

# CAROLINA LECTURES AND OUTLINES

by

Howard Winters

Published by

J. C. CHOATE PUBLICATIONS

Winona/New Delhi/Singapore

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by **J. C. Choate Publications**

First Printing in U.S.A., 2,000 copies

Typesetting in Singapore

Cover Art, Steve Choate

Order From:

**J. C. CHOATE PUBLICATIONS**

**Route 2, Box 156**

**Winona, Mississippi 38967**

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# Dedication

## TO C. W. BRADLEY

For what he has meant to the Lord's church in the Carolinas in general, to the Carolina Lectures in particular, and to me personally. No other man, living or dead, has meant so much to so many or made the impact for good that he did in his 18 years of labor in the Carolinas. The truth he preached, the example he set, the love he had, and the encouragement he gave made life more livable, work more meaningful, brotherly love more enjoyable, obstacles easier, and heaven brighter. He is truly the handiwork of God! Or to paraphrase the words of another:

A book may be written by a fool like me  
But only God can make a C. W. Bradley.

## The Publisher's Statement

In recent years a great deal of emphasis has been placed on the Lord's work in the Carolinas. One of the contributing factors to this has been the Carolina Lectures. With churches of Christ, this has been the means of bringing together not only preachers from within these states, but from other states as well.

Bro. Howard Winters, who has given years of his life to the Carolina work, has rendered a great service by not only participating in these lectures, but also by compiling a number of his speeches and outlines from several of those gatherings, so that they might be preserved in a more permanent form in this volume. Along with the sermons, a considerable amount of information on the Carolina Lectures, as well as the work in these States, has been gathered and included. This, then, will also serve to further call attention to this part of the country where much good work is being done, but where even more help is needed to fully evangelize North and South Carolina.

It is a pleasure on my part to be able to publish this book as a tribute to the workers and congregations of the Carolinas, and with the prayer that the cause of Christ there will continue to grow and spread.

J.C. Choate  
Winona, MS  
Sept. 12, 1986

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## The Carolina Lectures\*

The following lectures and outlines cover the grounds I have covered in my long years of association with the Carolina Lectures (and later the South Carolina Lectures and the North Carolina Lectures). Actually they represent only the formal lectures I have been assigned and have presented. The informal ones are innumerable. I have taken the floor in all of them that I recall and have spoken freely on any subject that came up. I have also often opened the discussions with a controversial question and then entered heartily into the discussion, discussing my views whether anyone agreed with me or not. I have often been outspoken in defense of some Bible doctrine or principle from the truth. While the lectures have never been a springboard for the hobbies of any man or group of men, no holds have been barred and no punches have been pulled. Yet I have never seen but one incident (and it occurred because of an out-of-state man who did not fully understand or appreciate the situation) that was not conducted on the highest principles of love and compassion. On the whole, the Carolina Lectures have been the most brotherly gatherings I have been associated with.

The lectures, without any question whatsoever, have been a major part of my life and preaching. And if I may say so without the appearance of boasting (and I must confess that the very best I can do, my ego is more than slightly inflated by the thought), I have spoken on the lectures more than any man living or dead (and I have heard more of them than any other being on earth). As far as the Carolina Lectures are concerned, I have been invited to speak on every lecture program but one (I was not invited to speak in 1975 when the lectures were conducted by the North Charleston, S. C. church and I did not

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\*This lecture was delivered in 1970 at the old historic Warners Chapel church in Clemmons (near Winston-Salem), N. C., which was the delightful host of the Carolina Lectures that year. Harmon Caldwell preached for Warners and assigned me this subject. The lecture is given here in outline but for those who wish to read the full manuscript, it can be found in my book, *Living Issues*, published by J. C. Choate Publications.

speaking when I was the host preacher at Burlington) since moving to the Carolinas in 1962 (and I had spoken on one while I was still living in Tennessee in 1957). On one occasion, in Greer in 1967, I was scheduled to speak on Friday but had to leave after the Wednesday sessions. I have spoken on every North Carolina Lecture to date. I did not attend the first five South Carolina Lectures. I was scheduled to speak on the fourth one in Union in 1969 but had a funeral the same afternoon I was scheduled. I do not now recall why I did not attend the remainder of the lectureship. I was invited to speak at the fifth in West Columbia but had previously scheduled a meeting for that week. But other than these few exceptions I have spoken formally on all the Carolina Lectures.

But in addition to these I have been honored to speak on a large number of local and specialized lectures, forums, and rallies. At first I considered collecting all my lectures in the Carolinas, but to have done so (I do not have a record of all of them anyway) would have enlarged the book to the point where the price would have been prohibitive. Thus I have chosen to present only the lectures (some in full manuscript and some in outline) presented at the three annual lectureships.

But why this book? There are five basic reasons (and perhaps a half dozen more minor ones) for this work in its present form, namely:

1. To publicize the Carolina Lectures. It has long been my desire to inform the brotherhood of the Carolina Lectures, their long and useful service to the Carolinas, and thus to emphasize what a regional program such as this can do for the cause of Christ. I hope thereby to encourage other sections to start and maintain more regional lecture programs. They do not cost; they pay.

2. To share the material that I have collected over the years with those who may be able to put it to a wider use. I have done a tremendous amount of study, preparation, and have gone to considerable expense to be able to present these lectures. I would, therefore, like for them to pay dividends beyond

the region for which they were originally prepared. Whether the book will be useful or not remains to be seen, but I prepared it with this end in view.

3. To collect the lectures and outlines together for my own use, benefit, and satisfaction. Before I started the book, the lectures were scattered through my papers and notes so that it would take hours to find one when I wished to refer to it. Thus for my own use I wanted them together so I could immediately turn to them when needed. They contain a large part of what I am and how I think.

4. To help me settle back into a regular pattern of work and writing after a long period of the most serious work I have probably ever done. When my book on *The Work of the Holy Spirit* was completed, I suddenly found myself in a vacuum — I was at a loss as to which way to turn or what to do. I had spent 10 years in a special study of the Holy Spirit and then an additional year in actual preparation of the book. When it was finished, I found that I had established new patterns for my life. But the work was done, and I was faced with a change of pace. I needed a cushion for that change. And so I turned to preparing these lectures as a cushion.

5. To get a brief history of the Carolina Lectures before the brotherhood. It appeared to me that perhaps the best method of doing this would be to prepare my lectures and write the history as an introduction to the book. And that is what I now turn to do.

## ORIGIN

The Carolina Lectures are said to be the longest running regional lectureship in the history of the Restoration Movement. They have continued for 35 years without a single interruption, and have become an integral part of the work of the church in the Carolinas. They are the one event to which almost every preacher in both states look forward, although recent years have seen a slight decline in the percentage of preachers who do attend on a regular basis. Only God knows the far-reaching effects the lectures have had on the thousands of lives which they



have touched during these vital 35 years. I am fully convinced that I was well within the mark when I wrote in an editorial for the May 1979 issue of *Carolina Christian*: "The Carolina Lectures have become a legend in our time. They are, without much serious doubt, the single most encouraging, edifying, and stabilizing force among the churches of Christ in the Carolinas. For 35 years they have brought scattered workers together for a few days of spiritual feasting and heavenly fellowship and have sent them back to the work with new zeal and courage. They are, and have been from their beginning in 1945, a bulwark against the onslaughts of Satan and all his evil forces."

There are two versions as to how and where the lectures began. The first indicates that they came about almost by accident. J. W. Brents (well known for his interest in and the vast amount of work done by him during the second quarter of this century) and A. R. Holton were in a tent meeting in Waynesville, N. C. in an effort to establish a new congregation. They sent out a call to all preachers in the Carolinas to get their support for the meeting. A few responded (evidently no records were kept as to the exact number) but that few probably represented a high percentage of the total number of preachers available to come. The meeting was felt to be so useful and successful to the scattered workers that it was decided to work toward making such an annual event. Of this meeting O. P. Baird later wrote, while he was living in Columbia, S. C., in *Carolina Christian*:

"Though I was not in the Carolinas at the beginning of the Carolina Lectures, it was my privilege to be present at the gospel meeting out of which grew the lectureships. Brother M. W. Fodrie and I went from Atlanta to attend a tent meeting at Waynesville, N. C. which was conducted in an effort to establish a congregation in that beautiful resort town in the mountains near Asheville. I have not been able to find anything in my records to show the date of that meeting but I believe it was in 1945. Brother A. R. Holton and Brother J. W. Brents conducted that meeting. An effort was made to get as many preachers of the church as possible from the Carolinas to come and support that meeting. A few responded to the call. Indeed, there were only a few to respond. During that meeting we assembled dur-

ing the day and Bro. Holton and Brents spoke and those who were there from the congregations in the Carolinas gave reports of the work where they lived. Near the close of the meeting there was a gathering for the purpose of discussing making such a meeting an annual event. It was emphasized that such a meeting would be entirely for the purpose of fellowship and teaching the Word of God. Bro. Holton and Bro. Brents offered to arrange and (attend – HW) such a lectureship if some congregation would invite the people for it.”

Thus, according to the first version, the Carolina Lectures were born. But the second version, while not denying that such a meeting took place in Waynesville, says that the first lectures were in Charlotte, in 1945. J. Harrison Daniels wrote to C. R. Franks, Jr. on June 1, 1971:

“The first Carolina Lectureship was planned and arrangement made jointly with Bro. Holton and Bro. Brents in Nashville and myself acting in Charlotte for the elders of the Charlotte congregation, I being one of the elders at the time. Bro. Holton and Bro. Brents stayed in our home during the lectureship. Some of the preachers in the Carolinas who were there are now deceased. Bro. Brents and Bro. Holton are both gone. Bro. Dillard who started the work at West Columbia, S. C. and later in Greenwood, S. C. is gone. Bro. Hugh Shira and Bro. Bentley (Shira at Shandon Ave. in Columbia and Bentley at Rockingham, N. C.) were there. The preacher from Charleston, S. C. was there and he is now deceased. To my knowledge a register or record of the attendance was not kept and again I doubt if there is a preacher living in North or South Carolina now who was then present.” Brother Daniels left no room to question his statement by enclosing a copy of a news item clipped from the Charlotte Observer (or News) which tells about the meeting and names of A. R. Holton, C. E. McGauhey, and J. W. Brents as the principal speakers. (The news item, along with other pertinent information is found in Vol. 1 of the notebooks kept as a permanent record of the lectures.)

The second version seems to leave no doubt that the first lecture program, as such, was conducted in Charlotte, but neither

can there be a question about the meeting in Waynesville. The only disputed point is the date. At the time of this writing (perhaps I may try to do so later) I have neither the time nor the financial means to do the research to settle this mooted question. To make a final decision will require research into the records of J. W. Brents and A. R. Holton for the years 1944-46. One or both of them may have left reports or records that give the exact date of the Waynesville meeting, but such are not available to me at this time. There are three or more possibilities :

1. The meeting in Waynesville could have been in 1944. If this is the case all records of the Carolina Lectures starting in 1945 could be considered erroneous - they would actually be a year older than all records indicate. But this is not likely since all records give 1945 as the starting date.

2. The meeting in Waynesville could have been early in the year and the lectures in Charlotte later that same year. But again this seems highly unlikely. There is simply not enough time for extended planning to be done. Usually the planning and preparation for a successful lectureship is extended over several months. The letter from J. Harrison Daniels, who was involved in the planning and preparation, indicates that this was the case.

3. The meeting in Waynesville could have come after the Charlotte lectures and the discussion reported by O. P. Baird could have centered around trying to make the Charlotte lectures rather than the Waynesville meeting an annual affair. While this may seem incredible, we must remember that O. P. Baird was not living in the Carolinas at the time but had come from Atlanta, Georgia to Waynesville for the meeting. He may have had no knowledge of the previous lectures in Charlotte. If this is the case, he could have easily misunderstood the discussion to be about the Waynesville meeting rather than a meeting he did not know about in Charlotte. In short, he may have confused the two meetings, thinking that one was being discussed when in reality the other one was.

While neither of these seem to be a likely explanation of the

difference, I have nothing better to offer. So, having given the information I have, I leave the question of the first lectureship just where I found it, dangling in the air. However, it is my conclusion that the evidence favors Charlotte, and so I give it first in the list with some reservations.

The following places have been host to the Carolina Lectures:

Charlotte, N. C.	1945
Winston-Salem, N. C. — South Main	1946
Columbia, S. C. — Shandon	1947
Charleston, S. C. — Sans Souci	1948
Spartanburg, S. C. — Central	1949
Greensboro, N. C.	1950
Statesville, N. C.	1951
Salisbury, N. C.	1952
Greenville, S. C. — Judson	1953
Asheville, N. C.	1954
Columbia (Shandon)	1955
Fayetteville, N. C.	1956
Hickory, N. C.	1957
Greenville, S. C. (Buncomb Rd.)	1958
Charlotte, N. C. (Plaza)	1959
Winston-Salem, N. C. (South Main)	1960
Charleston, S. C. (Durant Ave.)	1961
Statesville, N. C. (Abilene)	1962
Union, S. C. (By-Pass)	1963
Rockingham, N. C.	1964
Greenville, S. C. (Northeast)	1965
Burlington, N. C.	1966
Charleston, N. C. (North Charleston)	1967
Durham, N. C.	1968
Greer, S. C.	1969
Clemmons, N. C. (Warners Chapel)	1970
West Columbia, S. C.	1971
Greensboro, N. C. (Friendly Ave.)	1972
Columbia, S. C. (Shandon)	1973
Winston-Salem, N. C. (South Fork)	1974
Charleston, S. C. (North Charleston)	1975
Fayetteville, N. C. (Cape Fear)	1976

Spartanburg, S. C. (Central)	1977
Statesville, N. C. (Abilene)	1978
Rock Hill, S. C.	1979
Raleigh, N. C.	1980

No exact date was originally set for the lectures, but since 1962 they have been conducted the first full week in April. This date has now been established by tradition. It has become "lecture week".

My association with the lectures began in 1957 in Hickory, N. C. I was living in Tennessee at that time but was driving across the state line into North Carolina to preach on Sunday afternoons in a rural community called Tamarack. I was thus invited to speak on the lectures. With this a long love affair began, both with the lectures and with the work in the Carolinas. Before the week was over I had been so tremendously impressed with the reports, the challenges, the preachers, and the calibre of preaching (I heard for the first time such men as C. W. Bradley and N. E. Sewell) that I had all but decided to make the Carolinas my life's work. I had caught a glimpse of a vast mission field begging for workers - I had heard the Macedonia call, "Come over and help us." I made a determination to respond just as soon as I could make the necessary preparations (at that time I was working toward entering college, and I had rightly concluded that this must come first). In 1960, fuel was added to the flame when I married a lovely girl from the northwest mountains of North Carolina. The pull suddenly became even more powerful. In 1962 we made the move, and we made it with the full intentions, that if it is the Lord's will, to spend the remainder of our active lives teaching the Carolinas the truth. The lectures thus played a large part in the decision. (And this may be one of the reasons I have never missed a single lecture program since moving to the Carolinas. I have told each of the churches I have worked with that there is one week in the year I will be gone, and that is lecture week. I make no other plans for the first full week in April.)

Some great names have appeared on the lectures from time to time, such as C. R. Nichol (who was for a number of years in

the early days a featured speaker), G. A. Dunn, C. E. McGahey, A. C. Pullias, Rex Turner, George W. DeHoff, Guy N. Woods, Paul Southern, Virgil Trout, Franklin Camp and a number of local preachers in the two states have multiplied. The practice of inviting out-of-state speakers has rapidly decreased. Carolina preachers are now almost exclusively used, except for one out-of-state featured speaker (usually a favorite of the church conducting the lectures). But this is natural and in keeping with the design and purpose of the lectures. Their basic purpose was to bring scattered workers together for sharing, encouragement, and fellowship. And, as surprising as it may seem, this has been the strength and enduring nature of the Carolina Lectures. I have heard a number say, "I go to the Carolina Lectures to hear Carolina preachers." And so more and more preachers have been used. Unfortunately, however, the number of preachers have now reached the point where it is impossible to use all of them on a single program. Yet, 30 to 50 are used each year.

The value of the lectures has not been, in my judgment, the contribution they make to the local churches which have served as hosts (even as valuable as that has been), but rather to the overall work of the church in both states. The scattered and war-worn workers come from all over the Carolinas to be fired anew with love, zeal, and enthusiasm. They see and hear what others are doing. They are introduced to new methods. They see the power of the gospel in practical settings. And all this sends them back home with renewed determination to turn the world right side up for Christ. Thus preachers are the big beneficiaries. But this in turn benefits all. When they return to their home congregations, they do so better prepared for a higher quality of service. Their preaching is more powerful. Visitation and personal work is increased. New programs of work are encouraged. And there is a better understanding of the problems and difficulties that must be faced and overcome in order to win the battle for truth and right. All this has helped to stabilize the work all over the Carolinas. It is my conception that no other single project has paid so much dividends in strengthening brethren and tying churches together in a common bond of love and purpose.

The lectures have no organization beyond the local congregations which plan and host them. And there is no definite plans or rules by which it is determined where they will be held from year to year. However, since 1952, with the exception of 1956-57 and 1959-60, they have alternated between the two states. This has worked well and is now pretty well established as an "unwritten rule". But with more and more churches wanting them in any given year, it is likely that some system will (by force of necessity) be developed to determine which churches should have priority in receiving them.

Like the mustard seed, in the Savior's parable, the Carolina Lectures have grown from a very small beginning to the giant they are today. While attendance is not large by the standards of other lectureships, they still represent the best known and the most widely supported work in the Carolinas. One reason for this is the fact that each lecture program develops a personality all its own. No two are alike. Because each is the program of the host congregation, new features are added while old ones are dropped, some emphasize current issues and needs and others deal with general topics, some are more practical while others are heavily theoretical, etc. No one man or group of men dominate the planning, the purpose, or the program. Each congregation adds its own personal touch to the lectures. This assures that no two will be alike. This, in my judgment, makes them far more interesting and instructive.

So as not to eliminate smaller churches, the cost of having the lectures has been kept to a minimum. No speaker is reimbursed for his expenses. This means that every lecture is given gratis (a policy has grown up in the past few years of the local church paying an out-of-state man who comes by special request, but in some cases even they have come at their own expense). No Carolina preacher has ever been paid to speak on the lectures. For this reason a church can conduct a meeting with only one man who receives a reasonable amount for this labor (of course, some have gone to considerable expense in advertising and providing food and lodging, but food and lodging are usually provided by the generosity of individual Christian families with no cost to the church or the guest). I am convinced

that this has contributed to their longevity perhaps as much as anything. Probably Bill G. Smith best summed this up when he was asked, "What does it cost to have the lectures?" He replied, "Nothing! Absolutely nothing! An investment? Yes. And one of the best investments a church ever made!" With this sentiment I heartily agree.

While I have said I have been privileged to speak on the lectures more than any other man, living or dead, my contribution overall has been extremely small. In each case I have been only one of about 40 annual speakers. Thus the lectures in this book represent less than two percent of the material presented after I arrived on the scene. That should give some hint of the contribution they have made and show the vast amount of material that has been presented.

This book contains only the Carolina Lectures up to and including 1980, with three exceptions. I had originally intended to include also the lectures from both the South Carolina and the North Carolina Lectures, but the book grew too large for any hope of publication. Thus I have eliminated all but three lectures, all delivered the same year, on "The World of Books". But while the lectures are omitted, a word should be said about each lectureship:

### **SOUTH CAROLINA LECTURES**

For several years before the South Carolina Lectures began there was some talk of discontinuing the Carolina Lectures and having in their stead two annual state lectureships, one in South Carolina and the other in North Carolina. It was argued that this would make possible the use of more speakers. And it would have, but I (along with several others) was opposed to this because I felt that it would weaken the ties between brethren in the two states. I was relentless in my opposition. I pointed out that if either state wanted to have a lectureship that it could do so, but that the Carolina Lectures, which was equally related to both states, should not be discontinued. This was the plan eventually adopted.

Soon after C. R. Franks, Jr. moved to work with the Central



church in Spartanburg he was able to stimulate enough interest in a lectureship for South Carolina that one was announced and conducted by Central the first full week in November, 1966. This has become the established dates for the lectures. And they have continued uninterrupted with varying degrees of success for 14 years, and from all indications they have enough life in them to continue indefinitely, although with only a few exceptions attendance has always been disappointingly small. The lectures have been hosted by the following churches:

Spartanburg (Central)	1966
Charleston (Essex Village)	1967
Rock Hill (Charlotte Avenue)	1968
Union (By-Pass)	1969
West Columbia	1970
Greenville (Augusta Road)	1971
Sumter	1972
Greenville (Edgewood)	1973
Barnwell	1974
Greenwood	1975
Columbia (St. Andrews Road)	1976
Aiken	1977
Columbia (Windsor Lake)	1978
Florence	1979

The Aiken Lectures, in 1977, were conducted the first two days in the building owned by the Hampton Road church (predominantly black) and the last two at the Whiskey Road building (where the membership is predominantly white). This marked the first time a predominantly black church had hosted a Carolina Lectureship (although they have conducted a number of lectures among themselves). I hope it will not be the last.

### **NORTH CAROLINA LECTURES**

The North Carolina Lectures have taken a slightly different format than either the Carolina Lectures or the South Carolina Lectures. They were late getting started. Several men in the Winston-Salem area discussed the possibility of such for several years before there was much concrete effort to get them underway. The first one was conducted by the Linville Forest

church in Winston-Salem in September of 1977. Bill Doriety (the preacher at Linville Forest) had been among those who were instrumental in building up interest in them. He was an enthusiastic supporter. He thus became the director of the first one (and as it turned out, every one since). Since the first one was so successful (it had been extremely well promoted and all attendance records for a lecture in the Carolinas were broken), and since Winston-Salem was a central location, and since the Linville Forest facilities were superb, it was generally felt that it would be a good idea to continue the lectures at Linville Forest, for at least a second year. No major changes had occurred by 1978; so the lectures were announced for the same place for 1979. Thus all three North Carolina Lectures (all up to the time of this writing) have been hosted by the same congregation. The fourth program is now being planned and Linville Forest has announced that it will again serve as host.

But there is also another difference: well known out-of-state speakers have been featured on each program, usually at the night service only, since North Carolina preachers are used throughout the day. The first year featured college presidents. They were John Stephens, Abilene Christian University; E. Claude Gardner, Freed-Hardeman College; and E. R. Brannon, Alabama Christian College. Also featured was David McQuiddy, Ted Underwood, and William Woodson. The second lecture program brought together J. M. Powell, Maurice W. Lusk, III, Guy N. Woods, Willard Collins (president of David Lipscomb College), and Jack Zorn. The third program followed the same pattern by featuring Flavil Yeakley and Lottie Beth Hobbs, each teaching an all day class and brother Yeakley speaking at the night service as well the day he was there. Thomas Eaves, from the East Tennessee School of Preaching, and Elza Huffard, president of Northeastern Junior Christian College, were also featured speakers.

### CONCLUSION

One final word in conclusion, at all three lectures, brethren from both states are encouraged to bring displays depicting their work or showing what they may have to offer others (either free or for sale). In some cases brethren have brought

books to trade, and a familiar sight (and a fond memory for me) is to see a group gathered around the trunk of a car trying to strike up a trade. David Pharr, for the 1979 lectures in Rock Hill, S. C., announced a "sermon swap". Each preacher was asked to provide a generous number of copies of his favorite sermon or sermon outline. These were all placed in a room for anyone who wished to take one or take a copy of all. This was very popular. One year all were asked to contribute any old books they might have that were no longer in use. These were placed on a table and sold at bargain prices to help financially support *Carolina Christian*, which in those early days sorely needed it. But for the most part the display area is made up only of books, Bible class material, and tracts for sale, copies of *Carolina Christian* for free distribution, and displays from out-of-state schools of preaching. The Bible camps and the children's home nearly always have promotional spots on the program rather than displays. But regardless of what is brought, the visitors seem to relish the displays with great delight and all agree that they are one of the lecture's best forums for an exchange of ideas.

I must end somewhere, and I have chosen to do so here. But the lectures go on. They go on because they fill a need. It is not uncommon to hear one say to several departing friends after a given lecture has ended, "I'll see you next year at the lectures." And he usually does. If he does not see them, he sees me!

## The Purity Of The Church \*

Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18.) This is a divine promise made by the Son of God. "I will build" is future tense and shows that the church had not yet been established when Jesus spoke this. The "rock" upon which the church was to be built is the fact that Peter had just confessed the fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God. The fact that Jesus Himself was to build it shows that the church is a divine institution — it was built by Christ, not by man! The personal pronoun "my" shows ownership — it is the Lord's church, the church built by Christ for Himself. It is His. Since "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," nothing, no power terrestrial or infernal, could prevent Christ from keeping His promise, from building His church. The promise was as sure as God Himself.

On the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the church Jesus promised to build became a reality, a living active body. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there was added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41.) "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47.) As one reads further into the book of Acts he sees the church rapidly spreading throughout the then known world; and from that day to this there has been a constant flow of churches claiming to be the church of Christ. Of course all that claim to be the Lord's church do not qualify for that high honor, but the Lord did build a church just as He had promised that church was active in the first century; and I believe that the church which the Lord built is still in existence today, still alive, still active, still honoring the Lord, still doing that which He built His church to do, and still marching under His

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\*Delivered in Hickory, N. C. in 1957. This was my first speech on the Carolina Lectures. It was written from my notes and from memory after I moved to Wilmington. Perhaps no lecture I have ever given has been better received. It is condensed and corrected for this work.

blood stained banner. It is the purpose of this lecture to study the purity of that church — the purity of the church as the Lord built it and as He would now have it.

The word church, when applied to the institution Christ built, appears 110 times in the New Testament; 92 times it applies either to the local congregation or to the church assembled, and 18 times to the church universal. When it is used locally, it means all the saved in that locality; when it is used universally, it designates all the saved throughout the world.

### **WHAT THE CHURCH IS NOT**

But before we go further let us clear up some misunderstandings by pointing out what the church Jesus built is not. First, it is not a denomination. It seems almost impossible for religious people today, who have been trained to accept confusion and division as a necessary and even a desirable part of the Christian system, to conceive of the church apart from denominationalism and human organizations. But Jesus built His church, and it thrived for hundreds of years before the birth of the first denomination.

Second, the church is not a federation of denominations. There are strong movements underway to unite all denominations into one huge organization; it is an organization for denominations to join. But if successful (and I doubt that it will be to any large degree) the results will only be a much larger denomination. The church in the New Testament was simply not a federation of denominations. To bundle all the human organizations in the world into one big human organization will not make the organization divine. Whether large or small it will not be the one body taught in the Scriptures.

Third, the church is not a sectarian body. The word sect implies sections. The church Jesus built is not sectioned up. It is a united body, one body, the body of Christ. Where there is sectarianism there is sin. Thus the Lord's church is not a sectarian body.

Finally, the church is not a material building. A church build-

ing is simply a place where the church meets. After the meeting, the church leaves the building. The church is made up of spiritual stones (1 Pet. 2:5), not of physical brick, mortar and timber.

### WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

When I ask, "What is the church?", I am not asking about the modern concept of the church, not what it means to the modern mind, but what it means in the New Testament. We need to know what it was that Jesus built. Thus we must see how the word "church" is used in the Bible.

1. The church is the called out. The word "church" is translated from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which means, according to *Young's Analytical Concordance*, "That which is called out." Thayer's comment on the word is as follows: "The whole body of Christians scattered throughout the earth; collectively, all who worship and honor God and Christ in whatever place they may be." Thus the church is the called out — the called out of the world into Christ, out of darkness into light, out of wickedness into righteousness, out of sinful practices into heavenly fellowship. This emphasizes the fact that Christians are a separated people — a people separated from the world. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:17, 18.) It should be noted, however, that the expression "called out" does not exhaust the meaning of the Greek word *ekklesia*; it also means the assembly resulting from the calling out. The church is God's called out assembly, God's own chosen people.

2. The church is the body of Christ. The Bible says, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22, 23.) The body, which is the church, is made up of all Christians. "But now are they many members, yet but one body." (1 Cor. 12:20.) "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30.) There is no body without Christians and there are no Christians outside the body. This emphasizes the church as a

living organism — an organism that is directed by its head. The body is the church and Christ is the head of the body.

3. The church is the saved. Concerning the early Christian, the Scriptures say, "Praising God, and having found favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47.) Adam Clarke, perhaps the best known commentator who ever lived, says that our translation (the King James Version), where it reads, "Such as should be saved," is, "improper and insupportable." He then adds that the meaning is simply, "And the Lord added daily to those who were saved." "The saved" and the "church", in the New Testament sense of the terms, have reference to identically the same people — the saved make up the church and the church is made up of the saved. Acts 2:47 simply teaches that those who were being saved were added to those who were already saved. This is why Paul says: "Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body." (Eph. 5:23.) Christ saves the body and the body is the saved. This emphasizes the fact that members of the body of Christ have been rescued from the world or saved from sin.

In my own words I define the church as the body of Christ made up of the people of Christ led by the Spirit of Christ doing the work of Christ. This body is so organized that each congregation composes a completely autonomous church. Thus the purity of the church demands that each congregation be a complete unit -- a body of Christ led by the Spirit of Christ doing the work of Christ.

But to get to the point of our study, I now call your attention to five areas in which the church, each congregation of God's people, must keep itself pure.

## I

The church must practice pure religion. Because the word religion is so loosely used it is difficult to define. It comes from the Latin *religio* which means "to bind back". It thus suggests a repairing of something broken. In the Scriptures, while the

word is used only a few times, it seems to suggest a way of life. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27.) Rather than defining it, this passages tells us what religion is. It is "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." This strongly suggests a way of life — a performing of one's duty, especially to God.

We must not confuse religion with *pure* religion. All religion is not acceptable to God; only pure religion is. James also gives us some inspired insight to this. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." (James 1:26.) While it may be true that every man's way of life is his religion, we are concerned here only with pure religion — a pure way of life. Pure religion is a right relationship with both God and man — right because it is doing what God has commanded one to do.

But for man to be right with God two conditions must prevail: his heart or motives must be pure and his methods or outward acts must be right. There are those who think that the outward acts, the rituals and ceremonies, are the vital things; they attach little or no importance to the condition of the heart. From this grew the concept of sacraments — acts which for all practical purposes have the virtue in the acts themselves. Thus many people make the outward acts the essence of religion. This is ceremonialism or ritualism. But it is not pure religion.

On the other hand, there are those who go to the opposite extreme: they say that if the heart is right the act makes little or no difference. They say, "God is interested in motives, not methods". But the Bible is filled with examples showing that motive alone is not sufficient. In 2 Samuel 6 the divine record tells of David moving the ark of God from the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah. God had given instructions on how to move the ark: it was to be carried by the descendants of Levi, the Kohathites in particular. But when David moved the ark he had the people to set it upon a new cart. "And when they came



to Nachon's thrashing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his errors; and there he died by the ark." (2 Sam. 6:6, 7.) Surely the motive of Uzzah was right in putting forth his hand to stay the ark of God! His heart was right but his action was wrong. Motive alone is not pure religion.

