

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Pleading for the restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity

Vol. 23

July 1992

No. 3

EDITORIAL

How Was Noah Saved?

Anyone who is acquainted with the Bible knows about Noah, and especially about the story of the universal great flood. Many movies have been made and books written about Noah and the flood that came when Noah lived. Noah lived during the time when the Bible says, "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:5). The Bible further tells us that it grieved the Creator as He saw those whom He had made after His likeness and after His holy image become so corrupt and immoral. But thank God that even during that time there was one man living whose name was Noah, and the Bible record states that "Noah was just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God." (Genesis 6:9). God, therefore, wanted to save Noah, to give mankind another opportunity through him to live righteously, as He devised the plan of sending a great flood to cleanse the earth by destroying all wicked people.

God revealed His plan to Noah and asked him to build a giant boat or ark. Since the life span of men, before the flood, was long, it took Noah and members of his family, Noah's wife, their three sons and their wives, nearly one hundred and twenty years to build the ark according to God's specifications. When the ark finally was ready, Noah followed God's command to bring his family and pairs of the various kinds of animals into the ark. And God then shut the door of the ark. The Bible record reads, "on that day all the fountains of the great deep were

broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights." (Genesis 7:11,12). The waters of the flood, which destroyed all the wicked people and cleansed the earth from all unrighteousness, lifted the ark of Noah high above to safety. The waters of the flood prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days. And finally when the waters receded the ark of Noah rested on the mountains of Ararat. In recent years excavations by archaeologists in different parts of the world have substantiated through many evidences that there has been a great flood on earth at some time. For instance, layers of clean-water-laid clay has been found with several artifacts, such as toys and utensils of an older civilization buried underneath. Likewise, marine fossils have been discovered on the tops of the mountains. All this information, and other such evidences points to the truthfulness of the Bible account of the great flood of Noah's time. If Noah had not found favour with God, and if he had not walked with God, and if he and his family members had not done what God had asked them to do, then the world would have ended a long time ago. But because of Noah's faithfulness God saved Noah and his family. How wonderful it is to know that there was a Noah on the earth, when God decided to wipe out all wicked people from the face of the earth!

Several hundred years after the flood, when the Apostle Peter wrote his first epistle to Christians, he reminded them of the flood and about how Noah was saved by the waters of the flood, and then he said, "There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 3:21). What was Peter saying? He was saying that just as God used waters of the flood to save Noah and his family, in the same way God today uses waters of baptism to save people from their sins. He said that baptism is an antitype.. Now, what is an antitype? An antitype is that which corresponds to the type, that which is prefigured by the type, or that which a type or symbol represents.

Yes, Noah did build the giant ark, and the waters of the flood lift the ark up. But those were just the means by which God had saved Noah and his family. Infact, Noah was saved by the grace of God, just as people today are saved from their sins by the grace of God. (Epesians 2:8). Noah had found the grace in the eyes of God, as the Bible states, because he was trying to walk with God, even while all others of his time were living wickedly away from God. Noah's walking with God or walking by His will is shown in the fact that Noah believed God when God told him about the coming great flood. And not only that,

but at Genesis 6:22 we read: "Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did." God had told him what size of the ark should be, what kind of wood he should use, where he should fix the window, and how the whole ark must be made. Noah did all that, because Noah believed in God. And therefore God saved him. Noah was saved by the grace of God when Noah believed God and did that what God had told Him to do, according to God's will. The same waters which had destroyed the wicked and cleansed the earth also served to save Noah and his family in the ark. God used waters of the flood to save Noah and his people in the ark. And Peter, as we read a while ago, says that baptism, which now saves us, is an antitype of the flood. No wonder then why we hear Peter telling a great multitude of his listeners at Acts 2:38, when they had asked, "What shall we do?" to "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ For the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Peter was convinced that baptism was essential for salvation, and that to receive the forgiveness of sins one must be baptized. But how sad it is to hear modern day preachers telling people today that one need not to be baptized to be saved, but just believed in Jesus and He will save you. I wonder what would have happened if Noah had just believed in God that God was going to send the flood and that He was going to save him, and had not acted to build the ark just as God told him to do? Learn the lesson?

Advice To Young Parents

J.C. CHOATE

To those of you who have young children, I would like to offer some advice to you. Advice of this nature is often rejected, mainly because the ones it is directed to are young themselves, too immature to receive it. Still I am going to offer it with the prayer that you are wise enough to think seriously about it and to use it. I am also speaking to you as a parent who has grown children, even grand children. I think that I have seen enough and experienced enough to deserve the right to be heard, especially since the things that I am going to say is based on the teaching of God's eternal word.

1. I would advise you to be thankful for the child or children that God has given you. You have a real treasure and you should recognize

that if you don't already. You should also realize that the Lord has entrusted you with the care of that child or the number of children that have been born into your family. You should love that child or the children that you have and provide for their needs gladly. I know that up to this point that you would fully agree with me.

