the gospel is God’s power to save souls from sin, we preach the gospel. There is no power given of God to save those who will not accept the gospel plan of salvation. No one can ever be the same after hearing the gospel; it is God’s power to save!

Even though the gospel is God’s power to save, it cannot save until it is believed and obeyed. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16: 16.) “And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.” (Acts 18: 8.) This verse explains what it means to “believe in the Lord.” It means that one must obey the Lord by being baptized into him. (Rom. 6: 3.) No one can be saved by God’s power who will not believe the gospel, repent of his sins, and be baptized into Christ where the blood of Christ washes away all sin.

The word “power” in Rom. 1: 16 is a translation of the Greek word “dunamas.” “Dynamic,” “dynamo”, and “dynamite” come from the same word.

The gospel is God's dynamite to save! But in spite of all the power of the gospel, the gospel will not save unless people zealously learn the things revealed in the gospel. The all-powerful gospel is rendered powerless in the lives of those who indifferently and carelessly fail to hear it, believe it, and obey it.

“JUDGE NOT”

Gospel preachers are divinely enjoined to tell people what the Bible teaches. When some are told what they must do, what they must not do, and what they must quit doing, in order to go to heaven, they reply that the Bible says in Matthew 7: 1, “Judge not.” However, to thus use this passage is to grossly misuse it! To whom was Jesus speaking? He was talking to the hypocrite who judged a person for his little fault (the mote) when this same hypocrite was far more guilty than the one he judged! For Jesus said: “And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or, how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.” (Matt. 7: 3-5.)

Actually, Jesus here taught that we are to point out another's errors and show him the right way, if we are not ourselves more guilty than those we try to correct, or judge! The word “mote” means, literally, “a small particle of dust or wood.” In this

lesson, "the mote" signifies a little fault. The word "beam" means, literally, "a big piece or bar of wood or iron." In this lesson "the beam" symbolizes the many faults of the man who found a little fault in another. The man with many faults should not try to "judge" or correct one with a little fault. Consequently, Matthew 7: 1 does not have remote reference to the correcting influence of preaching that is done by faithful gospel preachers and other Christians. We must show with scripture that people will be lost who do not do what the Bible teaches that they must do. Jesus said: "Judge righteous judgment." (John 7: 24.) We are divinely enjoined to persuade men to live by God's standard of righteousness, or right doing which is revealed in the gospel of Christ. (Rom. 1: 17.) We must: "Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine (teaching)." (2 Tim. 4: 2.)

MARRIAGE

"And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read that he which made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore, they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives; but from the be-

ginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." (Matt. 19: 4-9.)

The world has experienced a lot of woe because God's will concerning marriage has not always been respected and followed. There has been a great break down in respect for God's sacred institution of marriage. One of the five reasons the historian Gibbon gave for the fall of the Roman Empire was the rapid increase in the divorce rate. An average of nearly thirty per cent of marriages in the United States end in divorce. This should be alarming to any nation. Just because a government allows divorce for most any cause is not proof that God is pleased with such divorces. Young people should be taught that marriage is supposed to last until the death of one of the partners in the contract. All who participate in marriage, and all who anticipate marriage should resolve to get along; they should cultivate the pattern of life that will be conducive to their marriage enduring all the problems that may arise.

At a University of California symposium in San Francisco on January 26, 1964 a doctor said: "Considering man as he is, as a mammal, monogamous marriage is a bizarre and unnatural state. In a state of nature the normal buck, bull, stallion, or primate collects, dominates, protects, and impregnates as many females as he possibly can." This is a sample of the extreme disrespect for God's laws of marriage which is so common. The doctor's senti-

ment shows the evil influence of the doctrine of evolution that reduces man to no more than an animal.

“THE THIEF ON THE CROSS”

“And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23: 42, 43.) Denominational people, particularly denominational preachers, have been quoting the foregoing scripture in an attempt to get around the teaching of the Bible on the subject of water baptism. If denominational preachers would point people to “Christ on the cross” instead of pointing them to “the thief on the cross,” they would do well. Jesus said to the apostles: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16: 15, 16.) He did not say: “He that believeth and looks to the example of the thief on the cross shall be saved.” He did not say: “He that believeth and is not baptized shall be saved, because the thief on the cross was not baptized.” Actually, we do not know that the thief had not been baptized. He may have been, he may not have been; one can prove that he was baptized just as easily as one can prove that he was not; neither can be proven!