Pure religion must therefore be characterized by both right motives and right acts. Acts alone are not enough; motives alone are not sufficient; pure religion must be characterized by both the right acts and the right motives.

But when we come to make application of this principle, there are those among us<sup>1</sup> who are opposed to certain methods of practicing pure religion. They, like the Pharisees (Matt. 23: 13), do not practice it themselves, nor will they permit others to do so. They are opposed to every way we do it, but still they will not tell us the Scriptural way by which it is to be done. But to oppose a method, whether it is right or wrong, does not excuse us from obeying this command. To practice pure religion is as much a command as anything else in the New Testament. And, if the purity of the church is to be maintained, we must practice pure religion; yet, the command cannot be carried out without some method. We *must* visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and keep ourselves unspotted from the world. This is not an optional command.

Those who oppose the present methods of caring for the fatherless and widows often argue that this is an individual obligation and the church cannot Scripturally become involved. But what is the church? It is the body of Christ composed of the people of Christ led by the Spirit of Christ doing the work of Christ. Is practicing pure religion a work of Christ? Most assuredly it is. Then it must be done by the church. As far as I

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1. The anti-orphan home issue was splitting churches all over the country at this time. Probably many of those present had not made up their minds one way or another when these thoughts were presented.

know, there is no work done by the church, in the final analysis, but that which is done by the individuals who make up the church. Right motives and methods must be practiced by both the individual and the group of individuals who make up the church. It is my sincere conviction that no church is living up to its full responsibility unless it is practicing pure religion. Pure religion is imperative to a pure church. Thus to meet the demands of the Bible, to be the church that Jesus built, the church must practice pure religion.

## II

The church must preach a pure doctrine. Doctrine simply means teaching. What the church teaches is her doctrine. The teaching of the Lord's church must be pure. There can be no pure church without pure doctrine. A qualification of an elder is stated in the following words: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." (Titus 1:9-11.) John states it right to the point: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ,<sup>1</sup> hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 9-11.) While these verses may seem radical to many, they teach that if one goes beyond or abides not in the doctrine of Christ he does not have God — that is, he is not in a right relationship with God. But he

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1. At this time I had never heard of a member of the church who questioned the concept that the doctrine of Christ here meant the doctrine taught by Christ (through His commissioned apostles). Later, when scores of old concepts were questioned, the more liberal element in the church almost unanimously concluded that it meant the doctrine about Christ, i.e., His deity. I still believe, however, based on the whole context of 2 John, that these verses mean the teaching of Christ delivered to us in the inspired Scriptures.

who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son – he is in right relationship with both God and Christ. Pure doctrine is thus necessary to a right relationship with God.

Pure doctrine is that doctrine delivered by the apostles of Christ. The Bible says of those who obeyed the gospel on the day of Pentecost, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer." (Acts 2:42.) The apostles' doctrine and the doctrine of Christ are one and the same. Paul said, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. 14:37.) The things that Paul wrote, as well as that of other inspired men, are found in the Scriptures. Thus pure doctrine is found in the written word of God. Any doctrine not found in the Bible is false; any doctrine found in the Scriptures, when it is rightly applied, is pure.

Far too many people overlook the fact that there can be and is a vast amount of false doctrine taught in the name of religion. Everything that is taught is certainly not from God – is certainly not pure doctrine. The Bible warns of the doctrines of devils. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter time some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." (1 Tim. 4:1–3.) "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." (2 Cor. 11:13, 14.)

But to receive false doctrine is as dangerous and as destructive as to teach it. Jesus said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:13, 14.) Paul warned that some would be deceived by the man of sin, who would lead them away from the love of the truth. He concluded

by saying, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. 2:9-12.) False doctrines is therefore dangerous both to the teacher and the receiver. The church Jesus built must shun it. It must preach pure doctrine.

### III

The church must engage in pure worship. Jesus said, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23, 24.) Man is incurably a worshipping being — to worship is written in his very nature. But all worship is not acceptable. To be acceptable it must be pure.

There are at least four kinds or classes of worship in the New Testament. First, there is vain worship. Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:9.) Vain worship is empty, worthless, idle - worship that fails of the desired end. Obviously vain worship cannot be pure worship.

Second, the New Testament speaks of will worship. Paul wrote, "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in honor to the satisfying of the flesh." (Col. 2:20-23.) James MacKnight says that will worship here means, "A worship of human invention, consequently performed from one's own

will." While such may be showy and appeal to innumerable people, it is not pure worship.

Third, the New Testament mentions ignorant worship. Paul told the Athenians, "For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Who therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." (Acts 17:23.) Ignorant worship is worship performed in ignorance of the right object, the right motive, or the right method. Ignorant worship cannot be pure worship.

Fourth, true worship is taught in the New Testament. John 4:23, 24 mentioned this and gave its characteristics. It is the kind that must be engaged in by the church. And true worship, pure worship, must have the right object, the right motive, and the right method. If either is missing, worship cannot be pure. Let us note each of these a little further:

1. Pure worship must have the right object. That is, it must be directed to God, and to God alone. Jesus told Satan, in His wilderness temptation, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matt. 4:10.) The writer of Revelation gives this revealing insight: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the saying of this book: worship God." (Rev. 22:8, 9.) This leaves no question about what the Scriptures teach: God alone is the object of true worship.

2. Pure worship must come out of the right motive. Christianity is a religion of the heart as well as a religion of specified acts. One believes with the heart (Rom. 10:10), purposes in the heart (2 Cor. 9:7), desires with the heart (Rom. 10:1), obeys from the heart (Rom. 6:16-18), and worships from the heart. That is, when he worships God his heart must be right — he must have the right spirit or motive. Jesus said, as I have already quoted, that worship must be in spirit and in truth. To worship

in spirit simply means to worship God with the whole heart, with the whole mind, with the whole being! It means that worship must be deliberate, purposed, and planned. God is not worshipped accidentally. All true worship must, therefore, be motivated by reverence, respect, devotion, and adoration to God. This is the right spirit of pure worship.

3. Pure worship must be expressed by the right method. Not only must it be in spirit, true worship must also be in *truth*. To worship God in truth is simply to worship Him in His own divinely appointed way – to worship Him according to the directions given in truth. But what is truth? Jesus said, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” (John 17:17.) In another passage we are told that the law of God is truth (Ps. 119:142.) In another the commandments are said to be truth (Ps. 119:151.) Thus to worship in truth is to obey the commands of God, follow the law of God, and be directed by the word of God. Pure worship is worship in which every act is prescribed by truth.

It should be observed, however, that I am not contending that the acts of worship within or of themselves are worship, but that right acts are necessary in expressing one’s adoration to God. While one might perform all the acts of worship prescribed in the New Testament without actually worshipping, he cannot worship without them. A man might have and use all the tools that are necessary to build a house, and yet never build a house. But if one builds a house he must have the tools. And so it is with worship. Without the necessary means there can be no worship.

God has given five acts by which man may publicly express his worship to Him. They are: singing (Eph. 5:19; 1 Cor. 14:15; Col. 3:16; James 5:13), praying (1 Thess. 5:17; Col. 4:2, 3; 1 Tim. 2:1—8), teaching or edification (Matt. 28:18—20; 2 Tim. 2:2), communion (Matt. 26:26—28; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23—30), and giving (Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8:12—15; 9:6, 7.) To obey God from the heart in these five acts is pure worship. No church can be pure that does not have a pure worship.

## IV

The church must maintain a pure organization. The organization of the church Jesus built is revealed in the New Testament. The Lord did not leave His church without organization ... nor did He leave it to choose its own organization. Had He done so the results would have been a multiplicity of antagonistic organizations, some over-organized, some under-organized, and some organized to oppose all other organizations, and perhaps to oppose all organization. But the Lord, in building His church, gave it the organization or form it must take. The organization consists of two aspects, namely, the universal and the local.

The organization of the universal church (which is more of an organism than an organization) is simple: Christ is the head and the church is the body. The Bible says, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22, 23.) "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is savior of the body." (Eph. 5:23.) Just as there is only one head, there is only one body. The New Testament leaves no doubt about this by saying, "There is one body ..." (Eph. 4:4.) "But now are they many members, yet but one body." (1 Cor. 12:20.) The head is Christ, the body is the church; the head commands, the body obeys; the head directs, the body follows.

The universal church (or the body of Christ) is composed of independent congregations throughout the whole world — each congregation is a body, made up of Christians, over which Christ rules as the supreme head. This community of obedient believers is bound together by a common tie of love — they are the body of Christ composed of the people of Christ led by the Spirit of Christ doing the work of Christ.

The Lord has specified in His word the kind of organization each local congregation must have. Paul wrote to the Philippian church saying, "Paul and Timotheous, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi,

with the bishops and deacons." (Phil. 1:1.) Thus the church at Philippi was made up of saints, and the saints had appointed elders and deacons to rule over them and serve them. This was the only organization known to the apostolic church. Luke states, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." (Acts 14:23.)

Elders or bishops (for in the New Testament both words refer to the same men) were appointed by the members of each congregation to "watch for their souls." (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-5; Heb. 13:17; Acts 20:28.) Churches that did not have elders were lacking something. Paul said to Titus, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I have appointed thee." (Titus 1:5.) To aid the elders in the service of the congregation, deacons were appointed (1 Tim. 3:8-13; Phil. 1:1; Acts 6:1-7.) Thus the organization of the local church was simple: it was a community of saints who appointed elders to rule in it and deacons to serve in it. And this is the only organization of the Lord's church revealed in the Bible. Anything short of this is not enough; anything beyond this is superfluous and unscriptural.

While churches did exist and function in apostolic times, and obviously can do so now, without being fully organized, this condition should not exist beyond the development stages. To organize, when qualified men are available and willing to serve, is not an option left to the church. God planned it; the cause of Christ demands it; the Scriptures teach it; the work of the church requires it; and each congregation desperately needs it. To refuse to organize after the Scriptural pattern, or to wait for qualified men who are available, would cast serious question on one's claim and desire to follow the Bible in all things, and it would make restoration of the first century church impossible. It is my strong opinion that any church which has the material to become fully organized after the Scriptural order, and refuses to do so, or substitutes some other organization sins against both God and the souls of men, not to mention the welfare of the church. To organize is God's choice. So let congre-



gations arise and organize after the New Testament pattern. The purity of the church depends upon it: for to have a pure church we must have and maintain a pure organization.

## V

The purity of the church can be maintained only when each of its members live pure lives. This is probably the most neglected area in our teaching program today. As individuals, we have compromised too much on moral issues. There is not enough of the church in the world and too much of the world in the church. We all need to be constantly reminded that God has "Delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. 1:13.) "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savior. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them." (Eph. 5:1-7.)

There are two aspects to pure living, the negative and the positive — things that we are to purge from our lives and things we are to add to them.

John says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:15-17.) The world, in the sense here used, is nothing more than the works of the flesh, things in which Christians can have no part. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which

are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-21.) "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Tim. 3:1-5.)

On the positive side, James says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27.) The two things here commanded of each Christian is to visit the homeless and widows – visit in the sense of providing for their needs, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Peter lists some additional positive aspects in what is often called the Christian graces. "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity [love]. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethern, give diligence 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 Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:5-11.) Perhaps we could broaden the scope of our insight by taking a brief look at each of the items mentioned here:

"Virtue" is moral courage, the courage to do what one knows is right. It is usually easy to know what is right; the real test of character comes in doing what one knows he should do. It is easy to determine that it is wrong to lie, but to tell the truth on all occasions and under all circumstances is what tries men's souls. Virtue is that moral courage to do right, regardless of the cost. "Knowledge" is the sum of what one has learned. But here it probably refers to a knowledge of God's word. Every Christian should be a devout student of the revealed will of God. "Temperance" is the ability to keep oneself in control. "Patience" is the power to endure, to suffer long, to tolerate, to understand others, even in their weaknesses and failures. "Godliness" is God-like-ness, or partaking of the divine nature (cf. 2 Pet. 1:3—4.) Ultimately it is doing the will of God. "Brotherly kindness" is respect for other people, especially those in the household of God. "Charity" (or love) is the climax of this list. It is that deep concern that urges us on to work for the welfare of all men. Paul says, "And above all these things, put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness." (Col. 3:14.)

A pure Christian life is thus characterized by abstaining from all that is wrong and by doing all that is right. The purity of the Lord's church demands that each member keep himself unspotted from the world. But more, he must always do that which is right. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4:17.)

## CONCLUSION

The lesson is now yours. But it remains for us to build and maintain pure churches. But what is the church? It is the body of Christ composed of the people of Christ led by the Spirit of Christ doing the work of Christ. But for the people of Christ to be called the body of Christ, or be led by the Spirit of Christ, or do the work of Christ they must compose a pure body — a body that practices pure religion, preaches a pure doctrine, maintains a pure worship, has a pure organization, and each member living a pure life. This is the kind of church Christ built, the kind that He now wants, and the kind He is coming to receive unto Himself when time shall be no more. Paul summed it all up by

saying, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:25–27.)

## **"Work Out Your Own Salvation" \***

The brethren have always had a problem getting me stopped on time. Brother Parker is trying to solve that problem by putting me on the program just before lunch. (Laughter.) Knowing how well I like to eat, he thinks he has at last found a solution to my over-time preaching. But it remains to be seen whether his remedy will cure the disease or not! (More laughter.)

I assure you that it is a genuine pleasure to be here and to have this golden opportunity to preach to so many preachers, even though I do have to compete with the aroma of that delicious ham the ladies are preparing for lunch. (Laughter.) Some of the brethren think that preachers need preaching to worse than anybody. (Loud laughter.) I would have liked to preach to a group I saw leaving for the golf course just a few minutes ago. (More laughter.) We have been discussing the matter of how to improve our lectureship. I think the thing that would help it most is for all of us to practice at the lectures what we preach to our brethren at home on Hebrews 10:25.

God has been gracious to all of us and has guided us by His divine providence to this time and place, thereby giving us this opportunity to study together His marvelous and eternal word of truth. For our study, I want to read for you a fact-filled passage found in Philippians 2:12-16: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain." The instructions here are

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\*Delivered at the 1963 Carolina Lectures in Union, S. C. Milton S. Parker was the local preacher.

for Christians to work out their own salvation. This is the thought of our lesson – a thought we think it would be profitable for all of us to consider just now.

Work out your own salvation! I am painfully aware of the fact that many have abused this passage. Some have abused it by saying that you cannot do anything in order to obtain salvation, that salvation is wholly a gift of God, and that one must first receive it and then work for it. This is not what Paul is saying. But, on the other hand, there are some who go to the other extreme and say that man must work out or merit his salvation, that man is responsible for his own actions and is therefore responsible for his own salvation. This is true of course if we understand that salvation is of God, that it is a free gift of God, that it is given by the grace and mercy of God, and that we secure it by obedience to the will of God. We cannot work it out on our own without the help of God. This is the two extremes. The middle ground is simply that God's grace has been given to us, and through faith we can obtain salvation by doing that which His grace has provided for us to do.

I think this is enough on the two extremes. Neither is correct if taken alone and apart from what the Bible teaches; and yet both are correct if rightly understood. We do work out our own salvation. Yet, salvation is provided to us as a gift of God's marvelous grace. It all depends on what is meant by the two expressions. There is perfect harmony between the two ideas in the Bible, but men have made them into two conflicting doctrines.

What then is meant by the expression, "Work out your own salvation?" When some use the expression they mean that you work it out by your own hands, by your own accomplishments, and thus by your own merits. But this cannot be done. The Bible says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Titus 3:5.) Again, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9.) But by the same expression others

mean that there is absolutely nothing one can do to be saved. Such is a misleading statement and simply does not state a Bible truth. Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5.) Again, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) These passages plainly teach that one must believe, repent, and be baptized in order to be saved. These are things which the grace of God has provided for an alien sinner to do. When Paul said, "Work out your own salvation," he was simply saying, "Do what the grace of God has made it possible for you to do." We can all understand that. Some may call such works and some may simply call it obedience. It seems that Paul, in the book of Romans, does not call it work. There is no contradiction between James and Paul. Paul is viewing salvation from the angle of God's grace; James is viewing it from the standpoint of man's obedience to the will of God. Neither excludes the other.

There are a number of things in the passage we have read which show how salvation can be worked out — how we can through obedience appropriate the grace of God.

First, then, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." This means in fear of God and in trembling of soul! When one fears God, reverences God, stands in awe of God (for this is the meaning of fear), he is in position to work out his own salvation.

In our thoughts, God is often too small. We think of Him in terms of an atom, but He is greater than the whole universe. Some times I wonder if the heathen does not have more fear and reverence for his false gods (he bows before them, he cries out to them, he makes valuable sacrifices to them!) than we have for the God of heaven. Only those who approach God in fear (reverence) have the disposition to serve Him, to obey all His commands, and thus to work out their own salvation.

Next, "Work out your own salvation ... For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Here is another expression that has been misused and abused. Let us study it a little more minutely.

Notice that it is God that "worketh in us." This is a comforting thought to me. God working in us! The hand of God directs His people. If we put our trust in Him, if we do as Jesus instructed in Matthew 6:33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," then God can and does work in us to His glory. But until we have brought ourselves to this disposition of mind, God does not work in us, through us, by us, nor for us. It is God that works in us!

But how does God work in us? God works in us through His word. When God tells us to do something, and we do it, that is God working in us. There are many things in which this is the only way God works on earth today. He works through His people in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and in comforting the sorrowing. When a cry goes up to heaven, "Lord, send us food," the Lord may answer through His people. The Lord uses His people when there is a cry for medical care. When there is a cry for love, for understanding, for sympathy, the Lord answers through His people. It is God working through us. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.) So can every Christian say, "It is not I that live, but Christ living in me." This is the way God works in us.

Take a look now at the next expression: God works in us "Both to will and to do of his good pleasure." How does God work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure? Some say that this means that one cannot do anything until God, in some strange mysterious way, changes his will and works in him salvation without any effort or choice on his part. But this is not what the passage says. I think I can illustrate the meaning in a very simple way. Suppose that next Sunday I plan to spend the afternoon relaxing (and I probably will after this lectureship). I do not plan any work and I do not want to go anywhere. But now suppose one of the members of the church invites me out to lunch. I have other plans and I do not want to go, and yet I do not like to turn brethren down flat (they might not ask me back if I did). So I say, "You will have to see Minnie." "But,"



the good lady of the house might respond, "I have a big roast and gravy with all the trimmings." Brethren, I tell you right now, when she says that, I do not have to see Minnie. (Laughter.) This family would have worked in me to will to do their pleasure. They invited me to dinner but I did not want to go. But when they told me of the big roast, they changed my will. They thus worked in me to will.

But with the smell of that ham the ladies have prepared and placed on the lunch tables filling the whole house, perhaps we could think of a better illustration right under our noses. The ladies are wanting to serve lunch, but they cannot do so until I get through, and right now I am in no big rush. So they just keep piling that ham on the table, letting its aroma drift through that open door. That delightful aroma is working in me the will to hurry on through. Now this is exactly the idea presented here by Paul. God has given us His will in His word. He has said to us, "If you will obey my word I will save your soul and take you home to heaven. I will give you a hundred fold in this world and in that which is to come, eternal life." I want to be saved from my sins and I want to go to heaven. And so when the Lord tells me what to do and then adds the blessings that will come to me if I do it, He is working in me to will — He is working in me to change my unwillingness to willingness to do His will. We work out our own salvation, but we must always remember that it is God who works in us — it is God who makes all things possible.

But there is still more: in working out our own salvation, Paul says, "Do all things without murmuring." A classical example of murmuring is found in the Israelites. God led the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, through the Red Sea, and to safety in the wilderness, where He sent them food, water, protection, and a cloud to guide them by day and a pillar of fire by night. All they had to do was trust God and He would supply all their needs. But they had gone only a short distance when they began to murmur against God and against Moses. They asked, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? Why did you not just leave us there to die around the flesh pots of Egypt?" We are often tempted to ask,

"How could those people have been so forgetful of God? Why did they murmur?" And yet we see the same tendency among God's people today. Sometimes we work for months or even years to teach someone the truth. We finally persuade them to obey the gospel -- to become enlightened, to taste of the heavenly gift, to partake of the Holy Ghost, to taste of the good word of God, and to taste of the power of the world to come. They start out well, but in a few weeks they often begin to murmur. They in essence ask, "Why did you lead us out of the world? Why did you bring us into the church where we are expected by both God and man to live clean lives, to assemble with the saints, to give, etc.?" This is exactly what the Israelites did. They turned back in heart to Egypt. We too turn back to the world in heart, and sometimes in action, when we murmur against the way of God. Paul urges, "Work out your own salvation ... without murmuring."

But going further, he says, "Work out your own salvation" without disputing, or as another translation puts it, without questioning. God expects His people to do what He says without disputing or questioning His word. Sometimes I tell Susie (our little adorable adopted daughter) to do something, and she will ask, "But why, daddy?" Sometimes I reply (just to teach her to respect the voice of authority), "Just because I say so: that's why." When a parent tells a child to do something, that is a sufficient reason for the child to obey. And so it is with God. When He commands something, that is the only reason His children need to carry out the orders. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25.) When we know what God requires, that should be the end of all questions concerning our actions.

In working out our own salvation, there is still more. Paul now adds the statement, "That you may be blameless." To be blameless is to be faultless or free from stain -- the stain of sin. All Christians ought to be blameless. One of the qualifications of an elder is that he must be blameless. It is said of Zacharias and Elizabeth, the father and mother of John the Baptist, "And they were both righteous before God walking in all the commandment and ordinances of the Lord blameless." (Luke 1:

6.) Thus as we work out our salvation, all our action should be free from the stain of sin.

Next, in working out our own salvation, Paul says we must be harmless. Jesus told His disciples, when He sent them out on the limited commission, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10:16.)

But not only must Christians be blameless and harmless, they must also be the sons of God, children of God, without rebuke. We are sons of God! What higher honor, what greater privilege, could one have than this? But with sonship comes grave responsibility. We must be sons of God without rebuke. The word rebuke carries with it the idea of a sharp disapproval or reprimand. The Bible says, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." (1 Tim. 5:20.) But sons of God are to live without rebuke. This is simply to say that in working out our own salvation we should so conduct ourselves that no one will have reason to rebuke us or to call our sonship in question.

But notice further: we are to live as sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. We live in the world -- a world filled with sin. We cannot escape this fact. Many years ago (before I met Minnie) I knew a very pretty girl. I often slipped around and dated her. But we always had to do it in strict secrecy. Her father had the idea that the way to keep his daughter pure was to keep her away from temptation and sin. But if such would work (and it will not), it would make one more of a machine than a man. Now I respect anyone who wants to rear his children in purity. I would not be critical of that. But we are in the world and in the midst of a perverse and crooked generation of people. We cannot keep from intermingling with people who live in sin. We cannot shut ourselves out from reality -- we cannot live in glass houses. The solution is to train ourselves (and our children) to overcome the world, to prepare ourselves so we will not weaken and fall when confronted with temptation and sin. We are not to become hermits, isolating ourselves from the realities of life. We are to live in the world but be no part of the world -- live in the presence of sin

but not in the practice of sin. John says, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4, 5.)

We seem to have a built-in tendency to desire the forbidden. Prohibit a child from touching an object in the room and he will spend the rest of the day trying to get to it. Forbid a young man to read a book and he is almost certain to read it (if for no other reason, to see why he was forbidden to do so). This reminds me of a story I once heard. (I do not know that it will illustrate anything, but you know how it is at these lectures: everyone is expected to tell a story of some kind!) (Laughter.) It is said that a certain man wanted to train his son to live without women. (Don't ask me why. That's just the way the story goes.) (More laughter.) He kept him locked in his room until he was twenty-one years old, never permitting him to see or be in the presence of girls. But when the young man came of age, the father took him down town to see the sights. As they walked along, the son, seeing the world for the first time, would ask about different objects, "What's that, dad?" His father would reply, "a tree, a car, a horse," etc. As they went along, they inevitably met a group of girls. After a long hard look at them, the son asked, Dad, what's that?" The father, not wanting him to know what they were, responded, "That's a bunch of geese, son." After a very exciting trip around town, they returned home. When they settled down to have a little talk the father said, "Son, you have seen a lot of things today. As you look back over the day and think of all the things you have seen, what would you rather have from among them?" The son very quickly replied, "Dad, I'd rather have one of those geese than anything I have ever seen in my whole life." (Prolonged laughter.) That is the way it seems to be in life, and I suppose that is the way it is with sin. If we were to isolate ourselves away from it, it would probably be the first order of business when we were exposed to it. So our problem of being in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation is not solved by being isolated from it but by learning to live above it.

But the thought does not stop here: Paul goes on to say that we live in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom you "shine as lights in the world." We are not to live away from the world but be leaders of the world – to be pace-setters. Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:14–16.) Christians are thus the light of the world – the light that shines in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

There is yet one more thing that I want to call your attention to: we are to work our own salvation by holding forth the word of life.

The world is in darkness. The word of life is the light it needs – the light it must have if it is to be saved. We all need light. We must therefore hold forth the word of God for the world to see. I remember when I worked in a furniture factory. One part, the rough end and cabinet room, was about a quarter mile distance from the other part, the finishing room and the shipping department. The two parts were joined together by a tunnel which was partially underground. The tunnel was lighted all the way through, but for some reason or other, the light switches on one end turned the lights on only half way through and the switches on the other end turned them on in the other half. One night I had been to the rough end for something and decided to return to the shipping department (where I worked) through the tunnel. I turned on the lights at the upper end and started down; but when I got half way through, I discovered that the lights were off at the other end. I decided to go on anyway (it's hard to get lost in a tunnel), even though it was dark. Believe it or not, it was so dark in that tunnel that I lost all sense of directions; I could not tell which way I was going, up or down or crosswise. I think I realized then, as never before, the blessing of light, and how that even the smallest amount of it would restore the sense of direction. The word of life is the light of the world, and those without it have no sense of direc-

tion — they know not where they came from, why they are here, nor where they are going. Paul exhorted Christians to hold forth the word of life, the much needed light, to a crooked and perverse world.

Not many of us can do justice to a public declaration of the word (perhaps, none can), but we can do something: we can exemplify the truth in our lives. The little that we can do may be the means of bringing some lost soul to Christ. I want to read for you a little item from a bulletin that crossed my desk a few weeks back. It says: "An Atlantic passenger lay on his bunk during a storm, deathly sea-sick. A cry of 'Man overboard' was heard. He prayed, 'Lord, help the poor fellow; there is nothing I can do.' Then the thought came to him, 'At least I can put my lantern in the porthole.' This he did. The man was rescued and recounting the story next day he said, 'I was going down in darkness for the last time when someone put a light in a porthole and it shone on my hand, and a sailor in a lifeboat grabbed it and pulled me in. If it had not been for that light I would have drowned.' Weakness is no excuse for not putting forth all of the little strength we have. We cannot tell how God will use it. The little light you put forth in your daily life may be the determining factor in the salvation of some precious soul." So do what you can. In doing this, whether it be great or small, you will be holding forth the word of life and thereby working out your own salvation.

Well, lunch is on the table. Everybody is wanting to eat. My time is gone. And so I will just quit.

## Death\*

Death is so universal, so common, so certain in all the affairs of man that it seems strange to have it chosen as the topic of a lecture. It ordinarily does not occupy our thinking except in its own presence. Most of us seem to have a built-in mechanism, a faculty of the mind, that says to us when we think of death, "Not now. This is not the time or place for such thoughts. Live now and let death take its own course." And from one viewpoint this is a blessing. But this is quite a contrast to what we find in the Scriptures. The Bible discusses death freely. And, in doing so, it has done more to "Deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" than all other books, sermons, lectures, and speeches combined. The Bible ripens man for the sharp sickle — it matures him for the "pale horse and his rider." In the Bible view of death, it is neither sought nor shunned; neither welcomed nor refused; neither cherished nor dreaded, neither awed nor feared. The believer is taught to say, "Thy will be done." "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:8.) Or to let Paul state it another way: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21.) "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." (Phil. 1:23, 24.)

I like to think of the passage where Paul said, "Therefore let no man glory in man. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3:21-23.) "Death is yours!" What a statement. What does it mean? Perhaps the principle set forth in Romans 6:16 will help answer this question. "Know ye not,

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\*Delivered in the 1964 Carolina Lectures, hosted by the church in Rockingham, N. C. Bill G. Smith was the preacher and director. The actual manuscript that was used is here condensed and corrected.

that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." This simply teaches that we are the servant of whatsoever or whomsoever we serve. But the converse is also true: one is master of whatsoever or whomsoever serves him. Thus "death is yours" can be said to Christians because they are its master and not its servant. Through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ the Christian has conquered death – it is his! We then ask with Charles Frehman, "Why fear death? Death is only a beautiful adventure!"

## I. DEATH DEFINED

Death in the Bible, especially in the New Testament, can be classed under four headings: 1. Dead in sin (Eph. 2:1); 2. dead to sin (Rom. 6:1, 2); 3. physical death; and 4. eternal death (Rev. 20:14). To do justice to the subject, each class would require as much time as is allotted to us. I therefore choose to discuss only one, physical death.

"Death" is a translation of the Greek word *thanatos*, which, according to Thayer, means, "The death of the body, i.e., that separation (whether natural or violent) of the soul from the body by which the life on earth is ended." (Of course, the word *thanatos* is used in other senses, but, as I have said, this discussion is concerned only with physical death – the separation of the soul from the body.)

Perhaps one of the most interesting aspects about the subject of death is its close relation to life. Take a tiny seed!<sup>1</sup> does it

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1. Here I departed from the manuscript and said, "I had intended to find a seed and hold it up before you to illustrate this point, but I waited until the final moments of the lunch hour to do so and to my consternation I could not find one. The only thing I could find is this bean left over from lunch. And there is no life in it to illustrate. It has been cooked and in the process of cooking its life lost – it is dead!" This brought prolonged laughter. I continued, "I am therefore forced to use a dead bean to illustrate how life can come from a dying seed ... a bean from which no life can come." This brought roars of laughter. After some other remarks, which the audience thought humorous, I got back to the manuscript.



have life? Yes, if it is normal. But how does it manifest the life it has within? It must die. Jesus pointed this out by saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24.) In his great chapter on the resurrection, Paul teaches the same thing when he says: "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body ... So also in the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. 15:35–38, 42–49.)

From this we conclude that physical death is separation – a separation of the spirit from the body. James says, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26.) Even in the seed, which must die in the production of its kind, we see the idea of separation. Life separates from the old seed, leaving it dead, so that life can go on in the new. This is the way the Bible pictures death. "Then shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccl. 12:7.)