2. I would advise you to bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4). You can't very well do that if you are not Christians and members of the Lord's church. Or if one is a Christian and the other is not, then it would be very difficult to do that. The wise thing for you to do in that case is to realize that you have a child or children to think about, that they need spiritual training, and that you need the Lord's help in bringing them up, and for both of you to sit down, discuss the matter seriously, decide that you are going to begin to read and study the Bible and attend the worship of the Lord's church. After you have done that for awhile, long enough to come to know what the Lord requires of you, then you need to obey the gospel so you can be saved and added to the church, and then as a Christians, being united and working together as Christians, you can truly bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If we can be of help to you in any way, then feel free to contact the church about these matters.

3. To those of you who are already Christians and members of the church, I would advise you to take your children to Bible study and worship every Lord's Day. Maybe you are already wise enough to do this. If you are not doing it, you have already lost some valuable time. Surely you wouldn't want to keep your children out of public or secular school. You wouldn't want to deprive them from receiving a good education because you know that their future depends on this, when it come to making a living and having a promising future. But what you need to realize is that their spiritual welfare is far more important. Surely you don't want your children to grow up without a good knowledge of God's word. If this part of their life is neglected then one day when you are older and they are older, you will see the grave mistake you have made. Because of your failure to give them this vital training, they may grow up to have less and less interest in the Lord and his will. They may not obey God on leaving home, they may cease to even attend worship. Then what kind of future will they and their children have? You will be sad to know what has happened to them, no doubt, but you will have to bear much of the responsibility for what may happen to them. Even if you take them to Bible study and worship, that is not an absolute guarantee that they will turn out right, since there are many factors

involved, but the likelihood of their growing up to obey the Lord and to be faithful to him will be much greater if they are given the training that they so badly need while they are young.

4. My advice to you would be to give your children the opportunity to grow up in a home of Christian influence where there is love and respect for each other. Train your children, discipline them, expect them to respect you, and give them responsibilities. In disciplining them, however, don't be overbearing, or mean, and provoke your children to wrath. (Ephesians 6:4). Let your home be a happy home where you can live together in peace and enjoy one another, doing things together.

5. Practice Christianity at home. Be Christians in your relationship with one another. Set a good example before your children. Don't go to worship on Sunday and live worldly lives through the week. In your work, recreation, and in your dealings with your friends and neighbours, let Christ be seen in your lives. Christ wants all of us all of the time. (Romans 12:1,2). That will do more to influence your children for good than anything else.

6. I would tell you to enjoy your children while you can because they will quickly grow up and be gone. All of a sudden one day in the near future, you will find yourselves all alone. Have a home that the children will remember with pleasant memories, and will always long to come back to.

Now, what do you think of the advice that I have given? Is it all that bad? Would you agree with it or disagree with it? I hope that I have suggested some things that will help you to enjoy your children even more and to help to prepare them for a better life in this world and in the world to come.

Especially for Women

"Childish Tantrums"

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

There are all kinds of personalities in children. Some are quiet and easily controlled. Others seem always a little stronger than their parents, and a step ahead of them in managing a situation. They often resort to some type of tantrum in order to have their way.

What is a tantrum? The dictionary defines it as follows:

"Tantrum: An outburst of violence or rage." (New Webster's Dictionary).

Tantrums take numerous forms. Some children "pout," acting sullen and withdrawn until the parents give in to their wishes so they will change to a good mood. Others scream and cry, perhaps even bumping their heads against the floor or kicking because of their anger. Abusive language is used by some children in their tantrums. Others may slap at their parents.

Parents of children who habitually have temper tantrums defend themselves with the half-hearted excuse, "We must do what he wants. Otherwise he won't stop."

Is this true? Are the parents compelled to obey the child in order to have peace?

The answer is "No." Children are intelligent enough to practice whatever works. A show of temper bluffs the parents so the children are allowed to do as they please, then they will practice tantrums regularly. However, if from the beginning the parents refuse to give in, there will never be a problem with childish tantrums.

How can parents respond effectively to tantrums?

1) Whatever the child is demanding is the one thing he must be denied, absolutely.

2) Conviction in the parents's voice can do much to quell the storm. If the child hears wavering and indecision, he will continue his tantrum with increased strength. However, if there is certain determination in the parents voice, the child will recognize it and submit to it.

3) Often, denying the child an audience will stop the fit of anger. Send him to another room to be alone until he can come out with a smile and an apology. This strategy works amazingly well and spares everyone of a prolonged confrontation.

4) Physical punishment should be meted out only when necessary, and then with judgment and control. Parents should never hit a child about the head and ears. But controlled punishment of the offending part of the body can be very effective. If the legs and feet are kicking, a slender switch used decisively on them can correct the problem immediately. A belligerent mouth can be stopped with a controlled smack across the lips. Hands that hit out at parental authority should be

slapped.

But the best way to deal with tantrums and conflicts of will is to prevent them by never losing control the first time. Parents owe that guidance and protection to the unknowing little ones they have brought into the world. The scriptures say, "Chasten your son while there is hope, and not set your heart on the destruction" (Proverbs 19:18).

Parents who choose not to discipline their children, with love, are setting their feet from an early age on the path of disobedience. It will usually end in spiritual death.

Some Things You Should Know About The Church Of Christ

You should know that the church was-First mentioned in the New Testament (Mt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16).