Preachers are without excuse who try to make void all that is said in the Bible on the subject of water baptism by introducing the case of the thief on the cross. These preachers should know that

the thief did not live in the Christian dispensation. When Jesus told the thief: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise," the Mosaic age had not ended, and he could exercise his power to forgive and save as he saw fit. The testament of Christ became of force after his death. (Heb. 9: 16, 17.) In the testament of Christ the law of forgiveness for believers is found in Acts 2: 38; the Holy Spirit told the believers on the day of Pentecost to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Regardless of how many appeals are made to the case of the thief on the cross, God's command for believers to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins is still binding. The day of Pentecost that followed the resurrection of Christ was the beginning day of the Christian dispensation. On that day the gospel of Christ was preached for the first time in his name. (Luke 24: 47.) Do not look to "the thief on the cross" for salvation, sinner friend, but instead learn the plan of salvation that is binding in the Christian dispensation; look to Christ, and put your trust in him. However, one cannot trust in Christ if he does not believe what Christ said. Remember, he said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10: 12, 13.) There is no question but that people

must call upon the name of the Lord to be saved; the question is: How does one call upon the name of the Lord? Therefore, Paul raised the following questions in the next verse in Romans chapter ten. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" The obvious answer to these questions is that one cannot call on the name of the Lord without first hearing and believing the gospel.

In verse 16 he said: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" Paul had said: "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Then he said: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel." That was the same as saying: "They have not all called on the name of the Lord." Hence to "call on the name of the Lord," and to "obey the gospel" is to do the same thing. We know that saying "Lord, Lord" is not the way to call on the name of the Lord, for Jesus said: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7: 21.) Often, Jesus emphasized the importance of doing God's will. He came down from heaven not to do his own will, but to do the will of God. (John 6: 38.) It was altogether fitting and proper therefore that he do all he could to get others to do God's will. He certainly made it clear that just saying "Lord, Lord" was not a substitute for doing the will of God.

CALLING ON THE LORD AND BAPTISM

Calling upon the name of the Lord, and "doing the will of the Father" are the same thing. Paul said: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel." He then said that Esaias (Isaiah) said they would not all obey the gospel when Esaias said: "Lord who hath believed our report (preaching)?" (Rom. 10: 16.) Here "believed," and "obeyed" are used interchangeably as those words are so often used in the Bible. These same Roman brethren had been saved or made free from sin by obeying the form of doctrine delivered them. (Rom. 6: 17, 18.) They had been baptized into Christ and into his death (the benefits of his death). (Rom. 6: 3, 4.) Hence in calling upon the name of the Lord to be saved they had been baptized into Christ. Paul himself was told to: "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22: 16.)

On the day of Pentecost, Peter said that Joel had said of the Christian age . . . "that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Acts 2: 21) His audience soon asked: "What shall we do?" (Acts 2: 37.) Peter told them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38.) "Remission of sins" in Acts 2: 38 is the same thing as "shall be saved" in Acts 2: 21. Therefore, the way for alien sinners to call upon the name of the Lord was given in Acts 2: 38 when Peter said repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Everyone must appeal to the name or authority of

Jesus Christ in order to be saved. He who rejects the answer Peter gave in Acts 2: 38 cannot call upon the name of the Lord, for he thus rejects the name of the Lord. For one who is not a Christian to "call on the name of the Lord" he must rely completely on the Lord and his authority, and in obedience to the Lord he must turn from his sins confessing Jesus as the Lord and be baptized into the Lord to reach the blood of the Lord. (Rom. 6: 3, 4.)

JOHN THE BAPTIZER

Some who did not believe the truth about Jesus believed something more difficult to believe; they believed Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead. (Matt. 14: 2; 16: 13.) It was a compliment to Jesus for people to think he was John, for John was a great man. "For I say unto you, among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." John died before the kingdom of God, the Lord's church was established, so he never enjoyed its blessings. For that reason those least in the kingdom are greater in that they have greater blessings and advantages than John had.

The term "Baptist" is found fifteen times in the New Testament. Every time it is used it refers to a man sent from God whose name was John. (John 1: 6.) It is never used in the New Testament to refer to those whom John baptized; they are called "John's disciples." The American Bible Union Translation uses "Immerser" instead of "Baptist"

in these texts. "Baptist" as used in the New Testament comes from the Greek word, "baptistes" which is defined in Thayer's Greek Lexicon as follows: "A baptizer; one who administers the rite of baptism; the surname of John, the forerunner of Christ."