## II. VIEWS OF DEATH

Man's views of death could be placed into many different categories, but for the sake of brevity I will list them all under

three headings, namely, death as a terror, death as inevitable, and death as a blessing.

First, death as a terror. The dying words of Voltaire was, "O Christ! O Lord Jesus! I must die – abandoned by God and man." He cried these words because the horror had become so great that his unbelieving friends would not approach his bed. It is reported that after he died his nurse said repeatedly, "For all the wealth of Europe I would never see another infidel die." The queen of England must have felt a deep terror when she cried, "All my possessions for a moment of time!" The oldest man I have ever baptized was almost four score and ten years old. He had lived his whole life in misery because of an abnormal fear of death ... but he died!

Second, death as inevitable. Those who hold this view have no great horror of death, but neither does it hold for them hope. It is simply inevitable – something they cannot escape (and something they usually ignore). To them it holds nothing, it offers nothing, it gives nothing. It is a natural process.

Third, death as a blessing, a step, a growth, a change. This approximates the Christian view. The Christian does not seek death, but neither does it terrify him. He does not shun the fact nor ignore the deep mysteries, but he looks on the bright side and sees a blessing in it. This prepares his mind to accept it and quite often he eagerly awaits it as a change, a challenge, a hope!

#### **But what are some of its blessings?**

Without death there could be no birth. I cannot find words to express the joy, the ecstasy, the bliss, the happiness I experienced on the days our children were born. The heart almost explodes with joy. I felt as Susie did (Susie is our adorable adopted daughter) when Jimmy was born. When I got home from the hospital and told her that we had been blessed with a new baby boy, she asked if she could go tell our neighbors about him. I gladly consented because I too wanted them to know. But when she was gone longer than I expected, I went to the door to see what was wrong. Susie was running up and down the street, from house to house, ringing every doorbell.

In most cases before anyone had time to answer she left and ran to the next house, rang the doorbell, and then back to the first in time to meet whoever came to the door. I watched her keep this frantic pace for several minutes and then called to her asking, "Susie, what are you doing?" She replied with all the earnestness of a child's soul, "Daddy, I *have* to tell them about our new baby boy!" Oh, how I understood those words! It simply had to be told. Never in all my life have I experienced anything that will compare with the joys of birth. But if there were no death, the earth would have long ago become over-populated, making more births impossible. Thus death clears the way for birth. And the Christian can say, "When I am old let me pass off the stage of life so there can be room for some on-coming youth."

Without death, the helpless, the crippled, the aged would continue to increase. Suffering and physical deformities would be eternal. There would be no deliverance from a frail body.

Were there no death, man would grow stale and indolent: for the night when no man can work would not be coming. Death thus serves as an incentive for us to do our work ... now! What we do we must do quickly. The deadline of death is facing every one of us.

In the absence of death progress would come to a standstill. Age and experience, the desire to leave things as they are, would soon replace youth and optimism, the spirit of frontierism. All too often the world holds no challenge for the aged — they have *lived*, they have *learned*, and they *know* what can and what cannot be done. But death removes from the stage of activity the aged who resist change and replaces them with youth who eagerly seek it.

Were there no death, most of us would become friendless. It is not necessary for man to grow sour and self-centered with age, but all too often he does. It may not be necessary, but it is also true that most of the friends we make in life are made in youth. And as age progresses, for one reason or another the number of friends are gradually reduced. And since the aged

make fewer friends, were death not to relieve them, they would soon be friendless. I am glad this does not apply as much to Christians as to others.

Without death there would be no rest to look forward to. And without the rest ahead, life would be like working around the clock, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, three hundred and sixty-five days a year without any hope of relief. But there remains a rest for the people of God.

Work, for the night is coming,  
Under the sunset skies ;  
While their bright tints are glowing,  
Work, for day-light flies.  
Work till the last beam fadeth,  
Fadeth to shine no more ;  
Work while the night is dark'ning,  
When man's work is o'er.

### III. UNIVERSALITY OF DEATH

It is probably not necessary to mention the fact that death is universal, but for some reason I could not conceive of a complete lesson on this subject without some time devoted to that end. The fact that death is universal is shown by the three following facts:

1. The Bible teaches it. Only two men on record have ever escaped death, Enoch (Gen. 5:21-24; Heb. 11:5) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11), and even they were probably changed in a manner that would resemble death, since the fleshly body cannot inherit the eternal kingdom. For all others, "It is appointed unto men once to die." Of course those living when the Lord returns will not sleep (1 Cor. 15:51), but they will be changed -- the fleshly body will be exchanged for a spiritual one.

2. All our predecessors have confirmed it. They have all taken refuge in the silent cities on a thousand hills and their dust makes sacred many a hallowed spot. And still the line to the grave is endless. Soon we too shall join that ever increasing

number. But until we do we shall ask with Marcus Aurelius, only with increasing meaningfulness, "How many together with whom I came into the world are already gone out of it?"

3. I have written a poem to prove it.<sup>1</sup> Now I am not a poet, nor the son of a poet, not even the twenty-fifth cousin of one, but I had a burning to try to express an old, old story in a little different form. I have called the poem (if such it could be called), "And There Is Death".

Weary and tired from a long, hard plight  
A man came home one clear summer night.  
His house was aglow with heavenly joy  
For the day had brought him a new baby boy.  
Then the doctor called, and in a low voice said,  
"The end has come — your baby is dead."  
And there is death  
In the infant sweet!

Youth were driving in their own merry way  
When an on-coming car began to sway.  
A screech, a scream, a crash, crumpling steel, and shivering  
glass  
— Then silence! The road was blocked and none could  
pass.  
As a crowd gathered 'round, a patrolman said,  
"Stay back! Seven are hurt and five are dead!"  
And there is death  
In the young and fair!

The war was centered on an isle in the sea  
— A conflict to decide between tyranny and free.

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1. Each stanza of the poem tells of an actual death I had known, and it progresses from the infant through the hoary years, and finally to the time when death will be no more. This was to be my final effort at poetry. I had tried my hand at it a few times before this, but when this one was read I decided that a poet I was not and could never be, and that it would be a waste of time to continue trying. I have never regretted my decision, especially when I see some of the corny efforts of other preaching brethren appearing in print.

As commands were given, each soldier would say,  
"If there must be struggle, let it come in my day."  
The fight was soon over and the message was read,  
"The battle is won, but thousands are dead!"  
And there is death  
In the strong and brave!

A court was convened to review a crime  
— the cruelest recorded in the annals of time,  
In a labyrinth of death six millions had died  
And the man responsible was now being tried.  
The verdict was reached, and the sentence was read.  
The business was finished — and the culprit was dead.  
And there is death  
In basest of men!

The streets were lined with a cheering throng;  
But an assassin was there to do his wrong.  
A shot was fired from hate's own heart!  
The target struck — 'twas each of us a little part.  
A mighty nation stops and slowly bows its head  
As the word goes forth, "The President's dead!"  
And there is death  
In highest of men!

An lady old, acquainted with grief and toil and tears,  
Well passed man's allotted three score and ten years,  
Who had won for her honor the worthy woman's crown,  
Grew weaker and weaker as life's sun went down.  
The family was called; they pillowed her head  
To toil no more — for she was dead!  
And there is death  
In the hoary years!

So we each have a rendezvous — an appointment to meet,  
A resurrection of body, and with a judgment seat.  
Then with the saints the song of the triumph we'll sing,  
"O Grave, where's thy victory? O Death, where's thy  
sting?"  
And then it will be as the Bible's revealed,

The last enemy's destroyed and destiny sealed!  
And there's no death  
For death will be dead!

And so death is universal. Everything pertaining to this world must die, including poems: for one has just died!

#### IV. DEATH FROM THE BIBLE VIEWPOINT

The Bible displays a unique view of death. It is expressed in terms that imply peace, beauty, and sublimity. We can notice only a few passages at random to illustrate this.

Job, in a state of despair, says, "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." (Job 14:1, 2.) Then he asked the question that has been on every tongue: "If a man die, shall he live again?" There seemed to be no immediate answer for Job and he concluded, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." (Job 14:14.) Here he may close with a doubt, with an unanswered question, but later he burst forth with a new strain. He says, "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh<sup>1</sup> shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." (Job 19:23- 27.) Job's change came. "So Job died, being old and full of days." (Job 42:27.) He walked through the valley of the shadow of death fully expecting to see his redeemer.

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1. Whether Job said he would see God in the flesh, as the KJV renders it, or without his flesh, as others translate it, is a mooted question which will probably never be determined because the original is unclear. However, the fact that he fully expected to see his redeemer face to face after death cannot be questioned.

The death of Abraham offers some interesting insights. The records says, "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people." (Gen. 25:8.) There are five statements in this verse, and, unless they are all used exactly synonymously, we should look for a different shade of meaning in each. Let us notice each of them briefly:

First, "Abraham gave up the ghost." This simply means that he expired, ceased to breath, or died. The remainder of the statements obviously do not preclude this concept; they expand upon it – they tell us that there is more to death than just dying.

Second, "And died in a good old age." This suggests, or at least it does to my mind, that there is a good time to die. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die." (Eccl. 3:1, 2.) Some die in youth without a chance to accomplish much in life; others outlive their usefulness; but Abraham "died in a good old age" – he died at a good time.

Third, he died as "an old man." He lived one hundred and seventy-five years.

Fourth, he died "full of years." That is, he had filled his years with usefulness. Longevity alone does not make full years. It takes a full life, filled with service to both God and man, to fill the years to their fullest – to make life what it ought to be.

Fifth, he "was gathered to his people." This means that he went to the place where his people were gathered. He, at last, had found the city for which he had searched, "Which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:10.) Even at this remote period the Biblical writer gives us more than a dim glimmer of life beyond the grave. Of this expression Adam Clarke says: "His hope was crowned, for here it is expressly said, He was gathered to his fathers: surely not the bodies of his sleeping ancestors, who were buried in Chaldea



and not in Canaan, nor with his fathers in any sense, for he was deposited in the cave where his wife alone slept; but he was gathered to the 'spirits of just men made perfect, and to the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven!' Heb. xii.23." (Clarke's Commentary, Vol. I, p. 155.)

How unique! Abraham died at a good time, an old man, full of years, and was gathered to his people.

The death of David beautifully illustrates the Biblical view of death. David had lived a useful life and was called a man after God's own heart, even though he had sinned grievously. He, as king, had brought the kingdom of Israel through many a stormy battle to a new height of splendor and glory. He was a major link in God's chain to send a Redeemer to lost man. Considering the millions of words that have been written about other popular rulers, it is nothing short of amazing to find so little said about the death of David. In a very few words the Bible records the fact: "Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die ... So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David." (1 Kings 2:1, 10.) In his sermon at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul referred to David's death, saying, "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption." (Acts 13:36.) How simple! How serene! How sublime! "David fell on sleep!"

In the New Testament we get the same picture. Take Lazarus for example. He lived with his sisters, Mary and Martha, in the town of Bethany. Jesus loved them and often resorted to their home for rest. Lazarus grew sick and the sisters sent for Jesus, who was not then in Judaea. But Jesus did not go to them immediately. Later he said to His disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead." (John 11:11-14.) Jesus thus spoke of death in such a way as to cause His disciples to think that He spoke of sleep. Death — "taking of rest in sleep!" How peaceful! How provocative! How profound!

Stephen was the first Christian to die a martyr, and his death reveals the early Christians' view of death. Luke states, "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." (Acts 7:54-60.) He commended his spirit to the Lord and fell asleep. Nothing here to dread or fear. "He fell asleep!"

Finally, in studying the Bible view of death, we need to note the death of Christ. Perhaps the death of Christ has had more said and written about it than all other deaths combined — and Christians ought to blush with shame if this is not the case. His death was a death with a purpose, a vicarious death, a death to destroy the power of death. He died that others might live. But it does not fall within the scope of this study to discuss at length the purpose of His death. That remains to be done at another place and time. But we do need to observe it in our effort to depict the unique view of death that is everywhere taught in the Scriptures. All the writers of the first four books of the New Testament record His death. Luke tells us that just before He died Jesus said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, (or yielded) up the ghost." (Matt. 27:50, Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30.) That is all there is to it: death is simply giving up the spirit — placing the spirit into the hands of God!

## V. THE DEATH OF A CHRISTIAN

The death of a Christian, or the Christian's view of death, is not different from that I have just discussed, but I want to enlarge upon this point in order to show that death from the Christian's viewpoint is a unique experience.

First, death for a Christian is a happy state. John wrote, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea saith, the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13.) The dead in Christ are blessed ... happy. The happy dead! What a startling concept. No wonder the sting is gone! No wonder the Christian has hope, even in death.

But even more startling, there is a sense in which those who die in Christ are not dead at all. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11:25, 26.) Physically the child of God dies as all others, but his absence from the body causes no dread or discomfort because he, the real man, is at home with the Lord. Thus Paul could say, "For we know, that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight.) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." (2 Cor. 5:1-9.)

Second, the death of a Christian is the death of the righteous. Balak, the king of Moab, brought Balaam the son of Beor to Moab to curse Israel as they passed from Egypt to the land of Canaan. Balaam defying God's instructions, because of his love for the reward offered by Balak, went. From the top of a rock he looked out over Israel's camping thousands. He opened his mouth to speak a curse but instead, to the utter astonishment

of Balak, the Lord spoke in a blessing through him. Balaam concluded the blessing by saying, "Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" (Num. 23:10.) Unfortunately for Balaam, he did not die the death of the righteous. But Christians can and do. In fact, everyone can who wishes to. But to die the death of the righteous one must live the life of the righteous. One cannot live one way and die another. The death of the righteous is a unique experience -- a venture that holds many promising rewards.

Third, the death of a Christian is a death of hope. A child of God does not believe that death ends all. Death is just another step in God's scheme of things. Thus every Christian can truthfully say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." (Ps. 23:4.) He fears no evil because his Lord and Master has gone the way before him, triumphed over death, and has promised that by His power and grace all His people shall overcome. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death." (Prov. 14:32.) This is why Paul, when death was swiftly approaching, could say, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:6-8.) With Paul, all Christians can die in hope.

Death for a Christian is simply fulfilling a part of God's purpose and plan for him. He looks upon dying as a transition, a change, a step. This sentiment is expressed by Alexander Pope in a poem called, "Triumph Over Death."

Vital spark of heavenly flame!  
Quit, oh quit this mortal frame:  
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,  
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying!

Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,  
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; Angels say,  
Sister Spirit, come away.

What is this absorbs me quite?  
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,  
Drowns my spirit, draws my breath?  
Tell me, my Soul, can this be Death?

The world recedes; it disappears!  
Heaven opens on my eyes! My ears

With sounds seraphic ring:  
Lord, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!  
O Grave! where is thy victory?  
O Death! where is thy sting?

You should observe the progression in these beautiful words. In the first stanza, death is approaching. There is a trembling, hoping, lingering, and, perhaps, a dread, but there is also a desire to "languish into life." In the second stanza, death quietly steals over him and leaves a question as to what has happened. He is surprised at the sensation and wonders if this can really be death. In the final stanza the world recedes and heaven opens to his eyes. It is all over, and the soul flies away victoriously. And so it is with a Christian. He must meet death, but victory is sure. Death will be swallowed up. And the child of God will live forever.

In conclusion let me emphasize the fact that the Lord has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He told Ezekiel to "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked: but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. 33:11.) The wicked are "Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12.) The death of the wicked is therefore a total loss.

So let me die the death of a Christian! Let my last end be like his! And then I will have nothing to lose, but everything to gain in death. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Rev. 21:4.)

In view of all that has been said, we should not concern ourselves so much with death, but with that which comes after death. It is life, eternal life, that counts, not death.

When the great plants of the cities have turned out their  
last finished work;  
When the merchants have sold their last yard of silk  
And dismissed the tired, weary clerk;  
When the banks have raked in their last dollar  
And paid their last dividend;  
When the judge of the earth shall say, "Closed for the night"  
And ask for the balance — what then?

When the singers have sung the last anthem,  
The minister offered his last prayer;  
When the people have heard the last sermon  
And the sound has died out on the air;  
When the Bible lies closed on the pulpit  
And the pews are all empty of men;  
When one stands facing his record  
And is judged by the Bible — what then?

When the actors have played their last drama  
And the mimic has made his last fun;  
When the film has flashed its last picture  
And the billboard displayed its last run;  
When the crowds seeking pleasure have vanished  
And gone out in the darkness again;  
When the trumpet of ages has sounded  
And we stand in His presence — what then?

When the bugle's call sinks into silence  
And the long marching column stands still;

When the captain repeats his last orders  
And they have captured the last fort and hill;  
When the flag has been hurled from its masthead  
And the wounded and dying checked in;  
When the world that rejected its Savior  
Is asked for a reason — what then?

— Author Unknown.

# God's Plan For Fathers In The Christian Home\*

The worthy praise of mothers and their role in the home has often overshadowed the divine responsibility of fathers in rearing children, in setting a proper example, in training children, etc. It is the purpose of this study to call attention to God's plan for fathers in the Christian home.

## I. SOME FATHERS IN THE BIBLE

### 1. Good fathers:

- a. Abraham, Gen. 18:19.
- b. Enoch, Gen. 5:22-25.

### 2. Fathers who failed:

- a. Eli, 1 Sam. 2:22-26; 3:11-14.
- b. Samuel, 1 Sam. 8:1-5. This is tragic. Samuel spent his life in service to God. But he lost his own children. Preachers should take special note of this.

### 3. Fathers who were good but failed in some respects:

- a. Jacob. He blotted his fatherhood by partiality. Gen. 37:3, 4.
- b. David. Failed to teach Absalom respect. 2 Sam. 18:29-33.

## II. THE SCRIPTURAL ROLE OF A CHRISTIAN FATHER

### 1. He is also a husband. Eph. 5:25.

- a. In the anxieties of family life it is often easy to neglect the wife.
- b. The children come and go, but the wife remains. Prov. 5:18.
- c. Give honor to the wife. 1 Pet. 3:7.

### 2. The father is the head of the home. Eph. 5:22, 23; 6:1-3.

- a. He must lead the family.
- b. He is responsible for all decision.
- c. He rules his house. 1 Tim. 3:4, 5; Titus 1:6; Eph. 6:4.

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\*Delivered at the Carolina Lectures hosted by the Northeast congregation in Greenville, S. C. in 1965. Burl Curtis was the local preacher.



3. The father is the provider for the family.
  - a. The wife cannot be sued for non-support.<sup>1</sup>
  - b. The very nature of man seems to demand this. A quick way to a divorce court is for a wife to make an able man dependent.
  - c. 1 Timothy 5:8 is written in the Christian man's heart.
  - d. Of course there are exceptions to this rule. And may God richly bless those noble women who have had the support of the family thrust upon them!
4. The father is responsible for the children's training. Prov. 22:6.
  - a. He must love his children. 2 Sam. 18:29-33.
  - b. He must see that children are a blessing from the Lord. Ps. 127:3-5.
  - c. He is not to provoke them to wrath. Eph. 6:4.
  - d. He is to bring them up in the nurture (instruction) and admonition (putting into the mind) of the Lord. Eph. 6:4.
  - e. He is to administer discipline. "A juvenile delinquent gets on the wrong track because of a misplaced switch." As a principle, study Prov. 13:24; 22:15; 23:13, 14; 19:15.
5. The father is responsible for setting proper standards and examples:
  - a. In education.
  - b. In social conduct.
  - c. In reading matter.
  - d. In family worship.
  - e. In conversation.
  - f. In building attitudes.
  - g. In habit forming.

## CONCLUSION

When fathers fill God's plan for them they have a full-time job. But is there a more vital role in the world than that of a Christian father?

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1. While this was true at the time this lecture was delivered, it will have probably been changed by the time you read this. However the principle here set forth will always remain true: the father is responsible for the support of the family unless there are circumstances that make it impossible or impractical for him to do so.

## Roots Of Modernism\*

The subject assigned me for this time is the "Roots of Modernism", but I suspect there are too many roots in my subject. Modernism has but one root, and that root is unbelief.

All false religions are, to some extent, counterfeits of the true, but the poorest counterfeit ever encountered by Christians is that of modernism.<sup>1</sup>

In studying the root of modernism, let us observe:

### I. DISBELIEF OF THE BIBLE HAS RESULTED IN A "NEW APPROACH" TO ITS STUDY. The "new approach" is the results of:

1. Denying its inspiration (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:21). Harry Emerson Fosdick said, "No well-instructed mind, I think, could hold that (inspiration) now." (*The Modern Use of the Bible*, p. 30.)
2. Denying its credibility. Credibility is simply the reliability of the Scriptures. Are the books of the Bible true historical documents?
3. Denying its integrity. Integrity means that it has been transmitted to us without material change or without being corrupted.
4. Denying its genuineness. A book is genuine if it is the work of the man whose name it bears.
5. Denying its authority. In the hands of a modernist the Bible is an authority in the same sense as last year's calendar — good then but out of date now.

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\*Delivered at the Carolina Lectures at the Northeast church in Greenville, S. C. in 1965. I actually spoke at the three or four sessions but all except two were improvised after I got there.

1. At this time I had never met a liberal in the church, but the winds of change were blowing and the editor of the *Firm Foundation* was warning that the next big battle in the church would be with liberalism. The next year (1966) Ira Rice published his first volume of *Axe on the Root* and flushed some liberals out into the open. Suddenly they began to appear from everywhere. Where did so many come from so quickly? This is still a mystery to me.

II. DISBELIEF OF THE BIBLE HAS LED TO THE DENIAL OF ITS ACCOUNT OF CREATION. The theory of organic evolution, both atheistic and theistic, replaces the fact of creation.

III. DISBELIEF IN THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL HAS LED TO MATERIALISM.

IV. DISBELIEF IN MIRACLES HAS LED TO THEIR DENIAL.

1. Jesus is nothing more than a good man, born out of wedlock. (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25.)
2. Miracles are contrary to nature -- all things must be explained in terms of the natural. (Cf. Fosdick, *The Modern Use of the Bible*, pp. 155, 156, 163.)

V. DISBELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD HAS LED TO A DENIAL OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. This takes some doing and many efforts have been put forth to explain this fact. Only three are here considered:

1. The swoon theory. This says that animation was suspended and the cool tomb revived Him.
2. The hallucination theory.
3. The theft theory. This is the oldest (Matt. 28:11-15) and most improbable and unreasonable of them all (Matt. 27:62-66).

## CONCLUSION

Thus the root of modernism is *unbelief*. There are many root-lets, but they are all dependent upon the main root for survival.

## Going Into All The World\*

Man thrives on a challenge. God knew this when He made man. And so His very first instructions to man was to "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." (Gen. 1:28.) Ever since then the quest before man arouses the latent powers within him. It was in response to a challenge that the American people in the past two centuries have carved out a vast and powerful nation from a nearly barren wilderness. In response to the challenge man is now probing the secrets of the planets and outer space. He continues to probe for the mysteries of the sea, the atom, and even life itself. God has always given man a challenge that is worthy of the best that is in him — He does not deal out easy tasks or trifling matters.

The more we learn the more there seems to be to learn. Take for example the universe. When I was a child growing up in the poverty stricken mountains of East Tennessee it was rather simple to explain the universe to my mind. To me, it was simply a starry dome encircling a valley surrounded by high mountains on all sides. I thought if I could get to the top of the mountains I could touch the sky! But as I grew the simplicity began to vanish and I learned that the earth extended beyond the mountains — it spread itself from sea to shining sea. It was not long until I understood that even beyond the sea, with its great width, depth, and mystery, teeming millions lived in lands brightened by the same sun which shone in our little valley. After this came the knowledge that the sun is the center around which the earth and eight other planets revolve. The vastness had become incredible. But after this came the startling knowledge that the sun is just one star in a galaxy of stars called the Milky Way — a Milky Way 100,000 light years in length. With a little more advancement came the staggering information (knowledge that is still far beyond my dense power to com-

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\*Delivered at the Carolina Lectures in Charleston, S. C. in 1967. Rhoden Presnell, who in later years came to be a very close friend, was the preacher. Because other activities had not taken their full time, I had well over an hour to speak ... and I used it all!

prehend) that the Mikly Way is only one in millions of galaxies that are sprinkled throughout the infinite space. And even this is not the end: astronomers now astonish us by hinting that beyond the galaxies there are vast and unexplored frontiers far exceeding anything the mind of man has ever conceived. How marvelous are the works of God ... and the challenges He places before us.

But when all is said and done, the greatest challange ever given to the sons of men is the challenge of the Great Commission, the challenge to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in 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." (Matt. 28:19, 20.) It is the challenge to "Go ye into all the world and preach and gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15.) What a gigantic command! What a tremendous task! What a stupendous challange! What a thrilling adventure! The Great Commission is God's challenge to every generation of Christians. It is God's challenge to you: it is God's challenge to me. But if we are to accept this challenge, there are some demands that must be met.

## I.

Going into all the world requires a field of labor. In one of His parables, Jesus said, "The field is the world." (Matt. 13:38.) By "the world" Jesus did not mean the physical planet upon which we live, but the living eternal souls who live on the planet. And in this sense John says, "The whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John 5:19.) Jesus adds, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12.) Thus the field of labor is the whole world — all the people of the world.

There are two facts confronting us that are fearful to contemplate.

First, there is the present population explosion. Every day the world is growing larger. Just a decade ago the population of the world stood at approximately three billion. Today it is

reaching near the four billion mark.<sup>1</sup> The projected figure for the year 2000 is almost eight billion. Broken down into figures that the mind can grasp, this simply means that 106 million babies are born each year, or a total increase in population of sixty-five million per year. This is an average daily increase of 178,028 souls. Thus the world into which we are to go has never been larger ... and it is getting larger every day.

Second, the Lord's church is growing smaller in proportion to world population every time the clock ticks. And this is true in spite of the fact that we are said to be the fastest growing religious organization in the world.<sup>2</sup> The 1966 Yearbook of American Churches lists the growth of churches of Christ at 4.5% as compared with a 1.3% increase in U.S. population. This is certainly encouraging — we are gaining grounds in America, but this has very little bearing on world outlook. When the total picture is considered, the membership of churches of Christ (in proportion to the population) grows smaller every single second. To see the problem, consider this fact: the source quoted above says that the membership of the church for 1966 was up by 100,000. With this as an actual increase, there must have been at least 150,000 baptisms. But working with that figure, it simply means that for every person we baptized the population of the world increased by almost 400. Thus with each passing day we fall farther and farther behind and the church in reality grows smaller and smaller every minute the world stands.

So never before in the history of man has the field of labor been so challenging ... or so demanding. Our Lord said to His disciples, and it would apply with equal force now, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields: for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathered fruit unto life eternal: that both he

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1. All these figures were approximately correct in 1967. But to be correct now they would have to be updated. The population continues to expand at an amazing rate.

2. While this was probably true then, during the next decade the growth of the church slowed down radically.

that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And therein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." (John 4:35-38.)

## II.

Going into all the world requires a worthy cause for which to labor. Our minds have been trained (if indeed it is not inborn) to think in terms of cause and effect. But even more, every effect must have an adequate cause. And when we think of an effect in terms as enormous as preaching the gospel to every creature on earth in this generation, what cause could be adequate to explain it? There can be only one cause — Jesus Christ our Lord! Some unknown writer has said of Him:

"More than nineteen hundred years ago there was a Man born contrary to the laws of life. This Man lived in poverty and was reared in obscurity. He did not travel extensively. Only once did He cross the boundary of the country in which He lived; that was during His exile in childhood.

"He possessed neither wealth nor influence. His relatives were inconspicuous, uninfluential, and had neither training nor education.

"In infancy He startled a king; in childhood He puzzled the doctors; in manhood He ruled the course of nature, walked upon billows as if pavements, and hushed the sea to sleep.

"He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charges for His service.

"He never wrote a book, and yet all the libraries of the country could not hold the books that have been written about Him.

"He never wrote a song, and yet He has furnished the theme for more songs than all the song writers combined.

"He never founded a college, but all the schools put together cannot boast of having as many students.

"He never practiced medicine, and yet He has healed more broken hearts than all the doctors far and near.

"He never marshalled an army, nor drafted a soldier, nor fired a gun, and yet no leader ever had more volunteers who have, under His orders, made more rebels stack arms and surrender without a shot being fired.

"Every seventh day the wheels of commerce cease their turning and multitudes wend their way to worshipping assemblies to pay homage and respect to Him.

"The names of the past proud statesmen of Greece and Rome have come and gone: but the name of this Man abounds more and more. Though time has spread nineteen hundred years between the people of this generation and the scene of His crucifixion, yet he still lives. Herod could not kill Him, Satan could not seduce Him, death could not destroy Him, and the grave could not hold Him.

"He stands forth upon the highest pinnacle of heavenly glory, proclaimed of God, acknowledged by angels, adored by saints, feared by devils, as the living, personal Christ, our Lord and Savior."

Another concluded his remarks by saying:

"I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever sailed, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as has that ONE SOLITARY LIFE."

But for Him to be an adequate cause, we must whole-heartedly accept Him as the Lord and Master of our lives, both in faith and practice. We must not be as the following who are described on a slab in a cathedral in Germany:



Ye call me Master, and obey me not  
Ye call me Light, and see me not  
Ye call me Way, and walk me not  
Ye call me Life, and desire me not  
Ye call me Wise, and follow me not  
Ye call me Fair, and love me not  
Ye call me Rich, and ask me not  
Ye call me Eternal, and seek me not  
Ye call me Gracious, and trust me not  
Ye call me Noble, and serve me not  
Ye call me Mighty, and honor me not  
Ye call me Just, and fear me not  
If I condemn you, blame me not.

Rather we must call Him Master and obey Him; call Him Light and see by Him; call Him Way and walk by Him; call Him Life and desire Him; call Him Wise and follow Him; call Him Fair and love Him; call Him Rich and ask of Him; call Him Eternal and seek Him; call Him Gracious and trust Him; Call Him Noble and serve Him; call Him Mighty and honor Him; call Him Just and fear Him. And then He will save us, save us because we have made Him our all in all.

Thus the cause of our going is Christ Himself – we are going for Him, nor for ourselves. It is under His blood stained banner we march. It is His system that we believe will cure the ills of the world. With this in mind we can joyfully face the colossal task before us, proudly proclaiming that we know nothing but Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2.) Christ is therefore an exceedingly adequate cause to send His people into all the world with the message of salvation.

### III.

Going into all the world requires a need. None would be so adventurous as to tackle this task without first seeing that there is a need equal to the challenge. But what need could be so great, so demanding? Nothing, absolutely nothing, but the salvation of human souls. Men are lost – lost to the world, lost to good works, lost to God, lost to heaven, lost to their families, lost to themselves, lost in sin – lost and on the road to eternal

destruction. In order for us to better understand this terrible state, it might help to divide the lost into two categories, the alien sinner and the erring child of God.