Built and paid for by Jesus Christ (Mt. 16:13-18; Acts 20:28)

Built on Christ as the only foundation (I Cor. 3:11)

Not built on Paul, Apollos, Cephas or any other man (I Cor. 1:12, 13)

Fully established on the first Pentecost after Christ arose from the dead (Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8; Mk. 1:9; Acts 2)

You should know that Christ himself-

Loved the church (Eph. 5:25)

Bled for the church (Acts 20:28)

Established the church (Mt. 16:18)

Called the church His (Mt. 16:18)

Added people to the church (Acts 2:47)

Is the head of the church (Eph. 5:23; 4:4; 1:22, 23)

Will save the church (Eph. 5:23; 4:4; 1:22, 23)

You should know that in New Testament times there was—

One family of God (Eph. 3:15)

One kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13, 14)

One body of Christ (Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:4)

One bride of Christ (Rom. 7:1-7; Eph. 5:22, 23)

One church of Christ (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:4)

You should know that in the New Testament, the church is called—

The temple of God (I Cor. 3:16)

The bride of Christ (Col. 1:24; Eph. 1:22, 23)

The kingdom of God's Son (Col. 1:13)

The house of God (I Tim. 3:15)

The church (Eph. 3:10)

The church of God (I Cor. 1:2)

The church of the firstborn (Heb.. 12:23)

The church of Lord (Acts 20:28)

The churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16)

You should know that members of the church are called—

Members (I Cor. 12:27)

Disciples (Acts 6:1)

Believers (Acts 5:14; II Cor. 6:15)

Saints (Acts 9:13; Rom. 1:7; Phil. 1:1)

Priests (I Pet 2:9; Rev. 1:6)

Children (I Jn. 3:1,2)

Christians (Acts 11:26; 26:28, I Pet. 4:16)

You should know that permanent classes of servants in the church are—

Elders, who are bishops, overseers or pastors. Their duties are to oversee and feed the flock. (Acts 20:28; I Tim. 3:17; Tit. 1:5-9; I Pet. 5:1-4).

Deacons to serve the church (Acts 6:1-6; I Tim 3:8-13)

Evangelists to preach God's word (Eph. 4:11; I Tim; II Tim; Tit)

Teachers to teach God's word (Eph. 4:11; II Tim. 4:5)

You should know that man did not-

Purpose the church (Eph. 3:10, 11)

Purchase the church (Acts 20:28)

Build the church (Mt. 16:18)

Name its people (Acts 11:26; Is. 62:2)

Add to the church (Acts 2:47)

Give the church its doctrine (II Jn. 9-14; Gal. 1:11)

You should know that the church and body of Christ are—

The same (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18, 24)

You should know that in the church are-

Redemption (Eph. 1:7)

Forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:13, 14)

Sanctification (Eph. 5:25)

All spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3)

You should know that in order to get into the church, you must—

Be saved, or forgiven of yours sins (Acts 2:38, 47)

This takes place when—

You believe in Christ (Jn. 8:24; Acts 16:31; Heb. 11:6)

Repent of your sins (Lk. 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30)

Confess your faith in Christ (Mt. 10:32, 33; Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37, 38)

And are baptized into Christ (Mt. 28:19; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Pet. 3:21; Gal. 3:26, 27)

You should know that baptism requires—

Water (Acts 10:47)

Much water (Jn. 3:23)

Going to the water (Acts 8:36; Mt. 3:5,6)

Going into the water (Acts 8:38)

A burial (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12)

A planting (Rom. 6:5)

A washing (Acts 22:16)

A raising out of the water (Col. 2:12)

A coming out of the water (Acts 8:39)

You should know that in baptism-

Sins are washed away (Acts 22:16)

You are saved from sins (I Pet 3:21; Mk. 16:16)

You have remission of sins (Acts 2:38)
You get into Christ (Gal. 3:27)
You get into the church (Acts. 2:37-47)
You put on Christ (Gal. 3:27)
You begin to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-5)
You obey Christ (Acts 10:48; II Thess. 1:7, 8)

You should know that the faithful church—

Must worship in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:24)
Must meet upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25)
Must sing (not play) (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)
Must pray (Acts 2:42; I Tim. 2:1, 2)
Must edify one another (I Cor. 14:15-27)
Must take the Lord's supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:26; I Cor. 11:20-32)
Must give of their means (I Cor. 16:1, 2; II Cor. 9:7)

You should know that the same church today-

Exists in many places in the world
Can exist in your community
Is not a denomination in any sense
Is faithful to God's word.
Is ONE in fact and teaching
Gains members by obedience to the gospel
Has the same freedom from human power
Has the same name for its members
Has the same name for the church

Implication Is As Old As Methuselah!