John the Baptist's work was for the benefit of the Jewish people who had gone away from following the word of God that had been given them by Moses and the prophets. He told those people to repent of their sins, and he baptized them for the remission of their sins. "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." The baptism that John preached and administered was "baptism unto repentance" (Matt. 3: 11), in that it was baptism into a life of repentance. Different groups asked John what they would have to do in order to live after their baptism in such a way that their lives would be consistent with their baptism and its purpose. He told them the things they would have to do. Hence it was "baptism unto repentance." (Luke 3: 7-14.)

"GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNER"

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18: 13.) A publican was a Jew who collected taxes from the Jews for the Roman government. The Jews lived under Roman rule at the

time of Christ. The Law of Moses and the Jewish dispensation ended when Christ died on the cross. A great portion of the New Testament was written to show this great truth. The Book of Hebrews was written for this purpose; also the Book of Galatians. The publican who prayed: "God, be merciful to me a sinner" was an erring child of God in the Jewish dispensation. He was in the temple when he thus prayed. (Luke 18: 10.) He was a Jew, otherwise he would not have been in the temple. A Pharisee went into the temple with him. To say this publican was not a Jew would be to say that a Pharisee went into the temple with a Gentile. Imagine that!

Even in the present dispensation, the Christian dispensation which began on the Day of Pentecost an erring child of God should say "God be merciful to me a sinner." John the apostle wrote to Christians and said: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1: 9.) An erring child of God in the Christian dispensation (the church age) was told by the apostle Peter to "repent and pray" for forgiveness of his sin. (Acts 8: 22.) But no where in the New Testament is there an example of where one who had not become a child of God was told to "pray the sinners prayer." From the first day of the Christian age, the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) people were told to believe in Christ as the Son of God, and those who believed were told to repent and be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 38; Rom. 6: 3.)

PENTECOST

According to the second chapter of Acts, the Lord Jesus established his church on the first Pentecost following his resurrection. The day of Pentecost was a Jewish religious festival day. Instruction concerning its establishment is found in Leviticus chapter 23. This day was one of the three major feast days of the Jewish year. The other two were: the Passover, and the Day of Atonment. The day of Pentecost was called "the feast of weeks" by those of Old Testament times. The Old Testament does not refer to this day as the day of Pentecost, because "Pentecost" is a Greek term that means "fiftieth day."

Pentecost came on the fiftieth day after the Sabbath of the Passover. The Jews came from "every nation under heaven" to Jerusalem to observe the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2: 5.) God, in the same wisdom by which he weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, selected the day of Pentecost that followed the resurrection of Christ to be the day to have the gospel preached the first time in the name of his Son. (Luke 24: 46.) The gospel is the "seed of the kingdom" (Luke 8: 11), and the kingdom is the church (Matt. 16: 18, 19; Col. 1: 13; 3: 15; 1: 18). The church was established on the day of Pentecost, but Pentecost was not, and is not a Christian holiday.

PREACHING

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the fool-

ishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 1: 21.) In this passage, Paul did not mean that God chose foolish preaching to save people. He meant, instead, that God selected that which the world considered to be low, base, and foolish to save men. It is not preaching that saves, but preaching of the truth, preaching of Christ and him crucified. To preach Christ and him crucified includes the preaching of his mission; his dignity; his person; his works; his doctrine; his atonement; and his church. Paul preached all of these things in preaching Christ and him crucified. He told the Corinthians that he determined to know nothing among them save Christ and him crucified. (1 Cor. 2: 1, 2.)

If preaching saves it must be the kind that Paul and the other inspired men did. "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. As we said before, so say I now again, If any other man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1: 8, 9.) Paul's warning was not just to the Galatians; he also instructed Timothy in similar fashion. "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine." (1 Tim. 1: 3.)

Some preachers say: "You do not have to be what I am, and believe what I preach to be saved." Friends, if one felt this way about his preaching there would be no reason for his preaching. The man who says you do not have to believe what he

preaches, virtually says that he does not preach the gospel. Preaching that does not have to be believed involves a waste of time, money, and effort, and most of all it deceives and condemns souls.