There is first the alien sinner. An alien is one who does not have citizenship. In this case he has never been born again and consequently is not in the kingdom of God. Alien sinners fall into two classes:

First, there are those who have heard the gospel but have rejected it. They are lost by choice.

Second, there are those who have never heard of the true God and His plan to save. They too are lost, but not necessarily by their own choice.

Both classes are mentioned by Paul when he says, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when 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." (2 Thess. 1:7, 8.) But regardless of the class, all aliens are lost, and God has given us a five-fold picture of them. Paul states, "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12.)

1. The alien is without Christ. To be without Christ is to be lost — to be away from the only Savior of souls! To be without Christ is to be without the principles of Christ, without the love of Christ, with the blood of Christ, without the system of Christ, without the fellowship of Christ, without the only one who can deliver us from the present evil world.

2. He is an alien from the commonwealth of Israel. He has no citizenship in the kingdom of heaven. This means that he has not been born again (John 3:5), not been converted (Matt. 18:3), not been translated out of the kingdom of darkness (Col. 1:13), and not done the will of God (Matt. 7:21.) He has no coun-

try for his own. His citizenship is in the world and it will soon pass away (1 John 2:15—17.)

3. The alien is a "stranger from the covenants of promise." In my conception, the covenants of promise are simply the covenants culminating in the New Testament, the revealed will of God for all ages to come. The promise pertains to the spiritual blessings which are found only in Christ, such as the forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life. How sad to be a stranger from such promises!

4. The alien has no hope. Of all the deplorable states in which man might plunge himself, none could be worse than this. Hope is the anchor of the soul (Heb. 6:19), the full assurance of faith (Heb. 11:1; 6:11), and that by which one is saved (Rom. 8:24.) But the alien has no hope — no hope for the forgiveness of sins, no hope for the future, no hope for a resurrection to a better state, no hope of eternal life! Such a state seems unendurable. Dante said of his *Inferno*, "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here." But the alien has no hope, not even before he enters the *Inferno*.

5. The alien is without God in the world. But when man is without God, he makes for himself gods of clay. "There is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many). But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:4—6.) Few sights are more pitiful than to see rational men bow down and worship the creation of their own hands — to worship the creature rather than the Creator. Thus man either worships and serves the true God or else he turns to idols — made by man. To say that one is without God is, in essence, to say that he is an idolater.

It would be difficult indeed to draw a darker or more hopeless picture than this, "Without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of

promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Yet this is the picture of all who are outside the family of God.

Second, another category of the lost is the erring children of God. Unlike the alien, the erring child has experienced the new birth (John 3:5) and has citizenship in the kingdom of God. But he has sinned — he has turned back to the beggarly elements of the world. He has crucified to himself the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame (Heb. 6:6.) He has trodden under foot the Son of God and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29.) This is an extremely serious state and no one should deceive himself into thinking that such a person remains in a saved relationship with God. Even though he has obeyed the Lord in the past, and has been acceptable to Him, he is now lost — lost because of sin. "For if after they have as-caped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Pet. 2:20–22.) This passage teaches that the condition of an erring child of God is worse than that of an alien sinner. But why should this be true? Because the erring sins against the light of truth and knowledge.

God has also given us a fivefold description of an erring child. To the church of the Laodiceans the Lord said, "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." (Rev. 3:16.) He then adds, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." (Rev. 3:17.) While they were unaware of their spiritual condition, they were still:

1. Wretched — reduced to the severest slavery to sin; contemptible, despicable, mean.

2. Miserable — a condition of deplorable pity; a life without pleasure or profit ;useless and serving no purpose.
3. Poor — having lost the true riches of faith.
4. Blind — blind to truth and right, to their own lost condition. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts." (Eph. 4:18.) "There are none as those who will not see."
5. Naked — not clothed upon with Christ or not having the benefits of His righteousness.

Thus men are lost, whether they be alien sinners or erring Christians. And when a soul is lost, there is no need in the world as great as his need of salvation. Jesus asked, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26.)

Souls are lost! The need is thus great enough to send us into all the world.

#### IV

Going into all the world requires a worthwhile object to be won. The object before us is the souls, the hearts, and the minds of men. Ours is truly a battle for the devotion of man's mind. We are not trying to win them to some theory of philosophy of our own; we have no desire to change their social or political status (unless one or both are wrong); we do not want to win followers to ourselves or make our own welfare secure; our battle is for the devotion of men's hearts to Christ. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6:12.) "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:3-5.) Thus the battle line

is drawn: every high thing, every thought, every imagination must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ.

The task before us is not an easy one. It will take all of us, all of our devotion, all of our means, all the time to win the world for Christ. Nothing, absolutely nothing, must detain us. The Master Himself said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." (Luke 19:10.) This must be our concern — we must seek out the lost and point them to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

But where are the lost? Where is the uttermost? Where shall we start?

For those who are not Christians, the uttermost is your own hearts. Conquer that and then the horizon broadens. For those who are already citizens of the Lord's kingdom, the world lies beyond. It may be across the breakfast table — a companion, a father, a mother, children, etc. It may be across the backyard fence — a neighbor or friend. It may be your town, state, your country. Or it may be beyond the borders of your homeland.

There are so many eternal souls in the world that it is almost impossible for the human mind to conceive of them. Americans comprise only six per cent of the world population, and only one and one half per cent of Americans are members of the Lord's church. The greater part of the world lies beyond — in India, Africa, Indonesia, Russia, China, or on 30,000 inhabited islands with no known New Testament church. The world is wherever there is a lost soul.

Our commission will not have reached its end until we have reached the final object of our going — the final heart to be won. As long as there remains one soul to be won for our Lord we must keep going. Each must start where he is, and, like leaven, work from center to circumference.

## V.

Going into all the world requires a plan or an organization.

The job is much too vast to undertake in a haphazard way. But the plan must be simple, safe and sure.

The only organization known in the New Testament times through which all Christians worked was the church, and the only organization known to the church was the local congregation. Each congregation was independently organized, ruled by elders, served by deacons, and made up of all Christians in a given locality. The church was built and maintained under the immediate direction of inspired men. We must therefore conclude that it was as God planned it — it was God's pattern for God's people in all centuries. Thus the plan or organization for going into all the world with the truth is the church.

With its simple structure, the early church shook the mightiest empire that had, up to that time, ever been conceived by the mind of man. Its message penetrated to the very heart of Roman society. Even Caesar's household had its saints (Phil. 4: 22.) Beginning on Pentecost with only a handful of unknown men, the church soon spread to the farthest corners of the earth. Nothing to compare with its enormous growth is to be found in the annals of history. It is true that other movements, such as the recent expansion of Communism, have grown more rapidly in number, but in each instance growth has been more by force than by persuasion. The church of Christ, at its earliest inception as well as through its long history, has grown by the force of its message rather than by coercive arms. Within 30 years' time, Paul could say that the gospel had been "preached to every creature which is under heaven." (Col. 1:23.) And that with no organization but the local congregation.

But will such a simple organization work in today's complex world? Indeed it will. And it is doubtful that any other organization would work. Thus God has given us a world to reach; He has given us an organization through which to reach the world; it is now our duty to utilize God's plan and reach the world. I know of no better procedure for the church today to follow than that given in the Great Commission and followed by the primitive church. Jesus said to His chosen apostles, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in

Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8.) Applying this principle to ourselves, it simply means to begin where we are, working first in our own city, then in our state, then in our country, and then finally in all the world.

God’s plan will always work when we work God’s plan.

## VI.

Going into all the world requires workers. It is not enough just to talk about the work; the work must be done, and it takes workers to do the work. Christians are the only workers that Christ has in the world. They must either take the message to the lost or else the message will never be taken. They are members of His body (1 Cor. 12:12.) This simply means that Christians are the instruments through which Christ works. Christ has no feet but our feet to go; He has no hands but our hands to work; He has no heart but our hearts to be concerned; He has no tongue but our tongues to tell the “old, old story.” Going into all the world is a job for Christians – they will either do it or else it will not be done.

Every Christian should fall into one of the two classes: he should be a go-er or a sender. I am reminded of an incident that happened to Jim Bob Jarrell, editor of *North American Christian*. He relates it as follows: “As I was riding on a passenger train, a vendor came by calling out, ‘HOT CHICKEN SANDWICHES!’ I bought one and began eating it, only to discover that it wasn’t HOT and that it wasn’t CHICKEN – it was TUNA! When the vendor came back through the car, I stopped him and said, ‘Say, that “hot chicken sandwich” you sold me is good, but it isn’t hot and it isn’t chicken – not a “hot chicken sandwich”.’ Without batting an eye, the vendor replied, ‘Boss, that’s just the name of it.’ ” And to call one a Christian who neither goes nor sends is like calling a cold Tuna Sandwich a hot chicken sandwich – that’s just what he is called and not what he is!

When Jesus called Peter and Andrew, He said unto them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” (Matt. 4:19.)



"Fishers of men" should describe all Christians. But to be a successful fisher one must have certain characteristics.

1. He must go where the fish are. And fishers of men must go where men are. We must go to the large cities, to the overpopulated countries, to the uncivilized tribes — wherever men are we must go. As Jimmy Lovell often says, "No man has the right to hear the gospel twice until all have had a chance to hear it once."

2. He must use the right bait. We must fish for souls with the gospel of Christ. No other bait is required; no other bait is needed. The gospel is God's remedy for the ills of the world — it is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16.)

3. He must use the proper equipment. One does not go fishing with a pitchfork or a cross-cut saw. In the word of God, the Christian is fully equipped to every good work; he has all that is needed to reach the lost.

4. He must pursue his sport — that is, he must keep on going. If he fails at one place he goes to another. Fishers of men must keep on going, going until the last soul has been reached.

5. He must have an abundance of patience. He may have to fish all day, in any kind of weather, before he gets a bite. Perseverance is the secret of successful soul winning. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.)

6. He learns that he cannot catch fish unless they are biting. There are areas of the world where the hearts of people are more receptive to truth than in others. J. C. Bailey tells of seeing people so hungry for truth that they would take tracts and read them until all the words were faded away. He said they would then return them and ask that he reprint them. This is happening in India right now.<sup>1</sup> And probably never before since

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1. At this time, brother Bailey and his co-workers had baptized more than 6,000

apostolic times has "biting" been better the world over for the fishers of men.

7. He must keep what he catches ... if they are worth keeping. Here is a sad reflection of modern fishers of men. It is conservatively estimated that we lose more than fifty per cent of all new converts to Christ in the first seven years. The loss slows down after that but there is a constant drain. And when a church says, "We are holding our own," it means, "We are baptizing as many as we are losing (and that can be a pretty impressive number at times). A church must grow rapidly to remain the same size. Thus we have no choice in the matter: we must either grow or perish. And we must somehow learn to keep more of what we catch.

It has long been my conception that the church of the Lord will grow in direct proportion to the work we put into it; and the work we do depends on the number of workers dedicated to the task of proclaiming the gospel to the whole world. Thus going into all the world requires workers.

## VII.

Going into all the world requires a message worth taking. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15.) That is the message. Is it worth taking? Frankly, if the gospel of Christ is not worth taking into all the world, we might as well give up now — we might as well abandon the previous old ship of faith and let it sink to destruction in the sea of oblivion. The value of the message must be worth the expenditures of time, money and human lives that it will take to go into all the world. And perhaps here is one of our greatest weaknesses: we simply are not sold on the worth of the gospel. It is commonly reported, and I partly believe it, that Christians spend more on dog food than they do to preach the

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people in two years' time. The next few years saw that number shot to over 100,000. It was the most exciting missionary story among us during the 1960's.

gospel to ninety-four per cent of the world's population. But that is not all: we spend more for social clubs, tobacco, cokes, chewing gum, etc. than we give to the cause of lost souls. Why is this? It is simply because we have not been sold on the value of the gospel. It has meant so little to us in our lives (because we have only half-heartedly accepted it) that we think it would mean little or nothing to the teeming millions in other lands. This is the secret of our failure: we are not sold on the gospel as the world's greatest need.

Ira North relates the following: "One of our business men was a little hard to sell on this new 3,000 seat auditorium. And I am glad he was because, brother, he believes in paying his debts. He believes when you make an obligation, be honest about it. We need men like that. But he said one day, 'You made a statement that shook me up and sold me. When you got up and said, "I'll sell everything I have to meet the payments on those bonds if necessary." ' He said, 'All right, if you will sell your home, I'll sell my home. If you will give everything you've got that's necessary to meet the obligation of the church, I'll give everything I have.' " With dedication such as that, it is no wonder that Madison, Tennessee has the largest meeting house owned by churches of Christ anywhere in the world.<sup>1</sup> That kind of devotion will take us into all the world!

When I moved my family to Wilmington, we consented to go there on a salary so small that we did not know how we could live on it (and we did not know where all of that was coming from). But salary was not the motivating factor. The thing that sold me on the work was the devotion of one young man, Eddie Canfield.<sup>2</sup> He stood before the audience just before we left, after our trial sermons, and said, with tears in his eyes, "I don't

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1. This may not be true now, although I do not know of an exception, but it was in 1967 when this lecture was delivered.

2. Eddie was one of the most devoted men it has ever been my pleasure to work with. But unfortunately he left the church about eighteen months after I moved to Wilmington, entangling himself in a marriage which he obviously thought was unscriptural. When he left, the majority of the leaders in the church thought it best to change preachers. While perhaps nothing has ever deflated my ego more, this was, as the future proved, a good decision for me ... and perhaps for the church as well.

know how we'll pay all our bills, but if you will come and help us we'll do it somehow. I do not have to drive a new car, but we do have to preach the gospel. And we need your help." He was saying, "If it comes to that, I will sell my new car to enable us to get the gospel to the people of Wilmington." That is the kind of devotion needed ... the kind of devotion we must have if we are to get the job done. If the gospel is worth taking at all it is worth giving all to take it.

Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Rom. 1:16, 17.) A number of vital things are either implied or stated in this profound passage:

1. The world (which means each man in the world) is lost without the gospel. Sometimes we hear brethren arguing that the heathen could not be lost because they have never had a chance to be saved. But this is precisely why they are lost. They have not the means by which they can be saved. And as long as we feel that they will be saved without the gospel, we will make little or no effort to take it to them. We need to learn one lesson well, namely, that without the gospel men are lost.

2. God has provided the means of salvation for the lost, but the means are contained in the gospel. There is no other source of salvation revealed to man.

3. The gospel is the power of God to save. This simply means that the power of God is exercised through the gospel. This in no way limits the power of God. He has many powers, many of which are beyond our power to grasp. But His power to save it is the gospel.

4. As far as revelation is concerned, the gospel is the only means by which God exercised His power to save. It is highly probable that God could have chosen to save in many different ways (just so long as they included the sacrificial death of Christ), but His choice was to save through the gospel. Thus

where the gospel has not gone, where it has not been taken by one means or another, God is powerless to save.

5. The gospel is God's power to save from sin. The word "power" comes from the Greek word *dunamis*. From it we get such words as dynamite, dynamo, dynamic, etc., all words of power. The gospel is God's dynamite to blast out sin, the love of sin, the power of sin, the guilt of sin, and the practice of sin. Sin has power, but the gospel is far more powerful — powerful enough to destroy the power of sin over us.

6. The righteousness of God (right as is revealed by God) is revealed in the gospel. "The just shall live by faith" — that is, the just shall live by that which is revealed in the gospel, the righteousness of God.

7. Christians are the messengers of the gospel. We are the instruments through which the gospel is conveyed, and if we do not take the gospel into all the world, the world will not have the power of God to save. In this sense (and what a fearful responsibility it is) we hold the salvation of the world in our hands.

Is the gospel worth taking to the world? If it is not worth taking to everyone else then it is not worth keeping for ourselves. If it is not worth keeping, then let us stop pretending that it is God's power to save. Our choice is clear: we must either arise and go or else we must abandon our faith. The gospel is the remedy for all the ills of the world or else it is nothing.

In conclusion let me cite for you one more passage. Paul said, "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, of life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (I Cor. 3:21–23.) Underline the expression, "The world is yours." This was said to Christians. Let us therefore arise and take it ... take it for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

## GO

Useless to stay in your doorway and beckon --  
Those who need most will never come in:  
Fighting the devil with art and with culture --  
How he must laugh at his stronghold of sin!

Go -- to the sheep that are scattered and fainting,  
Having no shepherd, and tell them to come:  
Go -- to the highways and tell every creature  
Still the feast waiteth, and yet there is room.

Go -- the time shortens, the night is approaching --  
Harvests are whit'ning and reapers are few;  
Somewhere, perhaps, in the darkness are dying  
Souls that might enter the kingdom with you.

Go -- church of God -- for he goeth before you,  
And all the way ye take He doth know.  
On the bright morrow He'll say, "Come, ye blessed,"  
But till the dawning the message is "Go!"

— Author Unknown.

## Those To Whom God Is Not Dead \*

The apostle Paul stood before the Areopagus, in Athens, Greece, and declared: "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he 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 17:22-31.) This is a powerful sermon on the living God. We marvel at its beauty, its power, its conciseness, its irrefutable logic! "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? (1 Cor. 1:20.) "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." (1 Cor. 1:25.)

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\*Delivered at the 24th Annual Carolina Lectureship in Durham, N. C. on May 12, 1968. George McWhorter was the local preacher and the lectureship director. Because of racial riots there had been a curfew in Durham earlier in the week, but it was lifted before my lecture was scheduled to be delivered.

There is one outstanding difference between the people of Athens and many men of modern times: they were too superstitious — they stood in awe of too many gods because they were ignorant of the one true God; the moderns, while they could know God, fear no gods at all. And now some in their arrogance and self-sufficient pride have declared the death of their own Creator, “Even denying the Lord that bought them.” (2 Pet. 2:1.) Paul pointed the Athenians to the Living God; it is the aim of this study to do the same for modern man.

Contrary to what the title of this lecture may suggest, God is not dead to anyone — He never has been and He never will be! But many are dead to God, and some of these are interpreting their own condition as characterizing God. They have closed their minds to truth and reality and live in a world of fantasy — a world created by their own illusions, sustained by their own powers, governed by their own low instincts, and controlled by their own philosophies. But when man proclaims the death of God, he is, in fact, proclaiming his own death to God.

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?” (Ps. 2:1.) Why do they turn from the fountains of living water and drink from stagnate pools? Why abandon the foundation of God, “which standeth sure,” and turn to human wisdom, philosophy, and vain deceits? I do not profess to know all the answers, but here are a few:

1. Some do not wish to believe in a supreme power, that is, a power above themselves. They deny God while accepting the absurdities of atheism. But still “the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.” (Ps. 14:1.)

2. Others do not wish to be under authority. If there were no God, or if God is dead, then there is no authority in the universe higher than man himself. Thus the death of God liberates man from authority. But if we are the creatures of God, if we are His handiwork, then He has absolute authority over us. But this is precisely what Jesus claimed: He said, “All power (authority) is given to me in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. 28:18.) “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a



name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:9-11.)

3. There are others who wish to be free from the moral restraints imposed by belief in the Living God. In the autobiography of Frank Harris, a sordid book I would not recommend for any purpose, he relates a conversation with a West Indian boy in which he was convinced that there is no God. I start with the quotation at the point where the boy startled Harris by asking, "Who made God?" Harris says, "I turned away stricken: in a flash I saw I had been building on a word taught me: 'who made God?' I walked away alone, up the long meadow by the little brook, my thoughts in a whirl: story after story what I had accepted were now to me 'fairy stories' ... In an hour the whole fabric of my spiritual beliefs lay in ruins about me: I believed none of it, not a jot, nor a tittle: I felt as though I had been stripped naked to the cold. Suddenly a joy came to me: if Christianity was all lies and fairy tales like Mohammedanism, then the prohibitions of it were ridiculous and I could kiss and have any girl who would yield to me. At once I was practically reconciled to my spiritual nakedness: there was compensation." (*My Life and Love*, paperback edition, page 40.)

Well, why not? Why shouldn't an unbeliever find compensation in immorality? What would be wrong with him kissing and having "any girl who would yield to him"? By what reason or logic could he say that it is wrong to murder a man but not to kill a dog? Without God, there is no standard of ethical behavior higher than human reason. The Gentiles had abandoned God and Paul could say of them, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." (Rom. 1:28.) This will happen to any man who holds back the truth in unrighteousness.

4. There are some who deny God because they will not accept the Bible as the revelation of God's will. I had a close per-

sonal friend once who either made a steadfast friend or an enemy out of everyone he tried to teach the truth. This seems to be a characteristic of the Bible, that is, among those who take it seriously. The Bible has many devoted friends, friends who would gladly die for it; but it also has many avowed enemies, enemies, who would die to destroy it. Just as every effort to build faith must begin with the Bible, so every effort to destroy God, or faith in God, begins with an attack on the Bible as the word of God. Let me sound a warning here: there is a growing number among us who say both by word and deed that the Bible, as it is, is no longer relevant to the needs of modern man. I have felt from the time this movement began that all this talk about making the Bible revelant is nothing but a smoke-screen to hide the leprous sin of a diminishing faith. Once we have surrendered the infalliable inspiration of every word of Scripture, there is no logical stopping place short of rank atheism. The Bible is either *all* or else it is nothing at all.

5. Some deny the existence of God because they want to be intellectually independent. To them implicit faith in God is a blow to their intellectual pride! The intellect of man is a marvelous mechanism and God gave it to be utilized to its fullest. Science is a wonderful instrument when it is properly used, used to fill the needs of man, but neither the intellect nor science (the enterprise of the intellect) can take the place of God and His revelation. If one could solve all his problems by scientific approaches (a philosophy called "scientism") he would have no need of God: he would be intellectually independent. And this is precisely the state some are seeking.

6. No doubt some have accepted the death of God theory because they believe all things (including God and His truth) are relative. Out of this concept has grown the idea that the Bible is just an evolution of religious thoughts. There is nothing divine about the book (except, perhaps, it tells how God worked in history). As the old concepts of God die, new and higher ones evolve to take their place. This view reduces God to nothing more than a human concept, changing with every whim of man. God thus dies every time man changes his mind about God.

7. The Altizer school of thought believes that God is dead because they have subjected Him to the dialectical process of reasoning. First they take a thesis (man), and then an antithesis (God). The thesis (man) and the antithesis (God) clash. Out of the clash emerges the best from both the thesis and the antithesis into what is called the synthesis. Now if this means anything at all, it means that both the old man and the old God was destroyed in the clash, but that the best from both is preserved in a new man-God (Altizer's "Great Humanity Divine"). Thus God died as man became God. This is simply a new twist on an age old fallacy of humanizing God in an effort to deify man.

But I have wandered too far from our course: our purpose is to discuss those to whom God is not dead — those to whom He is very much alive; those to whom He gives life, and breath, and all things; those who live in Him, move in Him, and have their being by Him; those who are the offspring of God! To identify them, we will now explore several areas of evidence.

## I. NATURE'S MESSAGE

God is not dead to those who believe nature's message. Three thousand years ago the chief musician of Israel sang, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." (Ps. 19:1-3.) What a powerful preacher God's creation is — it is nature's universal language. Some may not believe the message but she continues to speak to them. She declares with a hundred million voices that God is her Maker, Ruler, and Sustainer — that God is alive!

The more we learn about God's marvelous creation, the more there seems to be to learn, and the more we are forced to conclude that there is an ultimate omniscient omnipotent power of it all. When I was a child growing up in the poverty stricken mountains of East Tennessee it was rather simple to explain the universe to my mind. It was simply a starry dome enclosing the earth. I thought if I could get to the top of the mountains I could touch the sky. But then one day I went to the top of the

mountain and learned that the sky, like the rainbow, extended far beyond my reach. In fact, the earth extended from sea to shining sea. Then it was not long until I understood that even beyond the sea, with its great width, depth, and mystery, teeming millions lived in lands brightened by the same sun which warmed our little valley. After this came the knowledge that the sun is the center around which the earth and either other planets revolve. The vastness had now become incredible. But later there came the startling knowledge that the sun is just one star in a galaxy of stars called the Milky Way — a vast expanse of stars 100,000 light years in length. But another step took me to the staggering information (knowledge that is still far beyond my dense power to comprehend) that the Milky Way is only one in millions of galaxies that are sprinkled throughout infinite space. And even this is not the end: astronomers now astonish us by saying that beyond the galaxies there are vast and unexplored frontiers far exceeding anything that the mind of man has yet conceived. How marvelous are the works of God!

With this in view, there is little wonder that the Psalmist sang, "When I consider thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Ps. 8:3, 4.) It seems absolutely incomprehensible to me that anyone could look at our wonderful universe, grasp of its design and vastness, and still believe that it all "just happened," that it is an infinite effect without even so much as a finite cause. How incredible is the foundation of unbelief. This is why Dr. James D. Bales, in one of his many books, exclaimed, "I could never be an atheist: it takes too much faith."

God is alive to those who believe nature's message!

## II. THE SON OF GOD

God is not dead to those who believe in Jesus Christ as God's Son. There is no true Christian in all the world who has not said, in word, act, or deed, with Peter, "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John 6: 69.) We do not believe that Jesus *was* the Son of God (in the

sense of a relationship that has ceased) but that He *is* the Son of God. How could a dead God remain (in the sense of a continuing relationship) the Father of a living Son? How could one now believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God and still believe that God is dead? They both live or else our faith is wrong.

The basic fact of Christianity is the Sonship of Jesus. It is the one fact that underlies and makes meaningful all other facts of the gospel — it is the foundational fact. Jesus said, “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24), and if you die in your sins, “Whither I go, ye cannot come” (John 8:21.) But if we believe this fact we must accept all that is inseparably connected with it. Consider this:

1. If we believe in Jesus Christ as God’s Son, then we must believe in God. But one could not truly believe in God if He were dead — that is, one could not have true faith in a dead God. So either God is alive or else our faith in His Son is a dead faith.

2. If we believe in Christ as the Son of God, then we must believe in the Bible as the word of God. The Bible is the source of our faith (John 20:30, 31; Rom. 10:17). But if God is dead, the Bible has absolutely no force or authority — it is authority only because it is the word of God. How could a dead God have a living word? (Cf. Heb. 4:12.)

3. If we believe in Christ as God’s Son, then we must believe in the Holy Spirit as the revealer of the will of God. “But God hath revealed them [the things God has prepared for them that love Him] unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” (1 Cor. 1:10.) The function of the Holy Spirit in the scheme of human redemption is to take the things of God and make them known, through the word of God, to the mind of man. But if God is dead, how could He have a will? How could one do the will of a dead God? (Cf. Matt. 7:21.)

4. To believe in Christ is to believe in the principle of implicit

obedience to God (Matt. 7:21; Acts 5:32; Heb. 5:8, 9.) But if God is dead there can be no obedience to Him.

5. To believe in Christ one must believe in Christianity as the divine religion — the religion of God. God is its source of authority (Matt. 28:18–20; Heb. 1:1–3.) Without God, Christianity would have no divine authority — it would be no better than the other religions of the world. Thus if God is dead there is no divine religion in the world.

6. To believe in the divinity of Christianity is to believe that it is a system of faith. But the New Testament teaches that faith is made up of two indispensable components. The writer of Hebrews says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6.) The two imperative elements are: (a) belief that God is, and (b) belief that He rewards them who diligently seek to do His will. How could one believe that God is while believing that He is dead? How could a dead God be a rewarder of them "that diligently seek him?"

Thus the conclusion is inevitable: one cannot believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God while believing in the death of God. God is not dead, therefore, to those who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

### III. PROMISES

God is not dead to those who believe His promises. There are literally hundreds of promises in the Bible encompassing every phase of the Christian's life and work. Peter called them great and precious. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. 1:3, 4.) But with every promise He makes, God stakes His existence upon it — every promise He makes carries

with it the guarantee that He is alive and able to keep it. No argument I have ever read or made on the existence of God has struck my mind with the force of this one: for as surely as God is, as surely as He lives, He must keep His promises. And as surely as any promise of God ever fails, He is dead. Thus we have, as it were, a test-tube into which we can place God and actually determine by concrete demonstrations whether He is dead or alive.

If time permitted we could deal at length with a large number of the "great and precious promises" of God, but we must limit ourselves to a brief notice of the following:

1. God has promised, upon certain conditions, to forgive all sins. There is no problem known to man that is more acute than the sin problem; and there is nothing sweeter or more peaceful and satisfying than the knowledge of forgiveness. God had promised to forgive sins when the conditions of salvation are met — a promise that must be believed and accepted (cf. Acts 2:38; 16:31—34; 22:16.) One cannot prove forgiveness either by logic, experience, or feeling. It is a promise. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) The Lord here promises salvation to all those who will believe and be baptized. When we do what He commanded we must then trust Him to keep His promise. Thus as surely as God lives, He will keep His promise to save; as surely as He keeps His promise, He lives!

2. A second promise is the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 5:32; Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:9—17.) I make no claims of being able to explain how the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians, except that He does so through the word of God,<sup>1</sup> but I know that He does

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1. Just a year before this, at the Freed-Hardeman College lectures, a discussion between Guy N. Woods and Thomas B. Warren had shook my foundational concepts of the work of the Holy Spirit, including His indwelling. At this time I was in an intense re-study of the subject. As is obvious from this statement, I had already concluded that the Spirit works only immediately. A continued study resulted in my booklet, *The Holy Spirit, His Indwelling and Work*, and later my book, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*. Those who wish to study my views further are referred to these two books.

because of the promise of God. As children of God we are the habitation of God, of the Son of God, and of the Spirit of God.

3. God has also promised to provide a way of escape from every temptation. Paul writes, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13.) There are no Christians who have not been faced with temptation — the devil sees to that. But there are no temptations which do not have a built-in way of escape — God sees to that. If the devil ever leads a Christian into a temptation from which there are no means of escape, that is, if escape is impossible, we can know that God is dead because He has failed to keep His promise. But on the other hand, as long as there is a way of escape provided with every temptation, we have absolute proof of the Living God.

4. God has promised to bless those who do His will. James wrote, "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1:25.) No one has ever done the will of God without being blessed. I believe that it is as much the law of God for a blessing to follow obedience as it is for night to follow day. But as long as God blesses the obedient, as long as He keeps this promise, we know that He lives.

5. God has promised to supply the needs of those who put His kingdom and His righteousness first. Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33.) He has not promised to supply everything we think we need, nor everything we want, but He has promised to fill our needs. David once said, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." (Ps. 37:25.) Now I do not know how God may keep this promise. That is not my department — That is His promise and I must trust Him to take care of it in His own way. My department is



to put the kingdom first in my life. And when I do my part, as surely as God lives He will keep His promise.

I have just mentioned a smattering of God's promises, but I think I have given enough to convince any lover of the truth that the promises of God are a concrete demonstration of His existence and power. For upon each promise He has predicted His very existence! And in all the annals of recorded history there is not to be found one person who can sincerely say, "I did all that God commanded me to do and He failed to keep His promise." There are no broken promises of God. We must conclude therefore that God is alive, and He demonstrates this fact every day to those who believe His promises.