RON GILBERT

There are many today who attack the idea that the Bible teaches

by implication. Some equate implication with private interpretation, which simply is not true. The question, "How does the Bible authorize?" seems to be causing many problems among Christians today. Some are trying to authorize that for which there is no authority. Still others are condemning faithful brethren who teach the truth concerning how the Bible authorizes. To illustrate this point, a book was written in 1987, entitled, *The Wrath of Grapes, Drinking and the Church Divided*. The author of this book set forth: "The purpose of this book is two-fold: First, it presents reasons, backed by scripture, to uphold the thesis that the choice to use alcohol is allowable with the Christian ethic. . ." This book attempts to justify social drinking from the scriptures, which simply can not be done. The reason for mentioning this book is to show how some feel and teach concerning how the Bible authorizes. On page 11 he states, "God gives every believer the freedom to do anything the Bible does not declare sinful." Then on page 13 he said, "Though everything not declared sinful in the scriptures is permissible or lawful, everything is not beneficial-either for the person who feels free to exercise liberty or for those who observe him exercising that prerogative..." Notice what was said? He believes that everything that the Bible does not declare sinful is permissible. It would seem that he is not alone in his thinking. Many seem eager to adopt this line of thinking when it comes to instrumental music and a host of other topics as well. This line of reasoning when carried to its end would accept anything as being right simply because there is no explicit scripture which condemns such. This idea is false. One must have authority for what is taught and practiced (Col. 3:17). An action or doctrine is not right because one can not find a scripture that says, "thou shalt not." An action or doctrine is right because it is authorized in God's word. Then, it can be said to be by faith (Rom. 10:17). We are privileged and obligated to walk by faith (II Cor. 5:7). Many seem to believe that the Bible teaches by explicit statements only and not by implication. To say that the Bible teaches by implication is to say the Bible implies certain truths. The fact that the Bible teaches by implication is no new doctrine or idea. This truth, that is the Bible teaches by implication, is as old as Methuselah. It has been taught for many years by gospel preachers that the Bible teaches that Methuselah died in the year of the flood. Go back and read Genesis 1-9, you will not find it stated explicitly "Methuselah died in the year of the flood." But, does the Bible teach by implication that Methuselah died in the year of the flood? Let us go back to Genesis and see!

In Genesis 5:25, Methuselah was 187 years when Lamech, his son, was born. In Genesis 5:28-29, Lamech was 182 when his son

Noah was born. Therefore, Methuselah was 187 years older than his son. Lamech was 182 years older than his son Noah. The Bible teaches then by implication that Methuselah was $187 + 182$ or 369 years older than Noah. In Genesis 7:11 the Bible says that in the 600th year of Noah's life the flood began. If the Bible teaches that Methuselah was 369 years older than Noah, and that Noah was 600 years old when the flood came, then the Bible teaches, by implication, that Methuselah was $369 + 600$ or 969 years old when the flood came. Genesis 5:27, explicitly states Methuselah was 969 at his death. However, Genesis 5:25, 5:28, 29, 7:11 implicitly teach Methuselah died in the year of the flood.

Those who attack the use of implication simply do not understand how the Bible authorizes. Let those who equate implication with private interpretation and opinions argue that one can not really know that Methuselah died in the year of the flood. Implication is as old, yea older than Methuselah. The ability to reason correctly comes from God.

God has given us His word and demands that we reason correctly concerning it and warns in His word, He will punish man eternally for failing to reason correctly concerning His word.

A man who regards reputation as worth more than character is a coward. Reputation is what the world says of us: character is what God knows us to be. Many guard well their reputations, but care little for their characters, while the former we leave behind us at death and the latter goes with us to the judgement bar of God. If one's character is right, it will not matter in the judgment day what his reputation was.

Since, then, it is not reputation, but character, that goes with us, a man who strives to build reputation, to the neglect of character, is a coward.

Let the Wicked Be Ashamed ***(Psa. 31:17)***

WADE LEE WEBSTER

"Let me not be ashamed, O Lord; for I have called upon thee: let

the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave" (Psa. 31:17). Often times the wicked are not at all ashamed when they sin. Jeremiah said of those of his day, "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush.. ." (Jer. 6:15a). Jeremiah even went so far as to say that some of the wicked of his day *"refused to be ashamed"* (Jer. 3:3). Does this type of attitude toward sin sound familiar? Well, it should. Today the wicked are not at all ashamed as they openly rebel against God and His word. Instead of their being ashamed of sin, they often try to make the righteous ashamed of not engaging in sin. The wicked often employ this tactic against today's youth. Notice the following examples:

Young people are made to feel ashamed because they do not engage in the sexual immorality of the day. The wicked of the world would have today's youth to feel ashamed over their purity and virginity. However, Christian young people should not be ashamed of this purity. Paul tells us through inspiration to "Keep ourselves pure" (I Tim. 5:22), to "flee fornication" (I Cor. 6:18), and to "Flee also youthful lusts"(II Tim. 2:22). Young people should not be ashamed when they are keeping these commandments of God. But rather, **LET THE WICKED BE ASHAMED!**

Young people are made to feel ashamed because they do not indulge themselves in the substance abuse of the day. The wicked would have our youth to be ashamed of not experimenting with alcohol and other harmful drugs. But Christian young people should not feel ashamed because of this. Peter tells us to abstain from such "Fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (I Pet. 2:11). We do not have the right to abuse of our bodies, because our bodies have been bought with the precious blood of Christ, and are to be used to glorify God (I Cor. 6:19-20). through inspiration Paul declares that "drunkenness" can rob us of our home in heaven (Gal. 5:21). Young people have nothing to be ashamed of when they follow this wise counsel of the word of God. Again, **LET THE WICKED BE ASHAMED!**