FIGHTING OTHERS

When one opposes doctrines and practices that are not taught in God's word, he may be accused of "fighting others," and he may be told that he should not fight other churches. Any man who contends earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3) will have to fight, or oppose all that is not right. The loyal servant of the Lord has to show the difference between error and truth to the best of his ability. Some may say their preacher does not fight anybody or anything. True gospel ministers have to be fighters; they have to be active soldiers of the cross. Jesus and the apostles preached against the things that were wrong. To have the spirit of Christ one must be opposed to whatever is opposed to truth and right, even if it is something religious that is not right. Carefully read the preaching of Christ and you will discover that most of his preaching was directed to religious people and for the purpose of telling them things that were not right in their religion.

The leaders and the preachers of the leading churches of the time of Jesus were the ones who had him put to death. Jesus "fought" them with the truth, the message his Father gave him. Jesus loved those people, even the ones who had him put to death, but he hated their false teachings and sinful practices. A doctor should hate a disease in a

patient, but love the patient. Jesus showed his love for people who were sin-sick by "fighting" the error that caused them to be sinners. He not only exposed every false way, but he showed the true way. Paul preached the truth to religious people with "much contention." (1 Thess. 2: 2.) He debated in one place daily for the space of three years. (Acts 19: 9.) After a life fraught with this kind of work, he said: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." (2 Tim. 4: 7.) It was because of this "fighting" that Paul expected a crown of life, as he said in the same passage. Dear reader the one who does not tell you what the Bible teaches "fights" you in the wrong way, and is a great spiritual enemy to you. Those who deceive you and mislead you, and lull you to sleep spiritually with doctrines that are not taught in the Bible are the ones who are truly against you. The man who shows you what the Bible teaches is truly for you. Love him, thank him, and appreciate him.

CHAPTER XV

Strong Drink

STRONG DRINK

“Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes. They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.” (Prov. 23: 29-32.) Drinking intoxicating (poisonous) beverages has brought untold trouble upon the earth, and many will be in hell eternally because of their drunkenness. (Gal. 5: 21, 22.) It is appalling, and causes a God-fearing man to shudder with horror to see so many places selling, and so many people drinking that which rots the brain, ruins the body, and destroys the soul. Someone may ask: “What right have you to object?” I have a right, and I am divinely obligated to object to that which does so much against man and God! I have a right to object because I am called upon to bear a part of the pain and grief of some who are victims, directly, or indirectly, of drunkenness! My family and I are in

danger every time we drive on the highway, because others drink and then they try to drive. It is sad to know that so many young people drink. I hear them laugh and brag about it! Even college students drink; both boys and girls.

Drinking alcoholic beverages has been so glamorized that many actually think it is all right to guzzle such poison. I saw a drunk young girl who had just been in a car wreck; she was cursing and crying; some of her teeth were knocked out; she looked terrible, and sounded even worse. I thought while looking at her that we should take some pictures of such scenes and publicize them on big billboards and advertise what liquor will do for humanity.

LIQUOR'S LUCRE AND LOSSES

Some are reaping enormous profits from the sale of alcoholic drinks. Just in the U.S. where there is only about five per cent of the world's population, many billions of dollars are spent each year on alcoholic drinks. While some make big profits from the use of these drinks, multitudes of others suffer great losses.

Crime is greatly increased in communities where the sale of liquor is legalized. In studies made of 882 cases of crime, 72.7 per cent of the criminals had been drinking alcohol. This study was reported in the Northwestern University Journal of Criminal Law. The criminal cases studied included rape, felonious assault, cutting, murder, shooting, robbery, burglary, larceny, auto theft, and forgery.

Warden Lou Clapp of the Idaho Penitentiary is

quoted as having said, "Ninety per cent of the men tell me they were drunk, or had been drinking when they committed the offense that sent them up."

Tax payers pay for many of the bad effects of drinking. Upton Sinclair, one of America's greatest writers, says in his monumental work, *The Cup of Fury*, that in Lost Angeles alone in one year drinking caused a known loss of \$36,500,000 in traffic accidents. What would the cost be in the nation? Some scholars have reported on the cost of caring for the alcoholics. This cost along with other costs incurred in the diabolical results of drinking manifested in crime and disease is said to be at least ten times the amount of money that is taken in by the government in the form of revenue on liquor. But, the real cost of drinking cannot be measured in dollars. Louis Cassels classically summed this up in the Louisville Courier-Journal in the June 23, 1957 issue. He said: "The real cost of alcoholism cannot be measured, because no one can put a price tag on a broken home, a brilliant career down the drain, a human life that turns into a nightmare of hang-overs, blackouts, broken promises, and uncontrollable cravings." And no one can put a price tag on one human soul lost eternally in torment! "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20:1.)