#### IV. PROVIDENCE

If there is anything more marvelous than the promises of God it surely must be His providence; and, like His promises, His providence offers further proof that He is alive. I know of no way outside the Bible itself to prove

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform,"

but when I look back over my Christian life and see the long treacherous road I have traveled, see that a wrong turn at many a crucial crossroad could have been disastrous, see that some of the things which seemed ruinous at the time were life's greatest blessings in disguise, see where I was before I obeyed the gospel and know where I am now, all the powers of the infernal region could not convince me that God's hand was not in it all. I thus believe that God in some manner over-rules in all events for the benefit of His people. Or as Gus Nichols says, "God is at the steering wheel of His universe."

Paul said, "And we know that all things work together for the good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) What a great and precious promise this is! But some, no doubt, are ready to ask, "How could God bring good out of sorrow, or an accident, or death,

or war, etc.?" Frankly, I do not know. But again, that is not my department; it is God's department. My department is to believe His word and love Him with my whole being; His department is to make all things work together for the good to them who love God.

Joseph, a man whom God used to save Israel from famine, could have well asked, when his brothers were filled with envy and hatred toward him, "How could God work good out of this despicable hatred?" He could have asked the same question when his brothers sold him into slavery, or as he was cast into prison because he would not defile himself with his master's lascivious wife. He could not have answered because he could see only small parts of God's overall plan.

But now move forward a few years and see Joseph on the throne of Egypt and ask him, "How did it happen that you are on an Egyptian throne?" He could reply, "Because God used me to interpret a dream for Pharaoh." "But how did Pharaoh choose you to interpret the dream?" "Because," replies Joseph, "I had correctly interpreted dreams for two of the king's servants while we were in prison together, and one of them related the experience to Pharaoh." "But why were you in prison?" "I was in prison," he says, "because I resisted the advances of Potipher's wife." "But how did you come to be in Potipher's house?" "I was there because the Ishmeelites sold me as a slave to him." "But why were you in possession of the Ishmeelites?" "My brothers sold me to them." "But why would your brothers do such a wicked thing?" "They hated me because I dreamed that someday they would bow down to me — that someday I would rule over them."

Now as we look back over the life of Joseph we can see that every link in the chain of events is necessary to the desired end. We can now understand why he said to his brothers when he revealed his identity to them in Egypt, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: For God did send me before you to preserve life." (Gen. 45:5.) God had used every event to bring about ultimate good. Thus later in life, when Jacob died and the brothers were afraid that

Joseph would avenge them for the wrong they had done him, he curbed their fears by saying, "Fear not: for am I in the place of God. But as for you, ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. 50:19, 20.)

To believe in providence is to believe that God is in control of all created things – that He is Creator, Sustainer, and Ruler of the world. To believe this is to believe that He controls the world for the good of them that love and serve Him. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25.) But if God is in control of the universe, if He provides for them that love Him, He must be alive. Thus God is alive to those who believe His providence!

## V. EXPERIENCE

God is not dead to those who have experienced His power and presence in their lives. By "experience" I do not mean the kind you usually hear about in religious circles, the kind that has its roots in superstition, sentimentalism, and emotionalism. I mean the kind of experience that will take a drunk off skid-row and make him a providing husband, a good father, and a community worker; the kind that can motivate a twenty-one year old illiterate poverty-stricken man to learn to read and write, to graduate from high school with honors, and to go on to college, completely breaking the vicious illiteracy-poverty circle so he can preach the gospel; the kind of experience that can retrieve a prostitute, give her the incentive to rebuild her life and become a faithful wife and loving mother; the kind of experience that turns a thief to honest labor, a tramp to domestic living, a debtor to paying his debts, a gambler to earning his wages, a falsifier to telling the truth – the kind of experience that results in the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23) and makes one's life full and rich and useful.

For an example, take Saul of Tarsus, later to become the apostle Paul, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious." (1 Tim. 1:13.) He had been trained in the best schools of his time, and was well prepared for a life of service

in his native religion. When the first persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, Saul was one of those "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." But his quest to destroy Christianity was not restricted to Jerusalem alone. He acquired letters from the high priest authorizing him to go to Damascus to seek out believers. He was making it his business to destroy the church of Christ.

But as he journeyed to Damascus, something happened that changed the whole course of his life — changed him from the persecutor to the persecuted! The Lord appeared to him in a great light that shined about him. "And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." (Acts. 9:6.) He was led blind into the city, where he spent three days and nights in fasting and prayer. The Lord sent Ananias to him to tell him what he must do. "And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see the just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:14–16.) "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized ... And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." (Acts 9:18–20.) And he kept on preaching Christ until the sound had gone into all the world, until he had planted churches all over Asia and Europe, until he became the most amazing man, excepting only the Lord he served, in all the annals of time, until he changed the course of the history of the world! Can anyone for a moment even remotely imagine Saul, after he had experienced the revolutionary change that comes with the true Christianity, saying that God is dead? How utterly unthinkable!

The world was never the same again after Saul's experience with Christ and Christianity. God was alive to him because he had experienced in his own life and conduct the Lord's power and presence. The experience made a new man of him; it gave

to him a new life, a new direction, a new purpose, and a new Lord to serve. And just as God was alive to Paul, he is alive to all those who have experienced His power and presence in their lives.

## VI. EXCHATOLOGY

I have already exceeded my time limit and will therefore only ask your indulgence long enough to mention my final point: God is not dead to those who believe the Biblical doctrines of the second coming of Christ, the end of the world, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment of all nations, and one of two eternal destinies for every living soul. All things came from God. He is the source and the beginning of everything that is. But the Bible emphatically teaches that all things are to be returned to God. Paul says, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is expected, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. 15:24-28.)

When the end comes, when the mighty angel cries,  
"Time was, Time is, but Time shall be no more,"

all things are to be delivered back to God. Thus, in order to receive them, God must be alive at the end of the present order of things. God is not dead, therefore, to those who believe what the Bible teaches concerning the end of the world and what will transpire thereafter.

## CONCLUSION

God is alive! I have proven by nature's message and the Sonship of Jesus Christ that He was alive in the past; I have proven

by His promises, by His providence, and by the experience of His power and presence that He is alive now; and I have proven by the fact that all things are to be delivered back to Him in the end that He is alive forevermore. God was alive in the beginning! God is alive now! God will be alive forever! "Before the mountains were brought forth, or even thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Ps. 90:2.)

But there is a far more serious question confronting us now: *are we alive to God?* Too many who profess to believe in the Living God conduct their lives as if He were dead. God is alive, but it is possible for us to be dead to Him. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." (1 Tim. 5:6.) We need to put off the old man of sin and lust and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (cf. Eph. 4:20—24.) In short, we need to be children of the Living God, new creatures in Christ. And this we can be if we are willing to submit ourselves in full and complete obedience to His eternal will.

# The Bible And Evolution\*

1 Tim. 6:20

Believing as we do that the theory of evolution is contrary to the revealed will of God, we could not keep that which is committed to our trust without speaking out against the danger of this science falsely so called.

In some circles men have talked about evolution so long that they have come to accept it as a fact. But it is not a fact; it is not even a scientific theory: it is a hypothesis. Definition of the three terms: (1) Hypothesis: A tentative solution or proposal concerning a problem, a supposition, a guessed theory — a theory to work on but one untested by the findings of research. (2) Theory: A formulated (or tested) hypothesis, a probable explanation of a problem. (3) Fact: a theory that has been tested by research and continues to work. No scientific fact is ever final. The hypothesis of evolution has become a theory only by seniority and not by the accumulation of evidence. It is in this sense we refer to it as a theory.

It is not my purpose here to either prove the Bible or disprove evolution. I simply wish to set forth the underlying philosophy of each. And when this is done, surely all will be able to see that there is simply no way to harmonize the theory of evolution with plain Bible teaching. The theistic evolutionists have tried this, but they have miserably failed. They always wind up denying the Bible as the infallible, inerrant, immutable word of God. We thus note a few of the many irreconcilable differences.

## I. GOD

1. The Bible pre-supposes God (Gen. 1:1.) He is the all pervading power back of everything. "There is no power but of God."

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\*This lecture was delivered in 1970 at the old historic Warners Chapel church in Clemmons (near Winston-Salem), N. C., which was the delightful host of the Carolina Lectures that year. Harmon Caldwell preached for Warners and assigned me this subject. The lecture is given here in outline but for those who wish to read the full manuscript, it can be found in my book *Living Issues*, published by J.C. Choate Publications.

2. Evolution pre-supposes naturalism. There is *no* power of God. Everything is explained in terms of natural processes. This leaves no place for God.
3. These two philosophies are as different as night and day — as different as creation and chance development.
4. Thus to start with God it to discard evolution; to start with evolution is to abandon God. There is no way to harmonize the two.

## II. CREATION

1. The Bible reveals and teaches the creation of both matter and life by an Almighty Power (Gen. 1 and 2.)
2. Evolution teaches that matter and life are here as the results of a vast accident, caused by no outside force or power.
3. In the Bible, all things are made by God and for God (Col. 1:16, 17; Rev. 4:11.) Man is only a steward. In evolution, man is an accident, not accountable to any power above himself.
4. There is simply no way to harmonize these two vastly different philosophies — to believe one is to disbelieve the other.

## III. MAN

1. The Bible presents man as an eternal being, created by God in the image of God (Gen. 1:26, 27.) Only the Bible answers the three most pressing questions pertaining to man:
  - a. Where did he come from? From God (Gen. 2:7; 2:18—24.)
  - b. Why is he here? To serve God (Rev. 4:11.)
  - c. Where is he going? Back to God (Eccl. 12:7.)
2. Evolution sees man as nothing more than a child of chance, the offspring of lower form of life. It has no sensible answer to the questions:



- a. Where did he come from? Nowhere. Non-life produced life, like produced non-like, non-entity produced entity.
  - b. Why is he here? He has no purpose of being.
  - c. Where is he going? Nowhere but back to non-entity.
4. There is no harmony between man as made in the image of God and man as a freak of nature – a monkey who has lost his tail but found no soul.

#### IV. RESULTS

- 1. The Bible is ennobling, inspiring, motivational – it builds character, instills righteousness, inspires hope. (Ps. 84:11.)
- 2. Evolution never contributed anything good to anyone – it is an intellectually sophisticated effort to free man from the restraints of higher authority – a mental pacifier for those who wish to remove God from creation.
- 3. The pages of history are replete with the lives of men and women who have been changed by the Bible. But who ever heard a man say, “I was a drunk, abused my wife, neglected my children, refused to pay my debts, etc. until one day I heard how man had evolved from a lower form of life, how that he is free from all responsibility, and that made a new man of me – it dried up my drinking, made me love my wife, care for my children, and pay my debts?”

#### CONCLUSION

The Bible is (or contains) the faith of Christians. They trust their souls to its truthfulness.

Evolution is the faith of unbelievers. They are betting their souls that they do not have souls.

# The State Of The Church In The Carolinas (1971)\*

Jer. 7:21—28.

Before we can determine progress, we must first determine our goal. I clipped the following from the Statesville, N. C. bulletin:

In the days when Will Rogers lived a football game was played in the far-famed Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif. It was the game of the year. Two giant teams had met for a decisive struggle. It came to pass at a moment of supreme importance that a player caught a bounding ball. In the heat of the excitement, he lost the sense of direction and headed at top speed for the goal of the opposing team. Finally, just before reaching the goal, he was tackled by a team-mate.

There fell upon the poor lad an avalanche of criticism. Sport writers—many of them—“raked him over the coals.” But Will Rogers came to the player’s defense. In these words or in words with similar meaning he wrote: “Why heap criticism upon this unfortunate fellow for running with the ball in the wrong direction? Is it not a fact that a vast majority of us are headed in the wrong direction and running at top speed toward the wrong goal?”

Our goal is to preach the truth and build churches after the New Testament order. Any goal other than this is a goal reached for the devil.

What is progress? According to the reading from Jeremiah, Israel progressed as long as they obeyed God, but when they ceased to do His will, they went backward instead of forward. (But knowing the nature of men, I doubt that many of them be-

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\*Delivered at the Carolina Lectures in West Columbia, S. C. in 1971. C. R. Franks, Jr. was the local preacher.

lieved Jeremiah. They undoubtedly considered themselves progressives, popular with the gods of all the nations around them.) They could have grown powerful and prosperous but as long as they remained in disobedience to God, no progress could be made from Jeremiah's standpoint. Can we learn from this?

Any movement away from the word of God is *not* progress regardless of how popular it may be or how much seeming success may be enjoyed. There is no use running unless we are running in the right direction; there is no need to teach unless we teach the truth; there is no need to grow unless we are growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord; there is no need to compass land and sea to make a convert unless we make him something more than a son of hell.

If the message we have is not distinctive, if it is not something no one else can or will give, if it is not something that cannot be obtained anywhere else, our work and our progress is vain. Our plea is of such nature that it must be totally right or else it must be totally wrong. If it is right, all other religious bodies should be dissolved into it – and we should let them know that this is the case and that this is the way we feel about it; if it is wrong, we should be ashamed to talk about its progress, and we should spend this time together preaching the church's funeral.

Progress is not just going somewhere in a hurry; it is going in the right direction at the highest rate of speed our means will permit. (But our going sometimes reminds me of Minnie trying to get to the telephone at night. When it rings she instinctively jumps and hits the floor running. But she is in such a hurry that she does nothing but spin her wheels – she cannot get started and when she does she cannot properly turn the corners! And I usually make matters worse by saying, "Hurry, honey!")

But let me get to the point by taking a look at the overall picture of the church in the Carolinas:

## I. THE CHURCH IN THE CAROLINAS

### 1. North Carolina:

- a. Population: nearly 5,000,000
- b. Number of members: approximately 5,500
- c. Number of congregations: slightly over 100
- d. Full time preachers: approximately 65
- e. The job yet to be done: One member for each 900 citizens; one congregation for each 45,500; 30 counties with no New Testament church; more than 1000 towns. About one third of existent churches are without a full time preacher.

### 2. South Carolina:

- a. Population: approximately 2,500,000
- b. Number of members: 3,500
- c. Number of congregations: 65
- d. Full time preachers: approximately 45
- e. The job yet to be done: one member to 800 citizens; one congregation to each 38,000; 14 to 15 counties and 450 towns with no known church; one third of the churches do not have full time preachers.

## II. SOME OF THE PROGRESS BEING MADE

### 1. The work among the deaf:

- a. Started at South Fork in Winston-Salem but there are now five congregations providing deaf activity, including South Fork, Burlington, Friendly Avenue in Greensboro, Hickory, and High Point. The work is getting underway in Morganton and there are some attending in Whiteville.
- b. Winston-Salem has the only full time worker.
- c. Some facts and figures: 50 members, 25 baptized last year. Sign language classes are being conducted (brother H. S. Whittington reports that 62 were in attendance recently). South Fork now has a Bible class for deaf children. A meeting for the deaf was conducted last June at South Fork which broke all attendance records with 281 present at one service.
- d. This is presently one of the most thrilling works in the Carolinas.

## 2. The work among blacks:

- a. Clifford S. Davis is now working full time establishing new congregations.
- b. The Nicholtown church in Greenville, S. C. has just about finished its new building – the finest to be owned by brethren in South Carolina.<sup>1</sup> The Union Heights church in Charleston will soon complete its new \$85,000 building.
- c. Union has become the first in the Carolinas where a black and white congregation have merged.
- d. There has been a tremendous amount of prejudice to overcome, but the walls are crumbling; we still have it but it is diminishing.

## 3. New churches:

- a. I do not have the exact figures but we average about four new congregations each year. I know of five in 1970: Cary, Elkin, Fairfield, and Southport in N. C. and Hartsville in S. C.
- b. To help us understand what happens when a new congregation is established, consider Cary: Raleigh helped start this one in 1970; originally made up of 14 families; now has its own building, seating 240; had five baptisms last year and three placed membership; attendance has risen to 54 and the contribution is up to \$270.
- c. Another church that started in 1968, Friendly Avenue in Greensboro. It opened its new 325 seat building in February; is made up of 30 families, having about 100 in attendance; has three elders and six deacons; has a budget of \$525.

## 4. Growing churches:

- a. Most churches are growing to some degree, but from time to time some take a great leap forward. Some of the growing churches are Friendly Avenue, South Fork in Winston-Salem, the Plaza in Charlotte, Kinston, Bur-

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1. The Nicholtown church became known as the I-85 congregation when it moved into its new building.

lington, Jacksonville, Fayetteville in N. C. and Nichol-  
town in Greenville, and North Charleston in S. C.

- b. Since I cannot discuss them all, let us take a closer look at one growing church, Raleigh, N. C. It was started in 1947 with seven members and an average contribution of \$3. Here is its pattern of growth:

Year	Number	Contribution
1950	47	\$ 30
1952	60	95
1959	101	Not available
1962	133	Not available
1970	174	\$1,000
1971	198	\$1,100

Started campus work in 1969 and prison work in 1970. It helped to start the church in Cary, Henderson, and Waller Place in Raleigh; helped two preachers through schools of preaching.

### III. CHURCH RELATED WORKS (not necessarily the work of the church)

#### 1. Southeastern Children's Home:

- a. A Board of Directors were appointed in 1968; it settled on cottage type homes, and Sumter, S. C. was selected as the site for the first cottage.
- b. While contributions have come in slow, and property has been difficult to locate, the first cottage is now under construction.

#### 2. Carolina Bible Camp

- a. The purpose of the camps is to teach the Bible and Christian principles in a camping situation.
- b. CBC was started in 1956. Operated totally by volunteers. Does not own its own camp site. Has operated at capacity nearly every year.
- c. Pioneered last year a new rule on the length of dress. (Other camps have similar rules.) Effects of the rule: on attendance, none (or exceedingly small); on appearance, excellent; on camping situations, good; to be continued, yes.

### 3. Palmetto Bible Camp

- a. Started in 1967; has been remarkably successful. It has now gone to three weeks camping, and this year will go to four.
- b. In 1969 it purchased 68 acres of property with existing camp facilities for \$70,000 – a beautiful site indeed.
- c. The Board of Directors for PBC is setting a new pace for camping in the Carolinas.

### 4. Blue Ridge Encampment

- a. A unique family camping conception with the best known speakers in the brotherhood lecturing. It was started by J. W. Brents and A. R. Holton in 1950. Over 600 are expected this year from all over the world.
- c. The camp rents its facilities from the YMCA (I believe) in Black Mountain, N. C.

### 5. Carolina Christian

- a. Started in 1959 – is now in its 13th and best year.
- b. It has three basic purposes:
  - (1) To give a medium of contact between scattered workers.
  - (2) To promote the work in the Carolinas – in this it has experienced its greatest success.
  - (3) To teach the truth.
- c. A recent letter from Guy N. Woods says: “*Carolina Christian* is one of the best edited and interesting publications being issued today and I rejoice in the fine work you brethren are doing in that great field.”
- d. Financially, the paper does not pay for itself and no one associated with it gets a penny for his services (not even expense money – I even buy my own postage stamps!)
- e. Circulation is increasing but our aim is to put the paper into every Christian home in the Carolinas.

### 6. Carolina Christian Bookstore

- a. The Bookstore is operated by the Board of Directors of Carolina Christian and its purpose is to subsidize the paper.
- b. The Bookstore is a servant – use it!

## CONCLUSION

There are many other areas of work that we could talk about, such as the Carolina Lectures, South Carolina Lectures, individual programs in congregations (such as prison work), but I must stop somewhere. And this is a good place ... and a good time. But one thing can be said for sure: *The Lord's work is progressing in the Carolinas!*



# The State Of The Church In The Carolinas (1972)\*

1 Sam. 15:2-23

Before we can measure progress, we must decide where we are going. Saul thought he had made progress — he had destroyed the nation but saved the king alive! Samuel asked, "Hath the Lord as great delight in the burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?" The answer is obvious.

The Lord is thus concerned with our obedience, not with our programs, devices, schemes, buildings, show of pomp, etc. Progress must therefore be determined by aim and purpose, truth and right, and not by human standards.

## I. BASIC CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH

1. The church is the body of Christ composed of the people of Christ led by the Spirit of Christ doing the work of Christ.
2. Our goal is to restore New Testament Christianity by preaching the saving truth of Christ — the truth revealed in the Bible.
  - a. Our search for religious knowledge begins and ends with divine revelation.
  - b. There is a vast difference in preaching about the Bible and in preaching the Bible itself. A hungry man needs food, not the chemical make-up of food explained to him nor an analysis of the digestive system. A lost world needs the gospel, pure, plain, and simple. For it alone is the power of God to save. (Rom. 1:16.)
  - c. It is so easy to get carried away with our theories and our explanation of things, such as the trinity, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, etc., and forget our main purpose.

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\*Delivered at the Carolina Lectures in 1972. The Friendly Avenue church in Greensboro, N. C. was the host congregation and Talmadge Solomon was the local preacher.

3. We must come to the point where we can satisfy ourselves with a "thus saith the Lord" on all matters.
4. Thus we must go hard on with our plea – the simplicity of New Testament Christianity can solve all the ills of today's complex world.

## II. THERE IS CHANGE IN THE AIR (and we have breathed a little of the contamination in the Carolinas).

1. Some have begun to question the validity of the restoration of the New Testament order of things. Pope John XXIII opened up the windows and let some fresh air into Catholicism. Some of our brethren are tired of smelling first century Christianity in the 20th century. They want to open the windows and let some fresh 20th century ideas into the stale old Book.
2. This philosophy of change can be observed in many things (some have accepted it without being aware of what is involved):
  - a. To make the church more popular with denominationalism. But we can never be popular with it as long as we preach Bible unity – we are preaching it right out of existence. Only compromise can make us popular with denominationalism – we can be popular with it only to the degree we are identified with it.
  - b. To appeal to intellectuals. There is nothing wrong with trying to reach intellectuals *per se*, but we are developing a tendency to make their judgments the last word in matters of faith and practice. We have forgotten the common people. (Mark 12:37. A mark of Christ's divinity was that He preached to the poor, Matt. 11:2–6.) We need to reconsider Paul's contrast of human wisdom versus divine revelation. (1 Cor. 1 and 2.)
  - c. To abandon the traditional position on the church doing her work through human organizations. It is getting to the point where we cannot hold meetings, conduct preachers' schools, send out Bibles, advertise in papers, etc. without setting up a separate organization and then

calling upon the church to support it. The local church has little or no function but to determine which organization to support. I have been sounding this alarm for years and there is now not enough interest in it to get an argument ... even among preachers!

- d. To make our distinctive plea only traditional. What do brethren mean when they talk about "our" traditions? If they only mean two songs before the prayer, etc. there is no objection from me, but if they mean singing without the aid of an instrument (which is a distinct mark) then that is a different story altogether.<sup>1</sup> I warn you, brethren: watch this talk about tradition. It is only a front for a change in the work, worship, and organization of the church.
- e. To trust subjective evidence – emotionalism. I have no objections to the proper use of emotions. I think God intended for us both to have and express them. But emotions can never be the Scriptural basis of faith. And here is the danger as I see it: we are equating emotional experiences with closeness of God. More and more we are hearing such expressions, "God was so near," "We could feel God's presence," etc. There is just one step from this to Pentecostalism, and it may be the reason "tongue speaking" has found such a fertile field among our young people. Roger Nicole, in discussing the sources of authority (he calls them "Foundational Principles of Dogmatics"), makes an interesting observation on the relation of subjectivism to liberalism:

"A second basic approach is that of subjectivism, which is the hallmark of theological liberalism. Here, the pre-supposition is that God's authority is expressed directly in the subject and channeled through one or the other of the key faculties of the human soul: reason,

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1. At this time brethren with a liberal tendency were making a strong attack on what they called "traditions in the church." I felt then, and I feel now, that it was not an attack on traditions *per se* but an attack on the Scriptural way of doing things. They wanted to update the church and make it more modern and popular. It was essentially an attack on the validity of the restoration plea itself.

feelings, or conscience." (*Basic Christian Doctrines*, ed. by Carl F. H. Henry, p. 300.)

- f. To argue from the premise: "The Bible does not condemn it." One editor makes this statement in almost every issue. But this kind of thinking had led to all kinds of innovations, such as infant baptism, instrumental music in worship, etc. Have we forgotten the Biblical injunction, "Prove all things"? (1 Thess. 5:21.) We must learn to prove things right before we accept them; not prove them wrong before we reject them.

#### IV. PROGRESS BEING MADE

1. Almost every church is growing, e.g., North Charleston and Friendly Avenue.
2. Several churches have become self-supporting in recent months.
3. New congregations. Since I made the report at the lectures in 1971 I know of six new churches started, including Mt. Airy, King, Washington, Sparta, and Silver City in North Carolina and Newberry in S. C.
4. The work among the Black brethren. (See 1971 outline.) Perhaps the greatest progress has been made in race relations. For example, my articles on race relations in *Carolina Christian* last year did not bring a single objection from the Carolinas, but this was certainly not the case when they were later run in the *Firm Foundation*.
5. The work among the deaf. (See 1971 outline.)
6. New preachers. Most of the "old guard" have moved away, but the income of new preachers has kept pace, leaving about the same percentage of churches with preachers.
7. A new work. Gilbert Tripp, under the direction of the Augusta Road church in Greenville, is trying to raise support to work full time in establishing new congregations in

areas where no church now exists. This could be one of the most fruitful works ever attempted in the Carolinas.<sup>1</sup>

V. CHURCH RELATED WORK (work being done by individuals and organizations apart from the church)

1. Carolina Mission or Back to the Bible Crusade, under the direction of Clifford Davis. It is an effort to plant new works, especially among the blacks.
2. Southeastern Children's Home. The first cottage has been completed and the first children received.
3. Carolina Bible Camp. (See outline for 1971.)
4. Palmetta Bible Camp. (See outline for 1971.)
5. Blue Ridge Encampment. (See outline for 1971.)
6. Carolina Christian. (See outline for 1971.)
7. Carolina Christian Bookstore. (See outline for 1971.)
8. The Carolina Lectures. This is strictly the work of the local church conducting it. It is my conception that they have meant more to the over-all work of the church than any other single thing, except *Carolina Christian*.
9. The South Carolina Lectures. Annually held among the churches in South Carolina, geared especially to the needs of South Carolina.
10. AGAPA. Just getting underway. Designed primarily as a placement agency for homeless children.

## CONCLUSION

While there is much improvement to be made (and some dangers to be watched), in general the church is on the move in the Carolinas ... and moving in the right direction!

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1. A note in my notes gives the sad ending of this program. It says, "Dead! Killed by lack of interest."

# The Demands Of Love\*

1 John 5:2, 3

This verse offers us a surprise. How may we know that we love one another? John answers by saying that we know it if we keep God's commands. It is not surprising for the Bible to say (as it does in 1 John 5:3) that we know we love God when we keep His commandments, but the thought of our text is somewhat startling. We know that we love the brethren when we keep God's commandments! These verses, therefore, give us more than a faint hint that love is something more than emotional involvement or sentimental feelings.

But some of our brethren who preach so much about love are in the habit of minimizing the importance of obeying all God's revealed will. They use the word love as if it causes one to overlook error in both belief and practice. But when they do so, they are obviously talking about something other than

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\*Delivered at the Carolina Lectures in Columbia, S. C. in 1973. The Shandon church was the host congregation and James Montgomery, a man who always showed to me the highest possible respect, even in spite of our deep and gravely serious philosophical differences, was the local preacher. The soundness of the Shandon church was under severe question at this time and many brethren, including myself, considered James Montgomery to be a rank liberal. And as a protest against liberalism and the Shandon church a number of the more conservative brethren refused to speak on the lectures. I did not, even though I knew in advance that my actions would be questioned, my motives misunderstood, and that I would be strongly criticized. But it was my judgment then, after a long talk with the elders and the preacher, that the liberalism was in the pulpit and not in the pew, and that the best course to follow (in order to save the church) was to go and preach the truth strongly, letting the people see the issues involved. Looking back now, there can be little doubt but that this was the best course. The lectures turned out to be a conservative-liberal clash. And in my somewhat biased opinion, the conservative won a smashing victory (which could not have been done had all of us refused to go). It was at this lectureship that liberalism reached its high water mark in the Carolinas. It has been on the decline ever since. James Montgomery later left the church and the last I heard of him he was worshipping with a liberal denomination. The Shandon church, as far as I know now, stayed relatively true to the old paths. And as I look back over my work in the Carolinas there are but few things that I take more pride in than the part I played in the battle that reached its peak at Shandon in 1973.

Bible love. If we know that we love the brethren because we keep His commandments, what is strongly implied if we do not keep the commandments? We do not love them!

This is just one of the surprises John has in store for those who will study what he says about love. Since it would not be possible to notice in our limited time all that he says, I will limit our present study to his first epistle, and even more, I will limit it to the 25 verses (verses, not the number of times the word is used) in which the word *agape* (in one of its forms) is used. (The word also appears in other forms, such as "beloved", but they will not be considered here.)

But before I begin the study, let me first try to give you a working definition of love.

## I. LOVE DEFINED

1. According to 1 John 5:2, 3, it is something more to be demonstrated than defined. Perhaps those who are interested in a more extended definition could satisfy themselves with 1 Cor. 13.
2. There are several words in the Greek New Testament for love, but the two basic ones are *phileo* and *agape*, and of the two, *agape* is by far the most common. It seems to me that the words are used interchangeably at times, but there can be no doubt but that *agape* expresses a higher kind of love.
3. *Agape* love is over, beyond, or apart from emotional involvement.
  - a. In a Bible class I was asked, "How can I love a Russian whom I have never seen?" That is a good question. And it cannot be done if one thinks of love as emotional involvement. But it can be done in the sense of being concerned for the Russian's welfare and soul's salvation. That is *agape*.
  - b. Susie (our adopted daughter) was an abused child before she came to live with us. Because of her background she

felt terribly insecure. She would ask often, "Daddy, do you love me?" I would respond with an emphatic yes. She would then invariably follow with a second question, "Do you like me?" At first I would reply, "Of course I do. How could I love you without liking you?" But as I have studied the New Testament words a little more closely, I have concluded that it is entirely possible to love one without liking him (actually, without even knowing him). Thus a child helped me see the meaning of *agape*.

4. *Agape* love is a deep concern for the welfare of its object, regardless of whether there is emotional involvement or not.
5. Thayer's definitions (I quote only the italicized words, his definitions, even though he has many very interesting comments):
  - a. *Agapao*: "To love; to have a preference for, wish well to, regard the welfare of; to take pleasure in the thing, prize it above other things, be unwilling to abandon it or do without it; to welcome with desire, long for."
  - b. *Agape*: "Affection, good-will, love, benevolence."
6. It is well to remember that *agape* is something commanded, not something one falls into. It is to be in *deed* and in truth, not in word only. (1 John 3:18.)