Young people are made to feel ashamed because they do not dress with the immodest fashions of the day. Those of the world would have our Christian teens to be ashamed of this concern for modesty, But Christian young people have nothing of which to be ashamed. Paul through inspiration wrote, ". . . that women adorn themselves in modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But which becometh women professing godliness with good works" (I Tim. 2:9). Although Paul was primarily speaking to women on this occasion, men must also adorn themselves

in modesty. Peter tells us that we are to be a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people (Literally a people for God's own possession, ASV) to show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into this marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). We are to be different from the world in our dress, as well as all other areas of our life. Christian young people have nothing of which to be ashamed when they adorn themselves in modesty. **LET THE WICKED BE ASHAMED!**

Young people are often made to feel ashamed because they do not engage in profanity of the day. The world would have our youth to be ashamed of not using profanity or telling dirty jokes. But as in the above areas, our young people have nothing of which to be ashamed. We are to "Keep our tongue from evil, and our lips from speaking guile" (Psa. 34:13). The wise Solomon wrote, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (Prov. 21:23). Paul warned, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers" (Eph. 4:29). When young people follow this inspired teaching they have nothing of which to be ashamed. **LET THE WICKED BE ASHAMED!**

Young people are made to feel ashamed because they do not engage in the lascivious recreation of the day. The world would have Christian young people to be ashamed of not engaging in mixed swimming, dancing, or attending dirty movies. Again, our young people have nothing of which to be ashamed. God warns us through His word that engaging in these lascivious activities can rob us of our home in heaven (Gal. 5:19-21). We are commanded to keep our minds and our hearts pure (Mt. 5:8; 1 Tim. 1:5) Paul through inspiration tells us, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). Our young people should not be ashamed of choosing to abstain from reaction which is lascivious in nature. **LET THE WICKED BE ASHAMED!**

Paul encouraged young Timothy to be ". . . an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12). Young people like Timothy should not be ashamed. Let the faithful children of God "show forth the praises of him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). As David has said, "O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not my enemies triumph over me. Yet, let none that wait on thee be ashamed:

let them be ashamed which transgress without cause" (Psa. 25:2-4).

Are We Afraid To Obey?

TIMOTHY KIDWELL

Attitudes concerning church discipline have greatly changed. The question is, "Why?" Is it because of a better understanding of God's word? Or is it from fear of what might happen? Has God's word changed? We know it has not, and will not.

Church discipline: what is it? Is it an option we have been given by God in conducting the oversight of his family? Many treat it as such. Some ignore it completely. A close look at God's word should give us the correct answer.

First, discipline an option? Paul said, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us" (II Thessalonians 3:6). There can be no misunderstanding of this passage. In this particular situation a person is to be disciplined through withdrawal. This is the last resort in God's plan of discipline.

Before this drastic action occurs in the case of a personal offense against us, we are to talk to our brother (Matthew 18:15-17). But are we even doing this much? When our brethren "err from the truth" (James 5:19), are we getting involved? Jude said that some would be "snatched out of the fire," which means that someone helped them out of a life of sin. We are commanded to "restore such a one" (Galatians 6:1). Also "if any one among you wanders from the truth, and some one turns him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20 R.S. V.) These scriptures teach us that we have a responsibility to try and bring the erring person back before we "note that man, that ye have no company with." (II Thessalonians 3:14, A.S.V.).

What is God's purpose for his plan of discipline? Paul tells us that it causes the person to become ashamed, and will save his soul (II Thessalonians 3:14, I Corinthians 5:1-5).

Who should be disciplined? The Holy Spirit lists several: covetous (Romans 1:29; I Timothy 6:10); liars (Revelation 21:8); immoral (I Corinthians 5:1-5; Matthew 19:9); heretics (Titus 3:10); those who cause division (Romans 16:17); busy-bodies, tattlers, backbiters (I Timothy 5:13; I Peter 4:15); those who use foul speech (Matthew 12:36-37; Colossians 3:8); those who walk disorderly (II Thessalonians 3:6); the non-penitent brother (Matthew 18:15-17); and those who forsake the assembly (Hebrews 10:25). How many of these categories are being disciplined in the church?

It amazes me what our brethren can sometimes rationalize! Concerning those who are forsaking the assembly, some say that we can not withdraw from these people since they have already withdrawn from us. Where did this reasoning develop? There is not even a single scripture that can be interpreted to support this attitude. Some, to soothe their conscience, will go as far as calling or writing the erring to let them know that if they don't come back their name will be dropped from the regular membership roll. What a "cop-out!" This doesn't even represent the plan God has given us!

Jesus said, "If you love me keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Is Hebrews 10:25 a command? Are we commanded to withdraw from such a one? Paul said, "We command you" to "withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly" (II Thessalonians 3:6). A person could not be more obvious in his disorderly walk than in forsaking the assembly. Therefore such are subject to God's plan of discipline. Besides, these people must be made known publicly (marked, Romans 16:17) as someone who professes one thing and does another.