SAD TESTIMONIALS

The following sad testimonials are reported to have been made by inmates of a western penitentiary during a survey.

No. 21908—"If it wasn't for liquor I wouldn't be here. Young folks should pay more attention to

parents and not be influenced by wrong companions. Whiskey should be prohibited."

No. 21928—"I don't think I wrote that check, but I was too far under the influence of liquor to know."

No. 21923—"My advice to all is to leave drink alone. One cannot drink socially and not overdo. Every good opportunity I ever had has been lost through drinking."

No. 21952—"I would not have been in trouble had it not been for drinking. Drink is the greatest curse."

No. 21969—"Most of my drinking has been social drinking. I am certain, however, if it had not been for drinking I would not be here."

No. 21991—"I was very drunk and did not know what took place. I do not even know if I am guilty or not. I have never been in trouble when sober, only when drinking."

No. 22012—"I started to drink in the army and drank continuously overseas, if possible, and anything I could get. I was high most of the time. I was intoxicated at the time of my crime and did not really care. Every time I got drunk I got in trouble. Better leave drink alone if you want to live happily. I have lost my home, my car, and my family because of liquor."

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20: 1.) "Good understanding giveth favour; but the way of transgressors is hard." (Prov. 13: 15.)

IT WAS DONE AT GREAT NECK

“Look not thou upon the wine when it is red; when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly: at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.” (Prov. 23: 31, 32.) The celebrated author, Upton Sinclair, wrote a book a few years ago entitled: *The Cup of Fury*. In this book he tells of many famous personalities like Jack London and Henry Mencken who succumbed to the dreadful drams of the cup of fury. About fifty publishers refused to publish *The Cup of Fury* because of fear of repercussions from liquor interests. Finally, Channel Press, Inc. of Great Neck, New York published the book. Congratulations to Channel Press! Everybody should read *The Cup of Fury*.

Suppose we had in the cities of the United States where whiskey is sold as many serpents as there are bottles of strong drink in those same cities. What would we do about such a condition? I am certain we would launch the world's record serpent killing campaign. Liquor is worse than serpents for it destroys body and soul; serpents can only kill the body. Americans spend more for intoxicating drinks than they do for education and religion combined. We had better take down our sign and quit advertising as the example nation until we do better. I shudder when I think about the internal moral condition of America. I am made to realize that we continue to exist because there are some who fear God and keep his commandments. Those who serve the Lord are the only protection a nation really has.

“Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Prov. 14:34.) We continue to exist by the grace of God.

A FABLE, A “PSALM” AND SOME ADVICE

The following fable may help some to see the folly of strong drink: “Papa hog wandered down to the village brewery where he found a big puddle of liquor that had leaked out. He drank so much of it that he went home staggering and squealing wildly. Mama hog quickly got him around the barn out of sight of the baby pigs and grunted furiously: Shameless wretch, you ought to be ashamed of making a human out of yourself in front of our pigs.”

Someone wrote what has been called the “Devil’s 23rd Psalm” which says: “King Alcohol is my shepherd, I crave and want. He maketh me to lie down in mudholes; he damns my soul. He turns my car over for his name’s sake. Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of hell, I will hold to my bottle. For the devil is with me, his saloon and his beer joint, they beckon me. He prepares a table that is empty before me in the presence of my family. He anoints my head with bruises; my pocketbook is empty. Surely evil and misery shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell with the devil and his angels in hell forever.”

Another has written what seems to be some “good advice” for those who are victims of “King

Alcohol" which is as follows: "Since you say you cannot refrain from drinking, why not start a saloon in your own home? Be your only customer, and you will not have to buy a license. Give your wife \$55.00 to buy a cheap case of whiskey. There are 240 snorts in a case. Buy all your drinks from your wife at 60¢ a snort. In twelve days when the case is gone, your wife will have \$89.00 to put in the bank, and \$55.00 to start in business again. If you live ten years and die in your boots with the shakes and shall have bought all your booze from your wife, she will have \$27,085.37 on deposit, plus interest, enough to bury you respectfully, bring up your children, pay off the mortgage on the house, marry another man, and forget she ever knew you. And, if she marries another sot, she can go into business again, and make another pot of money." "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also." (Hab. 2: 15.) Neither the drunkard nor the man who provides drink can inherit the kingdom of God unless he turns from his evil unto God. (Gal. 5: 19, 20.)