## II. THE LOVE OF GOD (the love God has for us)

1. God is love. (1 John 4:8, 16.)
2. He sent His Son into the world. (1 John 4:9, 10.)
3. The Son gave His life. (1 John 3:16.)
4. Permits us to be called sons. (1 John 3:1.)
5. Thus God's love for us is manifested in what He does for us.



III. THE LOVE OF GOD (the love we have for Him). This love demands that we:

1. Love. (1 John 4:8.)
2. Love God. (1 John 4:19.)
3. Love one another. (1 John 3:10, 11, 14, 23; 4:20, 21; 5:1.)
  - a. By obedience to God we know that we love one another. (1 John 5:2, 3.)
  - b. He who loves his brother walks in light. (1 John 2:10.) He who hates his brother walks in darkness. (1 John 2:9, 11.)
  - c. God loves us; we ought to love one another. (1 John 4:11.) Here is another surprise: we would expect it to say, God loved us; therefore we ought to love God.
  - d. If we love one another God dwells in us. (1 John 4:12, 16.)
4. Love *not* the world. (1 John 2:15–17.)
5. Keep His word. (1 John 2:5.)
6. Obey Him. (1 John 2:5, 5:2, 3.)
7. Have boldness in the day of judgment. (1 John 4:17.)
8. Have freedom from fear. (1 John 4:18.)
9. Thus our love for God is manifested in what we do for Him.

IV. LOVE OF OTHERS. This demands:

1. Giving or sacrificing for them. (1 John 3:16.)
2. Compassion for their needs. (1 John 3:17.)
3. Deeds, not just words alone. (1 John 3:18.)
4. Thus our love for others is shown by what we do for them.

## CONCLUSION

Love demands a response. "We love him, because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19.)

The people we love most are the ones who love us best. It is hard not to respond to love. This is proven by little children, by dogs, etc. The marvel then is that more people do not love God — do not properly respond to His love. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is also the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." (1 John 2:1-5.)

Two facts should now stand out in our minds:

1. We know we love God when we keep His commandments.
2. We know we love the brethren when we love God and keep God's commandments.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccl. 12:13.)

# The Challenge To Study God's Word\*

1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Tim. 2:15

Interestingly enough the only word that is translated "study" that means study in the usually accepted sense is found in Eccl. 12:12, where it is said that much study is a weariness of the flesh. There are other words, however, that carry the concept, such as hear, meditate, think, know, etc.

The word in 1 Thess. means, according to Vincent, "To strive for honor, to be ambitious." The word in 2 Tim. means: "To use diligence, make speed (Young), or, "Originally, make haste" (Vincent). Although both words could well include study, and undoubtedly they do, one would have to stretch them a bit to make them fit the usual concept. However, as I have stated, study is a Biblical idea and offers to our culture a tremendous challenge when it is applied to the Bible. Hence, the assignment of the hour.

The challenge to study God's word is a challenge:

## I. TO SEE THE NEED FOR STUDY. Consider:

1. The lack of study. For example, how many young people do you know who are seriously studying the Bible?
2. Even Christians are no longer considered a Bible knowing people. Most members of the church would have to call the preacher to find where the Bible speaks of baptism for the remission of sins (and it just might be that the preacher would have to look it up in a concordance).
3. The failure to understand the Bible, e.g., Catholicism and denominationalism. Illustrate with:

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\*Delivered at the Carolina Lectures in 1974. The South Fork congregation in Winston-Salem was the host that year. Richard Pectol was in his first year as preacher at South Fork.

- a. The church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:4—6.)
- b. Baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:4.)
- c. The Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7.)

- 4. With such lack of Bible knowledge among religious people, what of the world?

## II. TO BELIEVE THE BIBLE AS GOD'S WORD.

- 1. If the Bible is not the word of God then there is no word from God — there is no word of God to study.
- 2. Man left to his own unaided reason arrives at a multiplicity of gods (e.g., Greeks and Romans) or some form of liberalism or deism — that is, he may reason to God but not to the will of God.
- 3. A study of the Bible will make believers. A former atheist asked me, "How can I know Jesus Christ is God's Son?" I replied, "Read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and ask yourself if they wrote about an ordinary man — they either lie or Jesus is more than man." I assume he read them because I baptized him the next Sunday.

## III. TO FOLLOW OR OBEY THE BIBLE AS GOD'S WORD.

- 1. There would be profit in studying the Bible for academic reasons, but this is not our challenge.
- 2. We must study it to know the will of God (1 Cor. 1 and 2; Jude 3; Gal. 1:6—9.)
- 3. When we know God's will, it is then our duty to follow it (Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8, 9; Rom. 6:16—18; Eccl. 12:13.)
- 4. The gospel becomes the power of God in us only when it is applied (Rom. 1:16, 17; Heb. 4:12.) We must learn to study, but study is not the end within itself; it is only a means to an end. Our problem: we just study, study, study but never get around to put into practice what we learn.

## IV. TO APPLY THE BIBLE AS GOD'S WORD. This means that we are:

1. To know God. But I cannot be personally acquainted with God in the sense I know you. My relationship with Him is on the basis of faith (2 Cor. 5:7.) Thus:
  - a. To know God is to know His will (John 5:38, 39.)
  - b. And we can know His will only by divine revelation, which has been delivered to us in the Bible.
2. To know Christ. All this talk about having a personal (subjective) confrontation with Christ apart from the Scriptures is existentialism to the core.
  - a. No one denies that we are to have a confrontation with Christ, but that confrontation comes through the divine revelation given in the Bible.
  - b. We need to re-learn how God speaks to us today (Heb. 1:1—4.) He does so through Christ; Christ through the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit through the apostles; and the apostles through the written word. Thus Christ speaks to us through the New Testament.
3. To know the church. The church was built under the immediate directions of Spirit directed men. It is therefore the church as God would have it in all ages.
  - a. God did not leave His cause to develop into maturity from age to age.
  - b. He revealed His will for His church in His word.
4. To know God's scheme of redemption. Everything in the Old Testament points forward to this. It reached its climax in Acts 2. The message was for the whole world.
5. To know God's plan of worship. Man is a worshipping being, and he will worship someone or something, regardless. It is therefore imperative that we study the Bible to learn the right worship — true worship (John 4:23, 24.)
6. To know how to live as a Christian (2 Pet. 1:3—11.)
7. To know the Great Commission and to be able to carry it out — we cannot preach that we cannot know.<sup>1</sup>

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1. There is no conclusion on the original outline, and I have chosen to leave it just as it is in my original notes.

# The Stewardship Of The Soul\*

Ezekiel 18:4

Man is more than a material being — he is a soul with a body, not a body with a soul. The spiritual is the vital part of man. But the soul functions through the body, and its future depends on the actions done in the body. Whether a man becomes carnal or spiritual depends on the man himself. And in this sense each man is the steward of his own soul.

## I. WHAT IS A STEWARD?

1. Jesus defined one well in Matthew 25:14.
2. God has delivered our souls into our own keeping and we determine what they will be for all eternity.
3. Demoninational doctrine, in the final analysis, makes God, not man, the steward of the soul because it teaches that man can do nothing to save his soul — that everything was done by Christ. But if we are stewards of the soul we must have some power over its destiny.

## II. WHAT IS THE SOUL?

1. Man is a triune being. (1 Thess. 5:23.)
2. The soul lives in the body but it is independent of the body. (Eccl. 12:7; Matt. 10:28.)
3. The soul is the spiritual part of man and in many places where the JKV has "soul" the ASV renders it "life". "Soul" often describes the whole man while "spirit" describes the vital part, the part that is immaterial.
4. But for all practical purposes we should probably think of

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\*Delivered in 1976 at the Carolina Lectures conducted by the Cape Fear congregation in Fayetteville, N. C. B. G. Langston was the local preacher.

it in terms of operation rather than in essence. "I" have a body through which to live, but "I" am something different than the body in which "I" live. "I" am the soul, the spirit, the part of man that never dies.

5. It is "I" that makes the decisions for "my" life and these decisions result in "my" eternal destiny.
6. The decisions are "mine" and that simply means that "I" am the steward of "my" soul.

### III. WHAT IS THE VALUE OF THE SOUL?

1. It is the Lord's. (Ezek. 18:4.)
2. It was made in and bears the image of God. (Gen. 1:26, 27; 1 Cor. 11:7.)
3. It is eternal. (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:11-15.)
4. Jesus died to save it. (Eph. 1:7; Rom. 5:6-9.)
5. It is more valuable than the whole world. (Matt. 16:26.)
6. The Bible was written to give God's plan to save it. Billions have been spent along with the lives of millions in writing, translating, publishing, and distributing the Bible. Why? Because of the value of the soul.

### IV. HOW CAN WE BE GOOD STEWARDS OF THE SOUL? The answer can be gleaned from Matthew 25:

1. Be prepared. (Matt. 25:1-13.) Watch (be prepared) is the key word here. Never for one moment stand unprepared to meet God.
2. Be productive. (Matt. 25:14-30.) Two servants made use of what they had — they were productive. The third failed, not because he did not have more talents, but because he did not use the one he had.
3. Be ready for judgment. (Matt. 25:31-46.)

- a. The master is going to call for an accounting someday.
- b. The kind of steward we have been in this life will determine where we will spend eternity.

## **CONCLUSION**

Since the salvation of the soul is now in our own hands (God has done for us what we cannot do for ourselves but He has left for us to do what we can) we should spend our lives preparing to meet God. In the long run, nothing else really matters!



# The Postponement Theory

Matt. 3:2; 4:17

Those who hold the postponement theory generally agree that the kingdom which was at hand was the promised kingdom of the OT. (See R. H. Boll, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 61, 62.)

The kingdom was thus promised at that time, and promised in good faith. How then do premillennialists think it is yet future? They say that the kingdom was offered to the Jews upon the condition that they repent; when they rejected the offer, refused to repent, the prophecies, promises, and expectations were then postponed.

## I. THE THEORY DEFINED AND STATED

1. It is not that the ends of the prophecies were postponed — that remains the same. The prophecies were conditional and must thus wait to be fulfilled until the conditions are met.
2. Boll states this concisely. *The Kingdom of God*, p. 86. So does Author W. Pink. Quoted in Whiteside's *Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy*, p. 100.
3. The OT prophecies thus dealt with the kingdom, which did not come, and not with the church, which did come.
4. There is another twist to the theory — the stop-watch twist. It says that God just stopped His prophetic clock — prophetic time is not now being counted.
5. All this says that the prophecies promised the Jews a kingdom at Christ's first coming, but is was postponed until His second.

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\*Delivered in 1977 at the Carolina Lectures conducted by the Central church in Spartanburg, S. C. James Meadows and Terry Wheeler were the local preachers.

6. This leads us to observe:

## II. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPHECIES

1. There are two classes of prophecies:

a. Conditional — the fulfillment is predicated upon conditions.

(1) Deut. 28 — if the Jews were *faithful* they would be blessed; if *unfaithful* they would be cursed.

(2) Jonah 3:4–10 — God would destroy Nineveh in 40 days ... but they repented.

b. Unconditional — no conditions attached.

(1) The virgin birth, Isa. 7:14.

(2) The northern kingdom to be destroyed — cease (Hosea 1:4, 5) and Judah to be saved (Hosea 1:6).

c. The prophecies concerning the coming Messiah and kingdom are, on man's part, unconditional.

(1) Isa. 2:2–4; Dan. 2:44.

(2) The statements of John and Jesus (Matt. 3:2; 4:17) are unconditional. They did not say, "The kingdom is near at hand if you repent." They said, "Repent, for the kingdom is at hand." The nearness of the kingdom is the reason why they should repent.

2. Prophecies also fall into time frames.

a. Specific time frames:

(1) Dan. 2:44 — the time of the world's fourth world empire.

(2) Jonah 3:4–10 — 40 days.

(3) The time is a part of the prophecy and cannot be changed without changing the whole prophecy.

b. No specific time frame. Deut. 28 again. The blessing was to be received when they obeyed; the curse when they disobeyed.

c. The prophecies of the kingdom have a specific time frame, the coming of Christ. They are all concerned with human redemption. When redemption came, that is the time they were to be fulfilled.

d. A prophecy must be fulfilled, if fulfilled at all, within its time frame.

3. A prophecy cannot point to two events, unless one is secondary.
  - a. No prophecy could point to both the first and second coming at the same time without one being secondary; nor could a prophecy point to the first coming (that puts it in a specific time frame) and have its fulfillment in the second. Thus
  - b. One of three things is certain:
    - (1) The prophets pointed to the first coming of Christ. If this is the case, they cannot be changed to the second.
    - (2) The prophets pointed to the second coming of Christ. If this is the case then they cannot be applied to the first, "The Old Testament knows nothing whatsoever of Christianity." – Author W. Pink. Salvation from sins is therefore not an OT subject: there is no promise to the Gentiles; and we may all be lost.
    - (3) The prophets pointed to both, some to one and some to the other. In this case we must distinguish between them.
    - (4) In either case, there is no place for the postponement theory.

### III. THE NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLS OLD TESTAMENT EXPECTATIONS. This I will now show by three lines of arguments:

1. Christ (and the Christian system) was the end toward which the law and the prophets pointed. Thus Christ is the end of the law:
  - a. Matt. 5:17, 18. Jesus came to fulfill the law. To fulfill means to serve the purpose for which it was given.
  - b. Gal. 3:22–25. The schoolmaster served its purpose in bringing the Jews to Christ.
  - c. Rom. 10:4. The end of the law here is not that the law came to an end (it did that but that is taught in other passages), but the end (purpose) the law had in view.  
*E.g.* the end of discipline is obedience.
2. Faith establishes the law. Rom. 3:21. By believing in

Christ one establishes the (purpose of) law. When one is righteous in Christ, he is precisely what the law intended.

3. The end of the law is righteousness by faith, that which is obtained by Christ and the Christian system. There is nothing in the law and prophets that points beyond the righteousness of faith.

#### IV. THE PROMISE MADE TO ABRAHAM – Gen. 12:1–3 (renewed in Gen. 13:14–18; 15:1–18; 22:15–18). The promise is twofold:

1. The land promise, Heb. 12:2, 3, 7. This was fulfilled before Joshua died (Joshua 21:43–45; 23:14), and cannot look to the future for fulfillment.
2. The spiritual promise. Is this the promise of salvation? If so, it is fulfilled in Christ. But to prove that salvation is the promise, notice:
  - a. When man fell, God promised redemption. (Gen. 3:15.) This points to the cross.
  - b. The spiritual promise made to Abraham was the same promise made in the Garden. Paul said “the seed” was Christ. (Gal. 3:16.)
  - c. The law was given after the promise was made, but the law did not annul or modify the promise. Paul makes an irresistible argument to show this in Gal. 3:
    - (1) God promised that the blessing (salvation) would come through Abraham’s seed. (3:7–9.)
    - (2) The promise was not to be realized in the law but in faith. (3:10–14.)
    - (3) The law added 430 years after the promise could not make the promise void. (3:15–22.)
    - (4) The purpose of the law was to bring the Jews to Christ. (3:23–25.)
    - (5) Those who by faith are baptized into Christ are the heirs of the promise. (3:26–29.)
3. If the land promise was fulfilled in Israel and the spiritual promise was fulfilled in Christianity, what is there left yet to be fulfilled?

## V. THAT WHICH THE OT FORESAW IS THAT WHICH CAME IN NT CHRISTIANITY

1. The prophets foresaw salvation. (1 Pet. 1:9–12.) This alone proved the postponement theory false – or else it proves that salvation has not yet come.
2. The prophet like unto Moses. (Deut. 18:18, 19; Acts 3:22–24.) Note: Peter says he foretold *these* days.
3. The New Covenant foretold. (Jer. 31:31–34; Hab. 8:6–13.) The NT system *was* therefore in the plan of God.
4. Redemption is the theme of the whole Bible. But there is no redemption apart from the NT system.
5. The last days. (Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:16–21.)
6. Salvation is now offered to all upon the same condition. (Rom. 11.) This is the hope of Israel, which Paul preached. (Acts 28:20.)
7. Christ and Christianity thus fulfills the law and the prophets. (Matt. 5:17, 18, Luke 24:44.) As James D. Bales observed:

“If the kingdom was prophesied, but not established, and the church was not prophesied, but was established, Christ did not do what He came to do, *i.e.*, to fulfill the law and the prophets.” – *Prophecy and Premillennialism*, p.17.

## CONCLUSION

If Christ did not do what He came to do, then the Messiah of OT has not yet come. When the Messiah came He was to restore Israel and reign over her. But according to the postponement theory, this has not yet occurred. Therefore the Messiah has not come.

The greatest problem here is the fact that it makes the promises and prophecies apply to a physical rather than a spiritual kingdom. And it looks forward to the time when the spiritual will be replaced by the physical.

# History Of The Church In The Carolinas \*

A study of history must be profitable because the Holy Spirit devoted one whole book of the New Testament to the history of the early church. But it is profitable only when we learn from it. The struggles of the past can give us direction for the present and the future.

The churches of Christ, as we know them today, had their beginning in the Carolinas 108 years ago, but the seed of restoration goes back far beyond that.

## I. RESTORATION IN EMBRYO — James O'Kelley.

1. O'Kelley broke with the Methodist sin 1792, 17 years before Alexander Campbell came to America.
2. The five cardinal principles announced by the O'Kelley group:
  - a. The Lord Jesus Christ as the only Head of the Church.
  - b. The name Christian to the exclusion of all party and sectarian names.
  - c. The Holy Bible, or the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments our only creed, and a sufficient rule of faith and practice.
  - d. Christian character, or vital piety, the only test of church fellowship and membership.
  - e. The right of private judgment, and the liberty of conscience, the privilege and duty of all.

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\*Delivered at the 1978 Carolina Lectureship conducted by the Abilene church in Statesville, N. C. The lectures were a co-operative effort by the four Statesville congregations, Abilene, Broad Street, Belmont, and Northview. The local preachers were, respectively, Wayne Hatcher, Robert Goff, C. C. Vaughan, and Stanley Crews. The lectureship book was dedicated to me, the first time in the history of the lectures that such had been done. At the end of my lecture Wayne Hatcher made a speech about the dedication (and me) and presented me with a copy of the book (the book had not been made public until then so that my surprise would be utterly complete).

3. This was perhaps the first movement in America to make an effort to return to the Bible order of things. Unfortunately it failed to go all the way back to the Bible.

## II. EARLY BEGINNINGS – M. C. Kurfees and Jericho.

1. Kurfees, along with four others, were baptized by W. L. Butler on July 4, 1872. This was the beginning of the Jericho congregation, which is now 106 years old. (For additional information, see Tony Forrest's article in the January 1971 issue of *Carolina Christian*.)
2. It is said that Kurfees baptized hundreds of people in Davie, Yadkin, Forsyth, Wilkes, and Surry counties.
3. But overall growth remained slow for three quarters of a century.

## III. SOUTH CAROLINA – Union (1919) and Greenville.

1. A. M. Burton sent Thomas H. Burton to Union to conduct a tent meeting in 1919. The church in Union was established.
2. As best I can determine, the Moore church was the second congregation to be started.
3. In the early 20's G. F. Gibbs came to Greenville. Scores were baptized. Many of them are still living and active, e.g., Glenn Moreland.

## IV. SPREADING OUT – after World War II.

1. The Carolina Lectures started in 1945. Only a very few attended, probably no more than two or three preachers, but then there were but few.
2. When C. R. Franks, Jr. moved to Charlotte in 1946, he was one of the only three full time preachers in North Carolina.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The other two were C. W. Bradley, at Rockingham, and Cecil Derryberry in Winston-Salem.

3. There are now approximately 200 churches (in both states) with well over 100 full time preachers.

## V. PROBLEMS AND BATTLES

1. In the early days, it was difficult to raise support. Many workers have had to live far below the poverty level. But this has greatly improved now. *Carolina Christian* has helped carry our needs and progress to other areas.
2. Anti-ism struck in the 50's and continued until the early 60's. This was the attitude of binding where God has not bound.
3. Liberalism (a swing to the other extreme of anti-ism) made its appearance in the early 60's and continued into the 70's.<sup>1</sup>
4. Race problems have been with us from the beginning. We have made vast progress but there is still some prejudice, especially among the older generation.
5. Present issues: evangelistic authority (especially among blacks) and the eldership.

## VI. ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Great churches: North Charleston, Jacksonville Road in Charleston, 1-85 in Greenville, Providence Road in Charlotte, Warners Chapel, Raleigh, Linville Forest, South Fork, etc.
2. Some great efforts — new buildings, new congregations, work among the blacks, work among the deaf, etc.
3. Some church related activities:
  - a. The Bible camps — Carolina and Palmetto.
  - b. Carolina Christian.
  - c. Southeastern Children's Home.

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2. See footnote at the beginning of the lecture entitled, "The Demands of Love," in this book.



- d. Blue Ridge Encampment.
- e. Carolina Christian Bookstore.
- f. Carolina Lectures (now add to them the South Carolina lectures and the North Carolina lectures).
- g. AGAPA.
- h. Christian Home Care, Inc. (in Statesville).
- i. Win-More Publications.

## VII. LACK OF GROWTH — caused by many factors:

- 1. Failure to be aggressive evangelistically.
- 2. Restoration plea seems to have little appeal to natives.
- 3. Those baptized have often been weak and indifferent.
- 4. Churches have relied too heavily on outside support, both financially and for leadership.
- 5. Preachers become too easily discouraged and move away.
- 6. Failure to utilize media.
- 7. Non-involvement by the average member.

## CONCLUSION

Our actions today are the history of the future. What will the future say about us?

# I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord\*

Matt. 6:33; Rom. 14:17

The kingdom or church of our Lord is one of the most vital institutions to ever grace the earth. But it is not earthly in nature — it is heavenly in origin and mission. To be in it is to have our citizenship in heaven (Eph. 2:12). When we know what it is, what it stands for, what it means to each citizen, we would be heartless not to love it.

Let us approach the subject by studying each word.

## I. *I LOVE THY KINGDOM, LORD.* *I love it because of:*

1. Who I am — a being made in the image of God. (Gen. 1:26, 27.)
2. What He had made me — a free moral agent. I have the God given right to choose.
3. What I have become — a child of the King!

## II. *I LOVE THY KINGDOM, LORD*

1. Love is the affection of the heart.
2. But love makes demands:
  - a. To devote the heart to the kingdom.
  - b. To put it first. (Matt. 6:33.)
  - c. To protect its good name by godly living. (Titus 2:11, 12.)
  - d. To obey its laws. (Matt. 7:21.)
  - e. To defend its territory. (Jude 3.)
  - f. To serve its cause. (Matt. 28:18–20.)
  - g. To be faithful to its king. (Rev. 2:10.)

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\*Delivered at the 1979 Carolina Lectures in Rock Hill, S. C. David Pharr was the local preacher and the lectureship director.

### III. I LOVE *THY* KINGDOM, LORD

1. This requires that I recognize that it is His, not mine. I love all that pertains to Him.
2. It is composed of His people. (John 3:3–5.)
3. Thy Lord, He is King!

### IV. I LOVE *THY KINGDOM*, LORD

1. It is the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 4:17; Col. 1:13.)
2. It originated with God and was established by Christ.
  - a. It was purposed by God. (Eph. 3:10, 11.)
  - b. It was promised by God. (Gen. 3:15; 12:1–3.)
  - c. It was prophesied by God. (Isa. 2:2–4; Dan. 2:44.)
  - d. It was prepared for by John the Baptist. (Matt. 3:1, 2.)
  - e. It was purchased by Christ. (Acts 20:28.)
  - f. It was perfected by the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2.)
  - g. It was promoted by the apostles in their preaching. This can be seen in the:
    - (1) Plan of salvation.
    - (2) Organization.
    - (3) Name.
    - (4) Mission.
    - (5) Hope.
3. I love it because:
  - a. Of its divine and enduring nature. (Heb. 12:28.)
  - b. Of what it has meant to me in my life, my work, my family, etc.
  - c. Of the fact that it is governed by divine law.
  - d. It has the greatest mission. (Matt. 28:18–20.)
  - e. It never changed heads, Lords or Saviors. (Acts 2:37; Heb. 13:8.)
  - f. It has heaven as its destiny.

### V. I LOVE *THY KINGDOM*, *LORD*.

1. Jesus is Lord. (Acts 2:36.) I have accepted Him as my Lord.

2. By accepting Him as Lord, every issue of life is then settled by this fact. I obey Him.

## CONCLUSION

I love thy kingdom, Lord! Perhaps all of us can say that, that is, we can give mouth service to it. But just to say it is not enough. We must *love* it! And we must demonstrate that love by faithfulness to its King and its mission. Love is demonstrated by actions. (John 14:15,21,23,24.)

## Difficulties Of The Century\*

I am glad I was assigned this subject because I am not certain that I could trust anyone else with it (and I am certain that some of you do not trust me with it). It would be impossible, in the time allotted, to discuss all the issues that have confronted the church in this century, and the most difficult ones for you may not even be mentioned. But I have chosen a limited number to illustrate the problem and show the consequences.

But the church in this century is not the only one to have faced difficulties and problems. Take a look at 1 Corinthians. The church there faced the problem of division (1:10-17), the problem of how to learn the will of God (1:18-2:16), the problem of carnality (3:1-23), the problem of immorality (5:1-12), the problem of brother going to law with brother (6:1-20), problems with marriage (7:1-40), problems with things offered to idols (8:1-13), the problem of authority (9:1-5), the problem of support for preachers (9:6-27), the problem of women's covering (11:1-16), problems centered around the Lord's supper (11:17-34), problems with spiritual gifts (12:1-14:40), problems with resurrection (15:1-58), and a problem with the collection (16:1, 2). There are other problems in the book but these will give you enough to consider for awhile and let you know that we are not the only generation who have been confronted with difficulties.

There are many ways to consider a difficult issue, two of which are as follows:

1. Difficult because its complexities make it hard to understand or to reach a common conclusion as to what is best or right.

2. Difficult because it has made such inroads in the hearts

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\*Delivered at the Carolina Lectures in Rock Hill, S. C. in 1979 - a second assignment. Because of the time element (this was only a 20 minute speech), not all points made were discussed and two or three were not even mentioned.

and minds of men that it is hard to uproot or change their thinking.

While these two aspects of the subject should be kept clearly in mind, no effort is here made to separate them as we discuss them.

Also the difficulties we are to discuss can be placed into three broad categories:

1. Those related to the church but not peculiar to it.
2. Those within the church — issues that have little or no concern for the world.
3. Potential difficulties.

In these three broad categories I list all the issues for discussion here (and they are not listed in what I consider to be the order of importance). I have limited myself to seven in each category.

## I. ISSUES CLOSELY RELATED TO THE CHURCH

1. Evolution — a necessity for materialism.
2. Abortion — a question of when human life begins and the right to life and protection of the unborn.
3. Divorce and remarriage — a strike at the foundation of the home, and the home is the necessary unit of society.
4. Homosexuality — a renunciation of the creative purpose of sex.
5. Communism — atheistic politics.
6. The legalization of strong drinks — diverting the proper function of government.
7. Humanism — making man sufficient within himself to solve all his own problems and needs.

## II. ISSUES WITHIN THE CHURCH

1. Liberalism – the rejection of revealed and objective authority. This has special appeal to intellectualism.
2. Neo-Pentecostalism – substituting subjective for objective authority. This has special appeal to emotionalism.
3. Premillennialism – replacing God's plan of the ages with a future utopia.
4. The status of a remarried divorcee. The question here ultimately is: does heaven recognize as bound a contract that is entered against its prohibition?
5. Race or class prejudice – determining the value of a man by the color of his skin or by his social class.
6. The place and function of human organizations in the work of a Christian ... and the church. Is the church all sufficient to do all God gave her to do? This ultimately led to the anti issues of church cooperation and the support of the homes out of the church treasury.
7. The work of the Holy Spirit as it relates to Christians – is it direct or indirect?

## III. POTENTIAL ISSUES – potential because they have not yet exploded into major problems.

1. The authority of elders – to what extent can an elder rule?
2. Instrumental music in worship – again! Too many of us are reasoning: "Where does the Bible condemn it?" Sooner or later some are going to apply that question to the instrument.
3. The role of women in the church. How extensive are the limitations? And to what can the limitations be Scripturally applied?
4. The distinction between law, judgment, opinion, and ex-

pediency. Most of us confuse our judgment (conclusions drawn from the evidence — conclusions not absolutely conclusive) with what the Lord has said.

5. The grace-faith-work-fellowship issue — a failure to ascertain a proper balance between them.
6. The relation (and responsibility) of a Christian to his government — most see this only as the war question.
7. The distinction between worship (or service to God) and entertainment (or that which is done for ourselves). Every service to God must be an authorized service, and the principle does not change simply because we call it a devotion or a soul talk.

## CONCLUSION

I have simply stated the problems, along with some of their difficulties and consequences — it takes no Solomon to do this. Now comes the real challenge: to find and apply the solutions.



# Study To Show Thyself Approved \*

2 Tim. 2:15

The word study in this verse is much broader than study alone. The American Standard Version correctly renders the Greek word (*spoudazo*) by "give diligence." But since study is an overall part of Christian living, no violence is done to this passage by applying it to study (as long as we do not limit it to that). Interestingly enough, the only word that is translated "study" (in the KJV) that means study in the sense of our lesson is found in Eccl. 12:12, where it is said that much study is a weariness of the flesh (I throw that in for lazy preachers). There are, however, other words, such as hear, meditate, think, know, etc. that carry the concept.

There are four reasons for study given in our verse:

1. To show thyself approved unto God.
2. A workman.
3. That needeth not be ashamed.
4. Rightly dividing or handling aright the word of truth.

I want to use these four statements to call your attention to some important and vital things about study:

**I. TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD.** This would easily cover the methods of study. How do we study?

1. Research and gruelling concentration. This is hitting the books.
2. Reading — read broadly. (1 Tim. 4:13.)
3. Memorization — can be either rote or a method of learning.

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\*Delivered at the 36th annual Carolina Lectures hosted by the Brooks Avenue church in Raleigh. Al Bergeron was the local preacher.

4. Meditation – to roll over in the mind. (Ps. 1:2.)
  5. Encounters, discussions, dialog.
  6. Teaching others – my Greek teacher told his class the best way to learn Greek was to teach it to our girlfriends.
  7. Hearing others – preaching, teaching, tapes, open forums, etc.
  8. Experience – rearing children, for example.
  9. Travel – a trip to Bible lands could be worth years of study from books and maps.
  10. Practice or doing – the typewriter, bicycle, etc.
  11. Place – should be regular, comfortable, and have an atmosphere conducive to learning.
  12. Tools – books, maps, tests, etc.
- II. A WORKMAN** (we need to study in order to be a workman).  
Here I wish to call your attention to the abuse of study – a failure to be a workman in study.
1. Failure to study.
  2. Taking time to study and using that time in other activities ... or wasting the time.
  3. Study only for sermon preparation or to teach a class.  
This is vital, but it is not the only reason for studying.
  4. To display accumulated knowledge.
  5. To win arguments. An argument, in the sense of discussion, is a good learning situation ... even when we lose.
- III. WHO NEEDETH NOT TO BE ASHAMED.** This gives us more than a hint as to why study is important.