God's word teaches a plan of discipline against the ungodly. Failure to follow this plan violates God's word. Those responsible for this failure are subject to corrective discipline.

To practice discipline can cause trials to befall the church. Fear has plagued the church leadership entered into the picture. It has been called an infringement of one's private life by some courts of our land. But in the words of Peter I say, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

There may be an easy way, and there is a right way. Which are you following?

That Troublesome Tongue

B. Allen Webster

*"The boneless tongue, so small and weak,
Can crush and kill." declares the Greek.
"The tongue destroys a greater horde,"
The Turk asserts, "Than does the sword."
The Persian proverb wisely saith,
"A lengthy tongue-an early death!"
Or, sometimes takes this form instead,
"Don't let your tongue cut off your head."
The tongue can speak a word whose speed,
Say the Chinese, "outstrip the steeds,"
The Arab sages said in part,
"The tongue's great storehouse is the heart."
From the Hebrew was the maxim sprung,
"The feet should slip, ne'er the tongue."
The sacred writer crowns the whole,
"Who keeps his tongue doth keep his soul."*

The words of the wise man sum up this matter, "Life and death are in the power of the tongue" (Proverbs 18:21). The use of the tongue is of great importance to the Christian as is shown by the teachings of the Master, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned (Matthew 12:37). The words one speaks are a mirror of the mind for ". . . out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). So if we are to catch our words before they fall from the lips we must set up a guard at the door of the heart! Never can this vigilance be laid aside because ". . . the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil; full of deadly poison" (James 3:8).

TO BE JUSTIFIED BEFORE GOD, WE MUST GUARD AGAINST:

FILTHY COMMUNICATION: Paul wrote, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the

use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29). To this he added, "neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks" (Ephesians 5:4). All crushing, dirty or off-color jokes, double meaning innuendoes, and swearing fit into this category. Peter exhorted, "Wherefore laying aside. . . all evil speakings" (I Peter 2:1) and Solomon testified, ". . . wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing forward or perverse in them" (Proverbs 8:7,8). In the words of the apostle to the Gentiles, "... BLESS, AND CURSE NOT" (Romans 12:14).

EUPHEMISMS, BYWORDS AND SLANG: Sometimes newborn saints need to be taught and older one reminded of certain words called euphemisms which are wrong. Euphemism means "the substitution of a word or phrase less offensive or questionable. . . ." than another might be. Many people would be shocked to know of the origin of some words used commonly as slang today! A few of these words are: Gee, Gee whiz, Gosh, Golly, Good Gracious, and My Goodness. All of these words are forms of names for God. The Bible commands, "Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7). When someone carelessly and thoughtlessly tosses the reverend name of God around they profane the holy and are guilty of sin!

GOSSIP AND LYING: "Talebearing" has been around a long time and will, no doubt, be here until the Lord returns. Solomon said, "He that goeth about as talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter" (Proverbs 11:13). "Talebearer" means "one who officiously and maliciously spreads gossip, scandal, etc." (Webster). Gossip separates friends and causes strife. Notice these verses: ". . . he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends" (Proverbs 17:9) and "Where no wood is the fire goeth out; so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth" (Proverbs 26:20). To kill gossip one must simply refuse to listen to it, or if it is heard, refuse to repeat it. Lying often goes hand in hand with gossip and is always wrong. It does not matter if these deceptions are called "little white lies" or "half-truths" they are still sinful. God hates a "lying tongue" (Proverbs 6:16-19) and Paul wrote, "wherefore putting away lying, speak everyman truth to his neighbor. . ." (Ephesians 4:25).

THE SIN OF SILENCE: While too many words can be bad (Proverbs 10:19), too few words can also be sinful! When an opportunity to teach is missed (Matthew 28:18-20), or when sin should be corrected but is not (Ezekiel 13:17), it is wrong. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in picture of silver (Proverbs 23:11). "A word spoken in due

season, how good it is" (Proverb 15:23).

The troublesome tongue can become a blessing to God and man if it is properly controlled and used. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Romans 14:19). Say some words of encouragement to those who need it. Remember, "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones" (Proverbs 16:24). Our prayer to God must always be, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in the sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer" (Psalm 19:14).

Magnets Won't Attract Rusty Nails

EDSEL BURLESON

A strong horseshoe magnet may be held over an old rust-eaten, shapeless nail without meeting any response. A bright, ringing nail will leap to the magnet, attract another, and through it draw another until several are attached. Just so, a rusty, unpolished, corroded "Christian," cranky, defiled, and selfish, has very little attraction; and through him the power of Christ to win the world will not flow.

A Hindu woman was converted to Christianity by hearing the gospel. She suffered much persecution from her husband. One day another Christian asked her, "When your husband is angry and treats you badly, what do you do?" She replied, "I cook his food better; I try to sweep the floor cleaner; I speak mildly, love him tenderly, and show him that when I became a Christian, I became a better wife and a better mother for his children."

The husband could withstand the preaching of others, but he could not withstand the Christian life of his wife. He soon became a Christian with her.

Several years ago a preacher was in London preaching in Hyde Park when a man in the crowd interrupted him. "We got nothin' agin' Jesus of Nazareth," said the interrupter, "but we have something agin' you Christians, because you ain't up to sample."

Real Christianity described in the Bible is (1) to grow as Jesus grew (Luke 2:52); (2) to think as Jesus thought (Philippian 2:5); (3) to obey as Jesus obeyed (Hebrews 5:8-9); (4) to give as Jesus gave

(Matthew 20:28); (5) to love as Jesus loved (John 13:34-35); (6) to forgive as Jesus forgave (Colossians 3:13; Luke 23:34); (7) to pray as Jesus prayed (Matthew 6:9); and (8) to seek the lost as Jesus did (Luke 19:10).

Mrs. J F. Moser wrote these thought provoking words:

Would I be called a "Christian,"
If everybody knew
My secret thoughts and feelings,
And everything I do?
Or could they see the likeness
Of Christ in me each day?
Or could they hear him speaking
In every word I say?
Would I be called a "Christian,"
If everyone should know
That I am found in places
Where Jesus would not go?
Or could they hear his echo
In every song I sing?
In eating, drinking, dressing,
Could they see Christ my King?
Would I be called a "Christian,"
If judged by what I read?
By all my recreation,
And every thought and deed?
Could I be counted Christ like
As I now work and pray,
Unselfish, kind, forgiving
To others every day?

Three Persons In The Godhead

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

There is one---and ONLY ONE---divine nature, or DEITY---the

The Bible Teacher

name of which is "GOD." Yet there are three beings or personages of whom this divine nature is characteristic. These comprise the 'family' of deity, or divinity, and thrice are called "the Godhead" in the King James Version (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9).

In this 'divine nature' there is clearly the distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as three 'subjects,' or 'persons.' Each of the three has equally, and in common with the other two, the nature -and perfection-of supreme DIVINITY. After writing by inspiration that "to us that believe there is BUT one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him," the apostle Paul added: "and ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Corinthians 8:6). In this text two of the three members of the God-family are identified: the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Numerous texts mention the third person of the Godhead—the Holy Spirit—along with these two, as we shall see.

GODHEAD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The God who created the heaven and the earth was—and is!—a unity in plurality, for a note the plural pronouns used by him: "And God said, Let US make man, in OUR image, after OUR likeness. . . ." (Genesis 1:26). All who claim to believe the Bible acknowledge that God created everything: and in connection with God the Father, the third person in the Godhead (the Holy Spirit, or the "Spirit of God") is mentioned as being present—and being active-in creation (Genesis 1:2). After Adam sinned, "The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of US. . ." (Genesis 3:22). The use of the plural pronoun ("US") proves that at that time there were more than one person in the Godhead!

At the tower of Babel, "The Lord said,. . . Let US go down and there confound their language. . ." (Genesis 11:6-7). This is not a sole personage of Deity talking to himself! But one member of the Godhead is speaking to the other two, which proves a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

Isaiah wrote, "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for" US? (Isaiah 6:8). The singular pronoun ("I") shows the unity of the Godhead; and the plural pronoun ("US") shows that there is more than one personage of deity.

CHRIST IN CREATION

Let it be observed that the second person in the Godhead is

specifically stated to have had a part in creation, Jesus Christ is the "Word" that "was made flesh" (John 1:14), and became "the only begotten of the Father." Of him we read: "In the beginning...."(that puts him back at the time of creation, Genesis 1:1) "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1-3). The personage who in the New Testament is known as the Son not only existed at the creation-he was active, or had a part, in creation!

Jesus said that the Father loved him "before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24), at which time he was "in the form of God" (Philippians 2:5-11). Before he was "made in the likeness of men," he existed with, and had glory with the Father, "before the world was" (John 17:5). To us, in "these last days," God has spoken by his Son, "by whom also he made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1-2). This Son, the second member of the Godhead, was called by the first person "GOD" (Hebrews 1:5-8); yet in the same paragraph he is called "my SON" (verse-5).

Of "his dear Son" (Colossians 1:13) we read again: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist: and he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of the cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Colossians 1:16-20).

Snake-Handling Preacher Does

W.A. HOLLEY

We have two excerpts taken from The Birmingham News and The Birmingham Post-Herald, August 20, 1985. We shall quote from these

and offer some comments as we deem appropriate. We do not wish to be unfair in our remarks, but we shall speak to the point.

The story told is tragic, indeed! Had the preacher and the church for which he preached known the truth of God's holy Word, his situation would never have happened, Ignorance can be so devastating. Almighty God wants all men to know his truth (John 8:30-32; I Corinthians 10:1; II Timothy 2:15).

The dateline of the article is, Greenville, Tenn. (AP). It says: "A relative of a man bitten while handling snakes in a religious ceremony says she begged him to go to the hospital but he refused, believing God would not let him die." As a matter of fact, God had nothing to do with the whole situation. He neither authorized such a rash act, nor did he save the preacher from death!