1. To know the truth, which makes us free. (John 8:32.)
2. We must know before we can teach. Can you imagine a salesman not knowing his product ... or a Christian not knowing the Scriptures?
3. Keep the mind alive and active. If you want the brain to die, for all practical purposes, just stop studying. Never add to its storehouse and soon the storehouse will be empty.
4. Keep growing. (2 Pet. 3:18.)
5. Keep informed. The world is changing so fast that no one person can keep up with it. But we can keep abreast of the advances that directly affect the study of the Bible.
6. Make life and teaching more exciting. Few things can be more exciting or profitable than contributing intelligently to the communication of truth.
7. Give depths to dealing with problems. Have you ever heard someone giving a solution to a problem when he does not understand either the problem or the solution?

#### IV. RIGHTLY DIVIDING (OR HANDLING ARIGHT) THE WORD OF TRUTH. This embraces the purposes of study.

1. To rightly divide the truth. This has been one of the most difficult problems facing us. Of course we know how to rightly divide the Old and New Testaments, but that is about as far as it goes. We have never learned to divide between the bound and the loosed, the essential and the non-essential, law and expediency, faith and opinion, an act of love and an act of compromise, etc.
2. Preparation. To preach the glorious gospel of the Son of God in a sloppy way (when it can be prevented by study) is little short of criminal. Jesus spent several years training His apostles before sending them out on their mission, even though they were to be guided by the Holy Spirit. How much more do we need the very best preparation

available to us. My Dad used to say, "You never lose time by sharpening your tools."

3. Devotional — study for our own private and spiritual benefit. None of us are strong enough to neglect this.
4. To set the pace for public knowledge.

## **CONCLUSION**

Study is vital to the work of an evangelist. But remember one thing: we do not study just for the sake of either study or knowledge. We study to know. And we know in order to do. Study without putting that which is learned in action, in the service of our Master, is an exercise in futility.

## Basic Tools For Bible Study\*

I confess to you (I have even confessed it to my wife!) that I love good books. They are my constant companions, and I am rarely caught without at least one within arm's reach. They go with me everywhere – visiting, shopping, playing, working, to the bedroom, and even to the bathroom. Over the years of my preaching life I have read thousands, bought hundreds, given away scores, and have even written and sold a few. As I see it, there is simply no way to describe the contribution they have made to my life and character, although my heart is filled to the overflow with gratitude. I have often worn unattractive clothing, driven a wreck of a car, furnished the house with used furniture, and deprived my family of many pleasures (and perhaps a few necessities) in order to be able to purchase books (I have not been without a challenging book to read in nearly 30 years). But there are no regrets, either on my part or that of my family (of which I am aware). The sacrifice has been an investment – the best investment I have ever made! And as marvelous as it may seem, I have never read a book that I did not get something worthwhile from, and I have never bought but one that I regretted purchasing, and that one was not what I thought it was – I was misled by the title.

But unfortunately most members of the Lord's church do not read books written by Christians to the extent that they should. This, I believe, is a great loss to the world ... and to us. How much richer would our lives be if we would but drink deep into the writings of such men as Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Guy N. Woods, James D. Bales, George W. DeHoff, Thomas B. Warren, David Lipscomb, R. L. Whiteside, N. B. Hardeman, Alexander Campbell and scores of others who have graced the Restoration

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\*This and the two following lectures were delivered at the 1979 S. C. Lectureship in Florence under the heading of "The World of Books." Bill Young, a very dear friend, was the energetic preacher for the church and the lectureship director. He originated the idea for the series, and assigned me the task nearly a year in advance, thus giving me plenty of time for preparation and thought as to their contents. They were prepared especially with young preachers in mind.

**Movement.** Such men, through their books, can enrich our lives and help solve many of our problems. While not many of us could ever hope to be as learned as these men, we can think their thoughts after them by reading their written works. And when one stops to think about it, what could be more wholesome to spiritual life and growth, other than the Bible itself, than to read what spiritual giants have written? It is highly improbable that Paul's instructions to Timothy, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:13), was meant to be limited to the Scripture alone. Timothy probably understood the exhortation to mean any book that he had access to that would help him study, understand, and apply the inspired record.

Solomon, the wise man, said, "Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." (Eccl. 12:12.) The truth of this statement seems more obvious now than ever before in history. There are thousands of books published each year. Each is different, each bears the distinct mark of its author, and each makes a strong appeal for both the purchase price and an honest reading. They fall into many classes and categories. Some are good and useful, some are otherwise; some are designed to instruct, some to entertain, and some just to make a profit. But regardless of the motive behind them, books continue to roll from the press with increasing rapidity.

But our concern is not with books in general but with religious books in particular or books designed to help in the sphere of religion, such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, biographies, etc. But even with this limitation, the number confronting us for consideration is inconceivably staggering. In most cases I will be limiting the discussion still further by considering only books which have come out of the movement to restore the ancient order of things. But even with this strict limitation there remains more than I could possibly consider. Truly, "In the making of many books there is no end," even among those who have but one book of authority as the only source of everything religious pertaining to their faith and practice.

While it is not my purpose to talk about the history, produc-

tion, or sale of books, one thing might be of special interest to note just here, namely, that more and more people are turning to purchasing, and making good use of religious books. Perhaps never before in the history of this country has the percentage of the total number of books sold on the open market been higher for Bible related books. Many religious books have skyrocketed to the best seller chart and have remained there for many months. For example, *Joni*, the story of a personal tragedy and how a young lady learned to cope with it by faith. The last figures I saw on it, 1,700,000 copies had been printed and it was still in great demand. Consider also *The Late Great Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsay. It is a dramatically doctrinal book, setting forth the premillennial hope in a very powerful way. The sales on it have been phenomenal. The last figures I saw (and it was still going strong) sales had reached nearly the 11,000,000 mark. While the sale on the Lindsay book is incredible, it points up the fact that religious books are now in great demand. And because of this demand, it is entirely possible for almost anyone to write his deepest convictions in a book and sell it to the public, providing only that he can present them in an interesting and readable manner. There are hardly any limits to the possibilities. It is true that the market is flooded with books, many of which will never sell enough to pay the printing bill, but the public eagerly opens its mouth and drinks up the flood waters (for the most part) as they gush forth.

But of all the books in the world, the Bible is by far the most vital and the most challenging ever written. It is the supreme production, the one book for which all other religious books should be designed to explore, to expound, or to explain. If a religious book does not send one to the Bible for the divine message, if it does not honor God and His word, if it does not make the Bible the absolute standard of spiritual values and of moral conduct, if it does not simplify, magnify, and amplify the message of the Bible then it probably should never have been conceived, written, published or read.

The Bible is the word of God – it is God's own book. No other book, therefore, is in the same class with it. It is the only infallible book ever written – the only book that reveals the

mind of God. This being true, it and it alone deserves and has received the title, THE BOOK! Other books are just books, but this one stands alone, unique, inspired, infallible, eternal. It is said that when Sir Walter Scott was dying he asked a servant who was standing by to bring him the book. The servant was at first puzzled. Scott had in his vast library hundreds of books, useful, valuable, and rare. The servant asked, "What book?" Scott replied, "There is but one book." Upon hearing this the servant went to the library and returned with the Bible. The Bible is indeed *the book*.

But there are those who think this puts too much emphasis on the Bible. Several years ago, I had a long discussion with a preacher friend, who had a broad liberal streak right down the middle of his theology, and he told me that my love for the Bible had led me too far afield from Christ. He said, in essence, "You have become so strong in urging people to follow the Bible that you have forgotten Christ and become a bibliolatrist." That did not disturb me then nor would it disturb me now. I knew that one simply cannot forget Christ while honoring and loving His word or fail to preach Christ while preaching the word and the fact that it derives all of its authority from Christ. I pointed out to my friend that even he, even though he disavowed it, had to depend on the Bible for everything he knew or could know about Christ or anything else that pertains to the will of God to man. The only possible thing that anyone can preach about Christ must come from the Scriptures. There is no other reliable source. The Bible is the revealed will of God (the revelation of Jesus Christ) and no man can preach that will (or preach Christ, which is the same thing) without preaching the word of God. Nor can one preach the Bible without instilling love and appreciation for it, for its author, and for all that it is and all that it says. Anyone who preaches the will of God must preach the Bible.

There is simply no way to make too much of the Bible, God's blessed old book. This reminds me of a quotation given by E. G. Echols from *Studies in the Gospel According to St. Matthew*, a book by J. Cynddylan Jones and published in 1881. "Some of our popular preachers have been descanting of late upon what



they call 'bibliolatry' – idolatry of the Bible. The people they are in contact with, I conjecture, make too much of the Bible. I wish I knew where such people live. I should like to go and live amongst them. The people I know make too *little* of the Bible, a great deal too little. They read it too little, study it too little, believe it too little. I would travel far to see an idolater of the Bible. I have not seen one yet. The truth is, that as to love Christ supremely is not idolatry of His human nature, so to believe the Bible intensely is not idolatry of mere thoughts and words."

But it is not enough just to love the Bible (or at least just to say that we love it). We must mold our lives by its divine precepts. Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4.) Thus *every* word of God is vital to the Christian life. To neglect one word would be to neglect part of God's plan to save. Every word is vital to life and conduct. But if we are to live by every word of God we must know it – it must become an essential part of our very being. God said to ancient Israel, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children." (Hosea 4: 6.) But the only way to know the word of the Lord is to read it, study it, and meditate upon it. We must delight in the law of the Lord and meditate upon it day and night (Ps. 1:2.)

## FOUR BASIC TOOLS

If Bible study is to be profitable, we must approach it as we would the study of any other book or subject. While the Bible is certainly not just another book, it is written in human language and is therefore subject to all the rules of hermeneutics that apply to other writings. Thus any book that can help us arrive at a proper understanding of the Bible is a useful tool. But there are four basic books, indispensable for the serious student, in Bible study, namely, a Bible, a concordance, a Bible dictionary, and an English dictionary. I will discuss them now in the order named.

1. A Bible. Probably for most people a good study Bible will be most useful and satisfying. Nearly every publisher of Bibles features a study Bible. They are not hard to find. My preference is the Thompson's Chain Reference Bible. I like the way the references and helps are set up better than any I have seen (yet I do not personally use it). It comes only in the King James Version, and if you have chosen some other version to study from, this one will not do for you. Many people prefer the Dickson's Analytical Bible. It has the advantage of having the King James Version as a text and the American Standard Version, where there is a difference, inserted in brackets, right in the text itself. While this is an advantage in study (both versions are before one in every verse), it makes for slower and more difficult reading, especially in public. One simply must train himself to skip the brackets. (I have also found that many have never understood why the words are in brackets.) There are many other study Bibles, and you should probably explore the field until you find one that fills your need.

My own opinion is that if you have all the helps in individual volumes, which I strongly recommend that you do, you will not need an expensive study Bible. I have all my helps at hand, but I usually use an inexpensive Bible for study purposes. I am presently using a Gideons Bible. I found it in an old used furniture store in Rockingham, North Carolina. When I offered to purchase it the owner gave it to me. I have used it for a number of years and it fills my needs because I have all the helps in other volumes.

But here I want to mention an almost indispensable book that could be listed under some other heading, namely, *Nave's Topical Bible*. While it is not strictly a Bible but a topical arrangement of Bible subjects, I have chosen to mention it here because I consider it the tool closest to the Bible itself. It contains more the 20,000 topics and sub-topics and over 100,000 references. A vast number of the Scriptures are quoted in full under each topic. The advantage of this over a concordance is tremendous. Take any subject and it will give (usually quote in full) the Scriptures pertaining to it, even when the word itself is not used in the passage. Take for example homosexuality.

Look in a concordance under sodomy and that will give you the verses that actually mention it by name. But look in Nave's under the same word and you have listed every passage in the Bible that deals with this sin, regardless of what it is called. No preacher, teacher, or writer should be without Nave's!

That brings us now to translations of the Bible. And while I strongly recommend either the King James Version or the American Standard Version for use in preaching, teaching, and writing, I do not think that we should limit ourselves to these in a serious study of the Scriptures, especially for comparative purposes. So I would suggest to you, as far as your personal study is concerned, get all the translations you can and use all you get ... as reference tools. But in your reading, preaching, teaching and writing stay with the one version you choose to use in your study. And just here let me throw in a piece of advice (which will be ignored by many): do not get into the habit of jumping from one translation to another, either in your study, in your memorization, or in your teaching. I have seen articles in which each quotation is taken from a different translation, when there was no reason for quoting different translations when by doing so you can clarify a thought or reinforce some particular point of emphasis. But do not do it just for the sake of displaying your familiarity with them.

While I would warn against the need for and the proliferation of translations and paraphrases (and everyone should read *A Review of the New Versions* by Foy E. Wallace, Jr. whether he agrees with all his conclusions or not), and would urge that their danger always be kept in view, I must acknowledge the fact that each has some value for study purposes and can probably make a vital contribution to a better understanding of the Scriptures when properly used. While some undoubtedly contain error and mistranslations, this within itself is not a sufficient reason to reject the good they may offer.

There are severe problems in translating any composition from one language into another that we should be aware of. We can see this problem by observing that some philosophy of translation must be adopted before the actual translating can

begin. There are three such philosophies, one of which must govern every translator:

1. To produce a word for word translation insofar as such is possible. The King James Version, the American Standard Version, and *Young's Literal Translation* are examples of this philosophy.

2. To translate the thought expressed in the original words – to put into the words of the translator what he thinks the original writer meant. This results in what is generally called a paraphrase. There is no effort to translate the words, but only the meaning. *The Living Bible*, by Kenneth Taylor, and *Good News for Modern Man*, the American Bible Society's version, are illustrations of this philosophy.

3. A combination of the two. All translations to one degree or another fall into this category. But perhaps the *Revised Standard Version* and *The New International Version* would be best suitable for examples. They strike somewhat of a medium. But all versions will fall somewhere between the two extremes, some slanted more toward the word for word and others toward the paraphrase. Some (the King James Version, for example) try to remedy this by the use of *italics*, added words put into a different type, and while this is commendable and useful, it is not absolutely reliable in all instances. There is simply no way to indicate all changes, i.e., the order of words.

The problem of translating the Scriptures is far more difficult than most people realize. An interesting insight into this difficulty is provided by Cicero, who, about 2,000 years ago, was faced with the prospect of translating Plato's Protagoras into Latin. He said, "It is hard to preserve in a translation the charm of expressions which another language are most felicitous ... If I render word for word, the result will sound uncouth, and if compelled by necessity I alter anything, in the order of wording, I shall seem to have departed from the function of a translator." That states the problem in a nutshell.

While we certainly need to be aware of their danger, there is probably no translation or paraphrase but what has something

useful to offer in the study of the Bible. Try to understand the problems in translating, and try to avoid being led into the doctrinal errors that are often subtly slipped into them, but do not let this prevent you from making use of different translations as an aid in understanding God's inspired word. In my own study I have and occasionally used the following versions and translations:

The King James Version — the one I use in all my study, preaching, and writing.

The American Standard Version — the one I would use had I not started with the King James Version and done all my memory work from it.

The Revised Standard Version.

The Douay (Catholic) Version.

The Berkeley Version.

King James, II, which I have not found very useful.

Young's Literal Translation, which I use more than any other except the first two named.

New World Translation, which is not very reliable.

The Complete Bible, Edgar J. Goodspeed.

A New Translation, James Moffett.

The Living Bible, the most popular of the paraphrases.

The Good News Bible.

The New International Version.

The Amplified Bible.

Besides the complete Bible, I have the following on the New Testament alone: Confraternity (Catholic) Version; The New English Bible — New Testament; A New Translation into Modern English, Olaf M. Norlie; The Emphasized New Testament, Joseph B. Rotherham; The Better Version of the New Testament, Chester Estes; The New Testament in Modern English, J. B. Phillips; The New Testament — American Bible Union; The Authentic New Testament, Hugh J. Schonfield, and The Living Oracles. I want to add others, especially the more recent translations, as opportunity and finances permit.

One more word about Bibles: beware of *The Scofield Refer-*

*ence Bible*. It is more than just another reference or study Bible. It is a handbook of dispensational premillennialism. And while it may be useful in understanding this false system of hermeneutics, it should not be placed in the hands of those unaware of its dangers. I tell you, as I used to tell a member of the church who used it, "You have a sharp sword but it is in a shabby scabbard."

2. Concordances. Unless one has an absolutely perfect memory, and can quickly locate everything he has ever read (and no ordinary person falls into this category), a concordance to the Bible is indispensable, the one tool that should always be within arm's reach of the Bible student. There is no substitute for a concordance and one should not settle for less than the best. And while there are several specialized concordances, the four following will fill the needs of most people:

Cruden's Complete Concordance.  
Cruden's Unabridged Concordance.  
Young's Analytical Concordance.  
Strong's Exhaustive Concordance.

One does not need all four of these, but he does need at least two of them, either Cruden's Complete and Young's or Strong's Unabridged or Cruden's unabridged and Strong's or Young's. Either combination will fill your needs, except for specialized studies.

3. Bible dictionaries. The basic function of a Bible dictionary is to give background information on words, names, places, and things in the Bible. While it does offer word definitions, this is not its major function. There is no shortage of dictionaries — there are so many the choice becomes somewhat of a problem. They range all the way from very small and inexpensive single volumes to the huge encyclopaedias. One's educational level, the use he plans to make of it, and the amount of research he desires will determine one's choice more than the author or publisher. While I have no intention of listing them all, I will give a select number from each of four categories and do so on an ascending scale — the beginner will probably start with the first and the Scholar will stop with the last.

First, inexpensive single volumes. While there are a good many of these available, the two most popular are *Smith's Bible Dictionary* (the name may vary from time to time) and *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary*. These are usually sufficient only for beginners.

Second, the more advanced single volumes. From these I list *Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary*; *Davis Dictionary of the Bible*; *The New Bible Dictionary*, J. D. Douglas; *Faussett's Bible Dictionary of the Bible*; *The New Harper's Dictionary of the Bible*; and *Unger's Bible Dictionary*.

Third, the multivolume sets. Smith's (the four volume set); *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (the original printing, I am told, is more conservative than the more recent edition); *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (four volumes) – liberal but has the advantage of being more up to date.

Fourth, the advanced works. There are a number of works that might be listed in this classification, but I choose only two: *Encyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, McClintock and Strong; and Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* and a companion set (not Kittel), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, now in preparation.

I personally started with *Peloubet's*, advanced to *Zondervan's Pictorial*, then to *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, and finally to McClintock and Strong. I hope someday to advance to Kittel, which according to some is the ultimate in its field. It is thus considered to be the most advanced work available now and probably most of us could neither use it with a great deal of profit nor much appreciation. However the advanced student will not want to overlook it.

4. English dictionaries. Most of us are going to be studying the English Bible and we cannot study it without knowing something about the English language and the meaning of English words. Thus an English dictionary is an indispensable book for serious Bible study. And while there are a number of good

English dictionaries, probably a good *Webster's* will be all you will ever need.

For my own use I have a *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* for daily use and an unabridged for reference purposes.

## CONCLUSION

Armed with these four tools, a Bible, a concordance, a Bible dictionary, and an English dictionary, we can start on a fascinating, challenging, and learning adventure in Bible study. Without them we can never hope to advance beyond a mediocre knowledge of the eternal word of the Living God.



## How To Build A Library

Apart from the Bible itself, a good religious library is a preacher's most valuable material asset. Guy N. Woods has well said:

"A good library is truly a fabulous fairyland, a place of genuine delight, affording a happy haven from the swirling currents of a restless world. In it we are in the intimate fellowship of the greatest intellectuals, the most profound thinkers and the greatest reasoners of all time. No barriers have been erected to exclude us; here is one of the few areas of human experience where the rich are at no advantage, rich and poor alike being privileged to drink at will from this ever-flowing fountain. Into what other select company of distinguished scholars may one appear at will and there converse to his heart's content? How else may one in life associate with spirits of the saints dead and share in the intellectual and mental labors of their lives on earth?

"Were I, after a long and eventful life of intense activity as a gospel preacher asked to designate what, in my view, are the most vital aims which should characterize all who teach and preach the word, high on the list would be the accumulation of a useful library, the cultivation of an affection for good books and the formation of regular habits of study. No day should be permitted to pass which does not provide for communion with good books." (Editorial, *Gospel Advocate*, March 29, 1979.)

This expresses my sentiments exactly, but building a good library is more, much more, than just collecting books. It is selecting and purchasing, on a limited salary, the best books available that are useful to you (and the most useful to one may not be the most useful to another). No book is worth the space it occupies (that is, to you) unless it is usable. Thus a good library is a usable library, a library that helps you study, understand, and apply the holy Scriptures to all areas of your life and the lives of those you teach. Books are tools, especially the tools of a preacher. And one cannot work without tools ... but neither does he need tools just as ornaments for a tool shed.

The first thing I do when I walk into a preacher's study is to look at his books. They have a story to tell – they tell one the kind of student he is, what he studies, and usually the kind of preacher he is.

## **HOW TO BUILD A LIBRARY**

One of the problems confronting every preacher, and especially young preachers, is how, on such a limited income, to build a good library. He should not be willing to settle for less than the best and yet he knows that the best is going to be shockingly expensive. How can he solve this problem? Here are a few suggestions:

1. One must see the need. No one can build a library that is worthwhile unless he is totally convinced that he needs one, that he needs it worse than he needs a lot of other things that make demands on his income. Books are terribly expensive, but so is everything else that is worthwhile.

2. One must have a workable plan. Too many people say to me, "I am going to get the money someday and come buy my basic library all at one time." But in this they are totally wrong! And this is the wrong approach for at least four reasons: (1) one needs his library now, not someday; (2) many of the books may not be in print at the time of such a purchase; (3) someday never comes; and (4) very few people will ever have enough money to go and buy a huge number of books all at one time.

3. I suggest the following as a workable plan to build slowly but surely: (1) set aside a weekly amount for books (perhaps \$2.50 to \$5 would be a starting point). But do it every week, just as scrupulous as you set aside your contribution. (2) Ask for books (of your choice) as Christmas gifts, birthday gifts, etc. You will be surprised to learn that people are relieved to learn what you want and know that their gift is a useful one. (3) Let brethren know that you need certain expensive sets. Many will provide them for you. And occasionally the church may give you such a set instead of a year end bonus. (4) Make a list of the books you need and leave it where it can be found – put

the most needed one at the top of the list (and you can also use this list from which to make personal purchases). (5) Watch for book fairs, sales, etc. I once bought about 40 books at a book fair for five cents a volume! (6) Ransack old out of the way antique shops and used furniture stores. Some of the rarest books I possess came from such. (7) I have also made some rare finds at yard sales and flea markets. (8) There is a remote possibility that you may be able to purchase a whole library from some preacher or the widow of a preacher. But do not count too heavily on this. (9) Use extra income (such as marriages, meetings, etc.) to swell your book fund, (10) Mention old, rare, and out of print volumes that you need to older preachers. They may have a copy that they will either give to you or sell very cheap. (I have a complete set of Lard's Quarterlies because I mentioned to a preacher that I needed volume 2, which is extremely hard to find. He had a copy but was making no use of it; so he just gave it to me.) (11) Trade books which you have but cannot use for books you can use. Use a little ingenuity in locating and purchasing books as well as to what books to purchase.

4. "When you need a book, buy it." This advice was given to me soon after I learned the truth by Bruce R. Curd. I thought I was too poor to purchase more than the three or four books I already had. But I wanted to do a little studying on the Holy Spirit. I went to Bruce and asked him to let me borrow his copy of H. Leo Boles' book. He owned a copy and would have loaned it to me but someone had already borrowed it and had not brought it back. I showed a little disappointment because I was thus going to be deprived of the study I had planned. He then gave me the advice that I have followed ever since, "When you need a book, buy it." I went home and ordered brother Boles' book and I have kept on buying books year in and year out as I need them.

5. You must be willing to make some sacrifice. Books, especially rare and out of print volumes, are extremely expensive. You may have to sacrifice new cloths, a new car, new furniture, eating out, a fishing trip, etc. but it will be worth it in the long

run. A book is an investment for a life-time. But you simply cannot own the best without being willing to pay the price.

## UNNEEDED BOOKS

There are some dangerous books — books that must be handled with care and even some that should not be possessed at all. While it is true that in preaching one can sooner or later use nearly any kind of book, there are some not needed except to show the ways of the world, human philosophies, and false doctrines in contrast with the word of God. The Ephesians owned such books. When Paul preached the truth to them, and they believed his message, they had a book burning. The record says, "And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver." (Acts 19:18, 19.) The Berkeley Versions computes this sum at ten thousand dollars. These were probably books that contained the secrets of their witchcraft and curious arts. When they were burned the secrets were destroyed. While we do not necessarily need to burn books today (there are multiple copies of them now where there was but one copy for the Ephesians), we should be able to see from this incident that there are some kinds of books not needed by Christians ... or the world either, as far as that goes.

Thus I suggest that you never purchase a book that you know that you cannot use or one that might corrupt your thinking (such as pornography) or lead you away from the truth into some false philosophical system (such as false doctrine, liberalism, or atheistic attacks on Christianity). Of course I am not suggesting that you read only that with which you agree (in fact, I recommend that we study different views), but I am saying that we need to see the danger in the use of certain books from which to mold our thinking. It is one thing to use a book to understand a false belief and quite another thing to have it as a constant fountain from which to drink. Take a modernist or a liberal for example: if he does not believe the Bible, you may be able to use him to understand modernism, but how can you

trust him to give a proper exegesis of any passage on inspiration when he does not believe in inspiration? He may throw much light on it, as far as background, history, grammar, etc., is concerned, but his doctrine of unbelief may also slowly penetrate our own thinking. We should learn all we can from any source, but we should be extremely careful lest we substitute human thinking for the revealed will of God.

Thus if you have a book that is not useful to you, or one that may corrupt your morals or lead you away from the faith once delivered, either burn it, sell it, or trade it. Any book that is worth keeping will make a useful contribution to your knowledge of the Bible.

With this danger fresh on our minds, let me add one more thing: never part with a good book unless it is absolutely necessary. Keep it. Someday you will need it. Furthermore, be careful how you loan books. Perhaps not one person in ten will return a borrowed book, and that, as incredible as it may seem, includes preachers. So in building your library, establish a loan policy that will minimize the loss of books.

## **NEEDED BOOKS**

I will now list as many categories of needed books as space will permit and give a few in each category that should be a part of your library. The best I can do in the space permitted is to give a few examples (those already discussed in lecture one and those to be discussed in lecture three will be, at least for the most part, omitted).

## **COMMENTARIES**

There are several categories of commentaries, such as devotional, critical, exegetical, homiletical, etc., but it is not my purpose here to note these distinctions. I merely call to your attention a few under two headings:

1. Restoration commentaries. In my judgment you should purchase commentaries written by brethren first (except for

those you might need for immediate or special use). Presently these are rather limited but fortunately the choice is broadening each year. The sets that are available are: DeHoff's on the Old Testament (the New Testament is in preparation) — brief but valuable. The Gospel Advocate series covering the New Testament in 14 volumes. Various authors. Some volumes are weak (e.g., Peter, John, and Jude by Guy N. Woods). Coffman's — complete in 12 volumes. Has the advantage of being written by one author. It is growing in popularity. The Living Word series published by Sweet Publishing Company. Designed to be more scholarly but some volumes do not escape a liberal tendency. The Restoration series. Not complete but has some extremely valuable volumes in it, such as McGarvey on Matthew and Mark and Acts and Lard on Romans. There is a six volume set covering the whole Bible by E. M. Zerr (who was associated with the "anti-located preacher" faction) but I have never used it and thus do not know of its value. *The People's New Testament With Notes* (better known as Johnson's Notes) covers the entire New Testament, briefly but splendidly. If you cannot afford a whole set to start with, this should be the first one you purchase (and probably should be anyway).

These are all the complete sets that I am aware of by our brethren but there are several valuable individual volumes, such as Whiteside on Romans (the very best available), McGarvey's original on Acts (which has never been surpassed), Lightfoot on Hebrews, Hailey on the minor prophets and Revelation, Wallace on Revelation (he holds the early date and advances the theory that Revelation was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70). A good number of the individual volumes are superior to those in sets and if you cannot have all of the sets or all of one in particular, you might want to make up a set from all that are available. In this case, I would recommend the following: Matthew and Mark by McGarvey; Luke by Boles; John by Coffman; Acts by McGarvey (original); Romans by Whiteside; 1 Corinthians through Titus (three volumes by Coffman; Hebrews by Lightfoot; James by Woods; Peter, John and Jude by Woods; and Revelation by Hailey. In my estimation this would

make a superb set and provide you with the best available at this time.

2. Denominational commentaries. There are so many here that I will just list the ones you should probably get first. At the top of the list I would place Macknight on the Epistles. Next Adam Clarke on the whole Bible, and then Barnes' Notes. Most preachers will want to add *The Pulpit Commentary* to their collection sooner or later. There are many newer sets and a vast number of individual volumes of varying value that one should investigate. I cannot list more here but if you know your specific need it should not be hard to find a set that will fill it.

## HISTORIES

While one should have a good history of the world (such as the huge set by Will Durant), our concern here is only with church history. And I will divide that up into two sections:

1. General church history. If you have no background in church history then I suggest you start with *Church History* by John D. Cox. This is a very brief work but it is concise and will give you a quick bird's eye view of the subject. *The Eternal Kingdom* by F. W. Mattox is the best work written by our brethren. *A History of the Christian Church* by Williston Walker is usually considered one of the best one volume works by a denominationalist. Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History* (Murdock's translation) is one of my favorites. It is an old work but among the most valuable. It has not been in print for many years, but get a set if you can. *History of the Christian Church* by Philip Schaff in eight large volumes will probably be as far as most of us will need to go.

2. Restoration history. If one knows the Bible, and believes that it must be followed in all things pertaining to faith and practice, he has the essential concept of restoration. But to see how this principle has been applied at different times and in different situations you need to read widely in restoration literature and history. There are a large number of good works in restoration that you should obtain, but there are four indis-

pensable ones: *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* by Robert Richardson; *The Life and Times of David Lipscomb* by Earl West; *The Search for the Ancient Order* — three volumes, by Earl West; and *Restoration, Reformation, or Revelation* by James D. Bales. A shorter work that would substitute well for *The Search for the Ancient Order* is *Attitudes and Consequences* by Homer Hailey.