"Charles Prince did die Monday after fighting off the effects of the snake's venom for 36 hours. The North Carolina bait-shop owner was bitten several times Saturday in the small Apostolic Church of God near this eastern Tennessee mountain city." The article under review continues: "He held (his faith) to the end. It was a horrible death. There was not a more honest person." Here is an example of a person who had zeal but without knowledge (Romans 10:1-4). The preacher "held (his faith) to the end;" but his faith could not heal him! Miraculous faith does not now exist (I Corinthians 12:1, 8-10 with 13:8-13.). These verses, and many others, show that miracles having fulfilled their divine purpose, have ceased. We are sure that the preacher suffered "a horrible death," because he refused proper medical treatment which should have been administered (Luke 5:31-32). "There was not a more honest man," the statement reads. But one can be "honest" and "sincere" and, at the same time, be honestly and sincerely mistaken. Saul of Tarsus was honest and sincere while he persecuted Jesus Christ, but he was wrong, nevertheless! (Acts 23:1; 26:9-11; II Timothy 1:12).

If one takes strychnine, thinking that he is taking aspirin, death follows just the same—regardless of how honest one may be!

"Prince, who handled snakes as a sign of religious faith, slipped in and out of consciousness until he died." And more: "Prince was handling several snakes during the service when a four-foot rattler bit him three or four times on the hand. . . Prince continued with the service, and drank strychnine after he was bitten..."

Handling snakes "as a sign of religious faith," cost the preacher his life. And to add insult to injury, he drank strychnine—a deadly poison.

The Lord God Almighty never commanded any one to "show his faith" by handling snakes and drinking strychnine. Those who use Mark 16:17-18 to justify such foolishness, do so through ignorance. These verses apply only to the Apostolic Age-to the miraculous period, before the New Testament was committed to writing; and these verses are never to be applied to present day situations.

The miraculous signs which accompanied believers of the first century were bestowed on others than the apostles through the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 8:14-19; 19:1-6) Although Philip was miraculously endowed, through the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 6:6), he was not an apostle; he, therefore had no power to transmit miraculous gifts to others. Since all the apostles are dead, Charles Prince, the preacher, had no miraculous powers which enabled him to perform miracles.

James 5:14-15 offers no support to such men who believe as Charles Prince believed. This passage has special application to the period of miraculous gifts in the church and is limited to that period. If we assume that these verses are applicable today, if the sick called for the elders as directed here, and if the elders did their duty, no one in the church would ever die! This conclusion follows irresistibly, as night follows day. But, in spite of all that might be said concerning the text under consideration, Hebrews 9:27 teaches that "..... it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Does the Bible contradict itself? Certainly not.

It is a sin for any man to tempt Almighty God. The Devil wanted Jesus Christ to show himself through some spectacular stunt, thus gaining some cheap publicity or attention. Satan carried Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple. He said, "If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down. . ." Jesus replied, Thou shalt not make trial ("tempt" K.J.V.) of the Lord thy God. Please consider Matthew 4:1-11. It is a sin for one to put himself in dangerous situations, hoping (?) for a miraculous deliverance. This is exactly what the snake handling and strychnine-drinking preacher did. Jesus refused to do in principle what Charles Prince willfully did! All who willfully endanger themselves without any command of God or call of divine duty, "make trial" of (or "tempt") GOD ALMIGHTY. Jesus would have become a sinner had he yielded to Satan's trials! (Hebrews 4:14-16).

In the excerpt from which we are quoting, the death of this unfortunate preacher is explained on this wise: "It was the Lord's will; we're just put here for so long a time. When the Lord gets ready to take

us away, we're gone." We shall propose a few questions: (1) Did the preacher have no responsibility for his foolish acts? (2) Does the Bible teach what the length of one's life is predestinated and foreordained from the foundation of the world? If so, how could one prolong one's life on earth (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-4)? (3) Must God be blamed for man's rashness (Ecclesiastes 5:2)? (4) Is God responsible for all suicides? for those who deliberately step into the path of an oncoming eighteen-wheeler? for those who will-fully handle rattlesnakes and drink strychnine? (5) Is God liable for the health of one who refuses proper medical treatment (Luke 5:31-32)? The answer to these questions is a resounding "NO, NO, NO!"

Just one more thought: There is such a thing as criminal negligence. "His wife was there. He had made her promise if he ever got unconscious she would not let them take him to a doctor." This statement is an example of a rash promise. It is a sin to make such promise or vows. Matthew 14:1-12 contains a much-needed lesson here. Herod's rash promise cost John the Baptist his life. Do not be a party to the sins of others (I Timothy 5:22; Ephesians 5:11).

Dear Reader, take warning—learn and be wise.

I asked God for strength that I might achieve,
I was made weak, that I might learn to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things,
I was given infirmity that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy.
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life.
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for--
But everything that I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am among men, most richly blessed.

Licence to Post without Prepayment of Postage

No. U/SE—25/85

Posted at New Delhi PSO on 10/11 July, 1992

Delhi Postal Regn. No. DL-11262/92

Regd. No. 25921/71

You are Cordially Invited

To Attend

Worship Services of the church of Christ

Every Sunday :

Paite

8.00 A.M.

English/Hindi

10.00 A.M.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

E-10/B Defence Colony, Ring Road

(Near Andrews Ganj Bus Stop)

New Delhi.

ALL ARE WELCOME

To:

From:

The Bible Teacher

Post Box No. 3815

New Delhi-110049.