Literature that would be most helpful in understanding the Restoration Movement is: *The Christian Baptist* — seven volumes, Campbell's original paper. *Lard's Quarterly*, perhaps the best writing to come out of the restoration movement. I have found *New Testament Christianity*, a three volume collection of sermons (collected by Z. T. Sweeney) to be very helpful. All the sermons are not true to the Scriptures, but they give insight both to the plea and to the problems confronting the restoration plea. All back issues of the Gospel Advocate and Firm Foundation would be rich sources.

## GREEK

Whether you have studied Greek or not, you need the tools to enable you to look up Greek words occasionally. For those who have not studied Greek, you should start with *How to Read the Greek New Testament* by Guy N. Woods. This will give you a method by which to work. In addition to this one, brother Woods recommends two other books that are necessary to pursue the course, namely, and interlinear Greek-English New Testament and *Bagster's Analytical Greek Lexicon*. I would recommend that you get *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon* and Vine's *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. (Incidentally, I use Vine's more than any of my Greek reference books.) As you advance you will want to add other lexicons and the word studies by Robertson, Vincent and Wuest. The *New Englishman's Greek-English Concordance* is a gold mine. For the more advanced student, *Alford's Greek Testament* and *The Expositor's Greek New Testament* edited by William Nicoll will be useful. There are many others but you will become acquainted with them as you begin to make use of your Greek books.



## GENERAL

Since space will not permit me to discuss at such length all categories, I will finish out this particular study by listing several categories under one general heading. I can do nothing more than give the first books, that in my opinion, you should acquire. And for the most part these will be limited to books written by our brethren – they are usually the first one you should read and study anyway.

1. The Holy Spirit. Naturally I think my book, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, should come first. *Lectures on the Holy Spirit* by Gus Nichols and *The Work of the Holy Spirit in Redemption* by Franklin Camp, along with my book, will give you a perspective on the three views held by our brethren on indwelling. H. Leo Boles' book remains the best survey of the subject. For the work of the Spirit in conversion, *The Witness of the Spirits* by James W. Zachary has never been surpassed.

2. Debates. While there are scores of these, the ones that should be obtained with all haste are the following: *The Campbell-Rice Debate* (the all-time classic), *The Hardeman-Begard Debate*, *The Neal-Wallace Discussion*, *The Campbell-Owen Debate*, *The Woods-Cogdill Debate*, *The Warren-Flew Debate*, and *The Woods-Franklin Debate*.

3. Sermons. At the top of any list must be *McGarveys' Sermons*. But next to McGarvey (and perhaps the first ones that should be purchased) is Hardeman's. The five volumes of *Hardeman's Tabernacle Sermons* are the finest models of sermons available, in makeup, contents, and delivery. No preacher should be without them. *Gospel Sermons* by T. W. Brents is invaluable. So is a volume by the same title by George W. DeHoff. *The Second Coming and Other Sermons* by Guy N. Woods is a superb work. *The Gospel Preacher*, vols. I and II by Benjamin Franklin rank with the best. *The Great Preachers of Today* series and *The 20th Century Sermons* series are bold adventures, and furnish insights to present day preaching, but they do not measure up in value to the others named here.

4. The eldership. The two best books on the eldership are small ones by J. W. McGarvey and H. Leo Boles. For an extensive study of the qualifications of elders, I have seen no book that anywhere near equals *Scriptural Elders and Deacons* by H. E. Phillips. *The Eldership* by Herbert E. Winkler is the largest collection of ideas (and different views) on the subject that has come under my observation. *The Model Church*, by G. C. Brewer, and *Congregational Development*, by L. R. Wilson, are both excellent Scriptural studies. More recent books (some of which are of great value) have focussed on counseling and the leadership aspect of elders and are not listed here.

5. The parables. Parables are of special interest because of their tremendous teaching potential. Neil R. Lightfoot's *Lessons From the Parables* and *The Parables* (in outline form) by Gaddis Roy are among the best studies yet produced by our brethren. *Parables in Profile*, a recent outline study by Wayne Jackson, merits serious consideration. But by all means you should obtain the standard work, *Notes on the Parables of Our Lord*, by Richard Trent.

6. Instrumental Music in Christian worship. The standard work in this field (although it has fallen under some criticism from some younger men) is still *Instrumental Music in the Worship* by M. C. Kurfess. *The Defenses of Music in Worship Answered* by S. H. Hall is the most meaningful study I have seen in setting forth the fact that we can do only that, in the work and worship of God, which is authorized in His word. *The Voice of the Pioneers on Instrumental Music and Societies* by John T. Lewis gives a vast amount of information on the views of the pioneers in the Restoration Movement. *A Medley on the Music Question* by G. C. Brewer, as would be expected, is rich. James D. Bales, in *Instrumental Music and New Testament Worship*, has concisely stated and answered most if not all of the arguments that have ever been made in its favor. A new book that is at the printers at the time this is being written by Foy E. Wallace, Jr., will be indispensable when it is ready. You should also have the *Hardeman-Boswell Debate* and the *Wallace-Barber Debate*.

7. The evidence. The selection in this field of study is almost inconceivable, but not quite so abundant by our brethren. *The Evidence of Christianity* by J. W. McGarvey is perhaps the most noteworthy among us. James D. Bales has done a considerable amount of work in the evidence. The fruit of his labor can be gleaned from the following: *Roots of Unbelief*, *Bales-Teller Debate* (still one of the best encounters with atheism available), *The Biblical Doctrine of God*, *The Biblical Doctrine of Christ*, *How Can Ye Believe*, and *Communism: Its Faith and Fallacies*. George W. DeHoff's *Why We Believe the Bible* and *Alleged Contradictions Explained* offer some valuable insights. Thomas B. Warren's *Have Atheists Proved There is No God?* and his debates with Flew and Matson should be in every library. These, along with *Horne's Introduction* (if you are fortunate enough to find a set), will give you a start in the right direction.

8. Geography. Nearly any good Bible Atlas will fill your need here to start with. I have Baker's and would probably choose it again had I to do it over. But in addition to an atlas you should add McGarvey's *Lands of the Bible* and Will Thomson's three volume set called *The Land and the Book*. Both of these are old works and are out of date in some areas but they have never been surpassed in value. Unfortunately at the present time both are out of print but you may be able to find used copies.

9. Biography and autobiography. Biographies are among the richest sources available to us for the purpose of understanding what the subject believed, the problems they faced, and how they overcame them. I have already mentioned the life of Campbell and Lipscomb under the history of the restoration. These two are, in my judgment, the most vital biographies in giving insight to the restoration plea. Next to them I would place *Hazard of the Die* (a biography of Tolbert Fanning) by James Wilburn. But there are many others that can make a tremendous contribution to your life and work. Among them are the following: *J. D. Tant — Texas Preacher*; *C. R. Nichol, A Preacher of Righteousness*; *N. B. H. — A Biography of Nicholas Brodie Hardeman*; *W. W. Otey: Contender for the Faith*; *Forty Years on the Firing Line* and *The Autobiography of G. C. Brewer*. Others of varying value are: *I'll Stand on the Rock* (biogra-

phy of H. Leo Boles), *Roll Jordan Roll* (biography of Marshall Keeble), *The Anchor That Holds* (life of B. C. Goodpasture), and *Life of Elder John Smith*. There are others but these will give you a start and whet your appetite for more.

10. Premillennialism. While presently this is not a pressing problem in the church, it is one of the fastest growing fads in denominationalism. And as we reach those outside of the church we are going to have to be acquainted with the doctrine and be able to refute it or else those converted will bring it into the church. The two classics remain *God's Prophetic Word* by Foy E. Wallace, Jr. and *Prophecy and Premillennialism* by James D. Bales. There are a good number of others that are practical and offer additional insights. Among them I mention *Prophecy Foretold — Prophecy Fulfilled* by E. R. Harper and *Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy* by R. L. Whiteside.

11. The home. The pioneers in the Restoration Movement were so busy in trying to restore doctrinal purity that they often neglected or left to others many practical subjects, and the home is one of them. While it has received some emphasis, very few popular or practical works have been published dealing with it. But we can be grateful that the current trend is to correct this abuse. I list three books that should enrich your life and preaching in this area. *The Home* by Dixon, Nichols, Brewer, Tatum, Patton, and Norred is a book of lectures that should be read and studied. *Christ in the Home* by Robert Taylor and *Marriage is For Those Who Love God and One Another* by Thomas B. Warren, are, without much question, the best works available.

12. Evolution. This is a most vital sphere of study because the materialistic concept behind it has permeated the thinking of 20th century man. Unfortunately our brethren have not produced a classical work on the subject, but they have done a vast amount of writing on it, even though a great part of it is scattered through many books and papers. For the most part you will have to turn to men associated with denominationalism for the better works (and many of them are written from the standpoint of theistic evolution). Of the books and booklets

that are available by our brethren, I mention only a few. *Evolution or Creation?* by Basil Overton is a good introduction to the subject. *The Other Side of Evolution*, by Jon Gary Williams, and *In the Beginning*, by Rita Rhodes Ward are good short studies. James D. Bales has done a considerable amount of work in this field. You need to glean his work but you will also want his *Why Scientists Accept Evolution*, which shows that it is not because evolution has been proven (it has not) but because it is the only alternative to God. Robert Camp has perhaps done more work on the theory than anyone among us. He has published some papers and a book of lectures (by various authors) which should be outstanding. But I am not personally acquainted with them and I could not find them listed in any catalog. By the time you have read the ones here mentioned, and noticed the books and authors referred to, you should be able to choose for yourself many helpful works. Evolution is a broad subject and a study of it will require that you be acquainted, at least to some degree, with both sides.

## CONCLUSION

I have briefly covered 12 categories of books. It has been my aim to do two things: 1. To suggest good books with which to begin your library; 2. To indicate to you that regardless of the subject you may be studying there are many good books to help you with it. The trick is to have the books you need at the time you need them.

No book lover will ever have all the books he wants (and perhaps needs) but nearly anyone, with a good plan, a little effort, and some sacrifice, can build an adequate library — one that fills his particular needs. But if we as preachers and teachers can do it, and if we need to do it, then we ought to do it. What are we waiting for? A good library does not cost; it pays!

## Read These Men

The Restoration Movement has been blessed with some powerful men, mighty in the Scriptures both orally and with the pen. They have therefore produced some classical literature that should be both studied and appreciated by you ... and around the world. It shall be the purpose of this lecture to introduce some of these men and discuss briefly some of their works. The lecture should thus serve a two-fold purpose: 1. To create in you a deeper appreciation for the men and what they have meant to the cause of Christ, and 2. To give a list of some of the finest books in which the plea for a return to the ancient order of things is made — a list of men and books that you should read. Our present study will be divided into two sections, namely, contemporary writers and writers of the past.

### CONTEMPORARY WRITERS

There are scores of contemporaries who have developed both knowledge and skill, most of whom merit serious consideration, but there are five men who rank at the very top, who have had no superiors and few equals in the whole history of the church (outside of inspired men). They are giants in the faith and masters with the pen. Every item they have written is a valuable contribution to restoration literature, but some are classics, the very best works available. Following are the five men of whom I speak:

1. Foy E. Wallace, Jr. He is the oldest of the five men that I will discuss, and by the very nature of the case cannot have many more years to live among us. He was born in Montague County, Texas, on September 30, 1896. He was baptized by his father in 1909. He preached his first sermon when he was 15 years old and has been on the firing line for the Lord ever since. Perhaps no preacher of this generation has made more of an impact for truth and right than has Foy E. Wallace, Jr., and his long years of service have served only to make sharper his brilliant mind. He is a powerful pulpiteer, always speaking from a vast reservoir of knowledge. But it is through his writings that

he will make his most lasting contribution. He became editor of the *Gospel Advocate* in 1930, *The Gospel Guardian* in 1935, *The Bible Banner* in 1938, and *Torch* in 1950. Through these papers he has been constantly before the brotherhood (to the utter confusion of the enemies of truth and to the consternation of many brethren who have been on the cutting edge of his sharp sword). He has published more than a dozen books, and in my judgment no one knows as much as he should know unless he has read most of them.

While very few will agree with everything which brother Wallace writes (in fact, I am not totally convinced that in later life he always agrees with his early writings, even though he, as did Campbell, says there is no disharmony), he writes so forcefully, so clearly, so logically, so concisely, and so convincingly that few can come away without understanding him and none without learning from him. Each composition is a never-to-be-forgotten reading experience.

I consider at least five of Wallace's works classics — works that should live on and be studied until the end of the world. These five are: *God's Prophetic Word*, lectures, and additional matter, showing the fallacy of the premillennial theory. It absolutely annihilates that worthless and false speculation. *The Present Truth*, a collection of his editorials and articles (except those appearing in other books) over the span of 50 years. It is a biography of his controversies — it gives more insight to the man himself than any other of his works. *The Gospel For Today* is an expansion of an earlier book called *The Certified Gospel*, plus a vast amount of additional material, including two of his smaller books, *The Party Spirit and the Pseudo-Issues* and *The Mission and Medium of the Holy Spirit*. *Bulwarks of the Faith* is a series of sermons refuting the basic dogmas of Catholicism and denominationalism. The fifth classic, in my judgment, is *A Review of the New Versions*. While the issue of the versions will probably soon die, the principles strongly argued in it (such as the virgin birth) will remain as long as time lasts.

The additional works of Wallace include: *The Sermon on the*

*Mount and the Civil State*, *The Christian and the Government* (both giving his views of the duty of a Christian to his government in the time of war), *The Book of Relevation* (a commentary in which Matthew 24 and the destruction of Jerusalem is paralleled with the contents of Revelation – a powerful defense of the early date of the book is included), *The Neal-Wallace Discussion* (a debate on premillennialism), *The Story of the Fort Worth Norris-Wallace Debate*, and *Number One Gospel Sermons*. At the time of this writing, the manuscript of a new book on instrumental music in Christian worship is at the printers – I do not know its exact title, but I am certain that it will live up to the Wallace name when it is published.

Nothing Wallace has written should be neglected by the serious student of God's word.

2. Guy N. Woods. Brother Woods is one of the busiest and most versatile preachers, lecturers, debaters, writers, and editors of the 20th century. He was born in Vardeman, Mississippi on September 26, 1908, and was baptized by J. W. Grant on August 24, 1926. He began preaching in Holladay, Tennessee just one month from the date of his baptism. From the very first his services have been in enormous demand. He served as local preacher for a number of churches at first but eventually gave this up to devote his time exclusively to holding meetings. As a result, he has been able to conduct nearly 50 meetings each year throughout the brotherhood for many years. In 1976 he had a calendar filled with 200 future meeting appointments.

Wherever the truth is known and loved, the writing ability of Guy N. Woods is known. He is probably the widest-read author ever to be associated with the Restoration Movement. In addition to his books, he has written hundreds of articles for religious papers and for many years has written the *Gospel Advocate Adult Quarterly*, from which more than 100,000 study weekly. He has also engaged in more than 100 religious discussions, covering all phases of innovation and denominational error. Five of his public debates have been published. Upon the death of B. C. Goodpasture, he was chosen as associate editor



of the *Gospel Advocate*, the most influential paper published by members of the churches of Christ.

Brother Woods has written or co-authored at least a dozen books (including the five debates mentioned above). The five that I consider the most outstanding are; *Questions and Answers —Open Forum* which is, in my judgment, the most significant book of the 20th century, if indeed it is not the most significant of any century since apostolic times. His two commentaries, *Commentary on the New Testament Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude* and *Commentary on James*, both of which are in the Gospel Advocate series, are the very best available from any source. *The Second Coming and Other Sermons*, recently reprinted, is among his first published works, is unsurpassed in contents and value. *How to Use the Greek New Testament* (the new edition is called *How to Read the Greek New Testament*) is a tool that no one who is not advanced in the Greek language should be without.

The remainder of his better known works include, *Sermons on Salvation* and his five published debates, *The Woods-Nunnery*, *The Woods-Franklin*, *The Woods-Cogdill*, *The Woods-Porter*, and *The Woods-Griffin*. At the time of this writing he has in preparation a Commentary on the Gospel According to John. While no collection of his numerous articles are available, hopefully this will be remedied in the future. And, if he is permitted to live, many more valuable productions should come from his pen. No serious student of the Bible can afford to overlook anything Guy N. Woods has written or may yet write.

3. James D. Bales.\* Brother Bales has been on the battle line, preaching, writing, and debating for nearly a half century. But unlike Wallace and Woods, who have spent most of their time preaching in evangelistic meetings, he has spent a considerable amount of his life in the classroom. While Wallace and Woods

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\*When this lecture was delivered, brother Bales' *Not Under Bondage*, his extremely controversial work on remarriage, had only recently appeared. It raised a storm among us, and did much harm to both Bales and his published works.

are preeminently preachers, Bales is an educator. But they all have one thing in common: they are powerful with the pen.

James D. Bales prepared himself with the highest academic credentials (he holds the Ph.D from the University of California) to refute with sound reason and logic all forms of false doctrines and philosophies. It was natural, therefore, for him to turn to teaching. But when we consider the fact that he has published between 60 and 75 books (some of them going through several printings and revisions), we can be assured that he has not been cloistered in a classroom. He has been a popular lecturer and debater (more so than a preacher), basically because he can present profound concepts in understandable language – he has not lost touch with the needs of the average Christian. His books, for the most part, have been well received and a large number of them are presently in print, although some of his valuable contributions (e.g., *The Book of Mormon*) have been permitted to go out of print. However some will be reissued from time to time.

While I am not sure that any of his books will ever be classified as classics (they are usually too logical to be popular), he has made such a tremendous impact on the 20th century that all students of the Bible should be aware of his work and most of it should be read and digested. We should all be eternally grateful to him for what he has meant to the cause of Christ during the last half of this century. When liberalism and Pentecostalism began to bombard the church from both sides, he was one of the best-prepared men among us who was willing to lay everything on the line for the cause of truth. Book after book, in rapid succession, came from him in defense of the ancient faith. If there were no other reason to read him, this within itself would be sufficient. No list of 20th century restoration books would be complete, or representative of our times, that did not include a selection from him. He is truly a man of faith, courage, conviction, and ability.

It would be impossible (within our space limitations) to list all of his books, but I will list what I consider his four most im-

portant ones to date and then a few others that have meant the most to me. The four major works are: *Restoration, Reformation or Revelation?* – a total refutation of the liberals among us who say that the restoration plea is not pertinent to our times. This may well prove to be his most important book. *Prophecy and Premillennialism* is, in my conception, the best book available showing that the Christian system is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (but in addition to this one he has written a half dozen others dealing with specific areas of prophecy and its fulfillment in the system of Christ). *Communism: Its Faith and Fallacies* gives the dangers of and refutes the fundamentals of communism. A recent book, *Not Under Bondage*, deals with his concept of how covenant relationship relates to remarried divorcees. This will undoubtedly be a controversial book (and I do not agree with its basic thesis), but on the whole it is one of the most powerfully reasoned works I have ever read. It is one that brethren are going to have to face up to and deal with.

The additional books that have meant the most to me are: *The Bales-Teller Debate* (with an atheist); *The Christian and Carnal Warfare* (the Bales-Stonestreet Debate) – he no longer holds the views he affirmed in this discussion but he did a marvelous work in defense of the conscientious objector's position; *The Hub of the Bible*, a detailed study of Acts 2; *Pat Boone and the Gift of Tongues, Miracles or Mirages?* and *Pentecostalism in the Church* are three of his many works dealing with neo-pentecostalism; *The Holy Spirit and the Human Spirit* deals a death blow to Calvinistic concepts concerning the Holy Spirit and His work; *Jesus the Ideal Teacher* gives the principles and methods of teaching used by Jesus; *42 Years on the Firing Line* reveals his many controversies and battles for truth and right.

This is just enough of Bales to whet your appetite. He will probably write additional ones faster than you will care to read them (in fact, the day before I wrote this he called me and we discussed at least five book that he has written in the past few months, all yet to be published). You should not limit yourself to the ones mentioned here. Some of his smaller works are simply unsurpassed in value, and they will richly reward you for your time and effort in securing and reading them.

4. George W. Dehoff. Here is an unusual man, one who towers far above the ordinary, but one who is not as widely appreciated as he deserves. As I have often said of him, "He is a jack of many trades and a master of them all." This is verified by the fact that he is known as an educator, traveler, lecturer, debater, civic leader, businessman, author, and preacher. There are only a few men in the world, and fewer still in the church, who can do so many things so well. He was born near Vandale, Arkansas in 1913. His father died when he was six years old but he was blessed with a godly Christian mother, who taught him to love the Lord, to love the truth, to love the church, and to make the best use possible of all the Lord has given him. He started preaching early in life and was soon recognized in his native state as a man of extraordinary ability. By the time he was 25 years old he had baptized 2,300 people (that number has now increased to more than 10,000). And while he has been successful in many things, preaching is still his first love.

But it is as an author that we are concerned with him now. He has written more than a dozen full-sized books and scores of Bible class study books. All his books are rich in content and practical. He has specialized in the defense of the Bible as the inspired word of God. He has greatly simplified this area of difficult study. As I have often described his writings, they are profoundly simple but yet simply profound. To fail to recognize his work and the worth of his contribution to restoration literature would be to deprive oneself of a rich contemporary heritage.

In my judgment, his most important books to date are: *Why We Believe the Bible* in which he gives innumerable proofs that the Bible is the word of God; *DeHoff's Bible Handbook*, a brief introduction to each book of the Bible along with many other pertinent facts; *Gospel Sermons*, 24 full length sermons, some of which are the very finest in print; *Alleged Bible Contradictions Explained*, and *DeHoff's Commentary* (the four volumes covering the Old Testament are complete at the time of this writing), very brief but many valuable contributions are made in it. While these are his major works, one would make a mistake to overlook his lesser-known books, such as: *Sermons*

on *First Corinthians*, *Sermons I have Preached*, *Christian Minister's Manual*, *Plain Bible Preaching* *The DeHoff-Garrett Debate*, and his scores of study books which cover nearly the whole Bible.

I heard George W. DeHoff say one time that when he was a boy ploughing a mule on a farm in Arkansas he dreamed that someday he would write books that would sell a million copies. That boy's dream has come true – but he dreamed too small! His books have already sold over six million copies, and in all probability the best is yet to come. While you may never class his books as classics, they are of such nature that all of them ought to be on your reading list.

5. Thomas B. Warren. Whatever else may be said of him, Thomas B. Warren has one of the most brilliant and highly trained minds of the 20th century. And perhaps no Christian since apostolic times has been better prepared to meet with Scriptural principles and sound logic the onslaughts of unbelief. He has spent his life in a defense of the truth as he sees it. His academic training is impeccable. He holds a B.S. degree from Abilene Christian College, and M.A. in philosophy and religion from the University of Houston, and an M.A. and a Ph.D in philosophy from Vanderbilt University. In addition to preaching and writing, he has taught in Abilene Christian College (now Abilene Christian University), Fort Worth Christian College, Freed-Hardmen College, Harding Graduate School of Religion, and is now serving as Executive Vice President and Dean of the Graduate School of Tennessee Bible College in Cookeville, Tennessee. He is widely known as a teacher, preacher, debater, author, editor, publisher, and, perhaps above all, a logician.

He has written, co-authored, or edited approximately 20 books and has many more in preparation or planned. Because of his educational background, a good deal of his work is in the field of apologetics. This calls for the use of pure logic, often with little or no emotional appeal. To grasp him and follow his profound reason is hard intellectual labor. And because of his precise logic (which is his hallmark and distinct contribution), he may not appeal widely to the popular mind – he is a thinking man's author. While this is necessary (to make him what he

is), it is unfortunate because all of us, regardless of our intellectual training or ability, need what he has to offer.

Here, in my judgment, are his more important books to date: *The Warren-Flew Debate* and *The Warren-Matson Debate*, both on the existence of God; *Marriage Is For Those Who Love God and One Another*, a series of lectures on marriage and the home; *When is an Example Binding?* and *Lectures on Church Cooperation and Orphan Homes* both deal with the principles attacked by the "anti" movement; *Have Atheists Proved There is No God?* proves that the power and goodness of God can be harmonized with human suffering; *The Warren-Ballard Debate* is a refutation of Baptist doctrine, especially dealing with the inspiration of Mark 16:9-20.

But amazingly enough, his greatest contribution to restoration literature may well turn out to be the books he has edited (and helped to write in most cases). Among those he has edited I list only the following: *Your Marriage Can Be Great*, *What the Bible Teaches*, *The Living Messages of the Books of the Old Testament*, *The Living Messages of the Books of the New Testament*, and *God Demands Doctrinal Preaching*. When he edits a book, you may know in advance that it is going to be a masterpiece.

In my judgment, these five men offer the very best in contemporary reading.

## WRITERS OF THE PAST

Space will not permit me to list all the men of the past you should read, nor would I pretend to be capable of listing them in the order of importance. However there are a few who stand out far above all others and their works should be your constant companions. While you will not (indeed cannot) agree with every position they take or with all the arguments they make, you should know them, know what they believed, and know why they believed what they believed. They will expand your intellect and increase your knowledge of the will of God. Here then are a few names that you should know:

1. J. W. McGarvey. McGarvey is usually recognized as one of the most careful scholars the restoration movement has ever produced. He left behind some of the finest literature available. Some of his works are: *MaGarvey's Sermons*, *Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, *Commentary on Acts* (both the original and the new), *Evidence of Christianity*, *Biblical Criticism*, *The Authorship of Deuteronomy*, *The Eldership*, *Sacred Didactics* (which contains the best outline on baptism in the English language), and *Jesus and Jonah*. Two additional works of merit are *The Fourfold Gospel* and *Commentary on Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians, Romans* which he co-authored with Philip Y. Pendleton. This list is incomplete, but you should read everything you can find that McGarvey wrote.

2. T. W. Brents. Brents was a medical doctor who became known as a powerful preacher, debater, and writer in the latter part of the 19th century. He did not leave many books behind but what he did is a rich heritage for us today. I know of only two books from him but I count them as among the most valuable in my library. They are: *The Gospel Plan of Salvation* (which should be among the very first on your purchasing list) and *Gospel Sermons* (which is presently out of print but keep your eyes opened for a used copy). (If I were asked to give the five authors who have meant the most to me in my life and work, I suspect that I would list Brents as number five, coming after Guy N. Woods, George W. DeHoff, G. C. Brewer, and David Lipscomb.)

3. David Lipscomb. Lipscomb is best known from the fact that he served as editor of the Gospel Advocate for about a half century. And during all that time, hardly an issue of the Advocate passed without something from his pen. Nearly everything he wrote appeared in the Advocate, and, unfortunately, a vast amount of it is available no where else. But the following have come down to us (mostly gleaned from the pages of the Advocate): *Questions Answered* (by Lipscomb and Sewell), *Queries Answered*, *Salvation From Sin*, *Civil Government*, and his comments scattered through most of the Gospel Advocate series of commentaries (most of which are based upon notes left by Lipscomb in the hands of J. W. Shepherd). Because of

his deep love for the truth, and his faith in the Bible as the infallible word of God, I consider Lipscomb one of the safest Bible teachers I have ever studied.

4. Alexander Campbell. Campbell wrote so many books (approximately 60 and all of them rather huge volumes) that I will make no attempt to list them. But you should make a special effort to obtain the seven volumes of *The Christian Baptist* because of their value in understanding the inception of the Restoration Movement. *The Campbell-Rice Debate* should also be in every library. But your appreciation of Campbell will be determined by your willingness to expand your vocabulary and the intellectual effort you are willing to expend in your study. His works are not for the lazy reader.

5. Moses E. Lard. Most of what we have from Lard is in the five volumes of *Lard's Quarterly*, the aristocrat among restoration literature. Do not be satisfied until you have acquired and studied the complete set. I know of only two other works that have come down to us from Lard, namely, *A Review of Campbellism Examined*, a devastating review of J. B. Jeter's book against the views of Campbell, and his commentary of Romans, a tremendously scholarly work but does not, in my estimation, represent the best of Lard. The best is in the *Quarterly*, which, if one will master, will be equal to a college education.

6. G. C. Brewer. I love Brewer. I think only two men, Guy N. Woods and George W. DeHoff, have meant more to me in my personal study than G. C. Brewer. While there are some subjects on which I radically differ with him, I never fail to learn something from what he says. He had in all probability the clearest concept of New Testament Christianity of any man in the 20th century. His brilliant mind and his incisive method of writing led him into many differences with his brethren. But in spite of the controversy that always raged about him, he was recognized by all as a scholar of the first magnitude. Of the books he left behind, *Contending for the Faith*, a collection of his articles (some of them controversial), is probably his most important work. But you should also be acquainted with *The Model Church*, *Brewer's Sermons*, *Forty Years on the Firing Line*, *A*



*Medley on the Music Question*, *The Autobiography of G. C. Brewer* (written in the face of certain death), and *Foundation Facts and Primary Principles*. There is one booklet by him, *Is the Church of Christ a Denomination?*, that you should by all means obtain and read often. The writings of G. C. Brewer will stretch your mind.

7. N. B. Hardeman. Hardeman's life overlapped with most of ours, and many living today, especially preachers, knew him personally or were fortunate enough to be in his classes. He was an extraordinary teacher as well as one of the great preachers of all time. The best of his work is in his two debates and the five volumes of tabernacle sermons. No preacher (indeed no library) should be without *Hardeman's Tabernacle Sermons*. They are models of preaching in both content and methods of preparation and delivery. He published a few other volumes of sermons, including *One Dozen Sermons*, but most of the material is in the tabernacle sermons. Both of his debates, *The Hardeman-Bogard Debate* (with a Baptist) and *The Hardeman-Boswell Debate* (on instrumental music in Christian worship), are among the most valuable debates ever printed. Hardeman ought to be your constant companion as you study the Scriptures.

8. R. L. Whiteside. I consider Whiteside as one of the outstanding writers produced by the Restoration Movement, not so much for what he has written or the way he wrote it, but because of his love for the Bible as the truth of God. One simply cannot appreciate Whiteside without loving the Bible as the only source of religious authority. His *Commentary on Romans* is, in my opinion, the best yet written on that profound book. *Reflections* is a collection of his answers to questions over a ten year period in the Gospel Advocate. *Doctrinal Discourses* and *Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy* are both collections of his articles. *The Whiteside-Clarke Discussion* is a written debate on methods of teaching the Bible (in classes and the use of literature). Some additional collections of his writings may be published in the future; if so, you should obtain them. In fact, you should read anything you can find from his pen.

## CONCLUSION

As you have observed, I have limited the discussion of authors to those associated with the Restoration Movement. This was not done to suggest in any way that your reading should be limited to members of the church. I do not think that it should be. In fact, my advice to you is to read as widely as possible. I have been concerned here only with foundational reading, reading that will acquaint you with the great principles of the restoration plea. Nor was the choice of the thirteen men discussed meant to eliminate others. There are many men and many books (such as those written by Gus Nichols, C. R. Nichol, Leroy Brownlow, and a whole host of others) that deserve your most serious consideration. I have simply tried to introduce you to some men and their books who carried the battle of restoration in their time. Read them!

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