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EDITORIAL



By What Authority ?

On one occasion the enemies of Jesus asked him by what authority he was doing the things he was doing. Jesus explained that he would tell them if they would agree to answer one question : Was the baptism of John from heaven or men ? In response to this, the record says, "And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven ; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him ? But if we shall say, Of men ; we fear the people ; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered, Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." (Matthew 21 : 25-27).

The foregoing reminds us of what happens again and again in our own time. A member of the church can move into a village or city where the church does not exist and the local people who believe in Christ expect such a person to join them for worship and all that they do in religion. When he does not, they often question the individual in an attempt to put pressure on him to fall in line. They act as though one cannot worship and obey God without their approval.

One of the first things they want to know is this : Who gave you the authority to come here to begin a new church ? They think that every one who professes faith in Christ must be a part of a traditional denominational church, the one of course that they are members of in their community. The new comer is supposed to bow down and give in to those who are already there. He is told that he cannot teach anything that would be in contradiction to that which is already taught. As a result, most people fall in line and the denominational churches continue to control them. The true Christian, and member of the church of Christ, would not be so easy to deal with. While he may be questioned concerning his authority, he would also ask his denominational friends, "Who gave authority for that church to exist ?" Furthermore, "By whose authority did you become a member of it ? And by whose authority do you wear its name ?"

The Christian acknowledges but one authority and that is the authority of Christ. (Matthew 28 : 18). He looks to Christ for everything. He hears his word, he believes him, he obeys him, is added to his church, wears his name, worships him alone, teaches his word only, and lives according to his will. (Matthew 17 : 5 ; John 20 : 30, 31 ; Mark 16 : 16 ; Acts 2 : 47 ; Acts 4 : 12 ; John 4 : 24 ; Matthew 28 : 19, 20 ; John 14 : 15). He cannot have fellowship with any except those who have done likewise. If he lives where there are no members of the church then he must try to begin the church. He is not beginning a new church. He is not establishing a denomination. He is a member of the one and only church that belongs to the Lord. All other churches are man-made. They do not represent the Lord. Regardless of what is said or done in opposition, the Christian must go forth with courage and determination. By teaching the truth about the church those who are honest and sincere will want to become members of it.

Again, when a Christian begins to preach God's word there are those who question his right to do so. They think that such a person must be ordained by some church, trained in a recogni-

zed theological school or college, that he must wear a certain dress, wear titles like pastor, reverend, bishop, etc., and be appointed as a pastor over some long established denominational group. But who said that this has to be done? Did God authorize this or did man make these rules? The Lord has commanded every Christian to be a preacher of his word. Christ commands us to go into all the world and to preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16: 15, 16). Paul said, "Preach the word." (2 Timothy 4: 2). Therefore, every Christian has a duty and responsibility of teaching others. He will not be condemned for teaching others. He will not be condemned for teaching but for failing to teach.

Should the ordinary Christian begin to baptize his converts, he would be asked, who gave him the authority to do that? Some of those converted through his teaching might even object to him doing the baptizing. Such people have the idea that there is some sort of special merit in the person who performs the baptismal service. These people need to understand that the one doing the baptizing is important only to the extent that he is willing to help the one who needs to be baptized to carry out the Lord's command. The Bible emphasis is on the one being baptized, his understanding, his sincerity, his belief, his obedience. His salvation does not depend on the one doing the baptizing and whether he is a Christian or not a Christian, whether he is a good man or not, whether he is sincere or not. The main thing is for one that needs to be baptized to find someone to baptize him as the Bible teaches. Certainly, a Christian, a preacher, a preacher or not, would have every right to baptize a person in any village or city where there is one or more who wants to obey God. But turning the things around, who gave anyone the authority to sprinkle or pour water on a person's head for baptism when the Bible teaches that baptism is a burial in water? (Romans 6: 3, 4; Acts 8:29-39). Who gave anyone the authority to immerse a person because he claims to be saved when the Bible teaches that one must believe and be baptized to be saved? (Mark 16: 16). Who gave anyone the scriptural right to immerse to make one a member of a denominational

church when the Bible teaches that there is one church and that when one believes and is baptized the Lord saves him and adds him to his church ? (Acts 2 : 47).

Continuing, when a Christian begins to conduct worship in his home, in the home of a friend, or in a hall, and during the course of worship the Lord's Supper is served; then there may be those who will ask who gave that person the authority to do that. Once more there is the problem on the part of many people who think that only a priest, bishop, or some recognized Padri can serve the Lord's Supper. The Bible does not teach this. Rather, the Lord has commanded his people to meet on the first day of the week to worship (Acts 20 : 7) and when they do this then a part of it involves that of partaking of the bread in remembrance of the body of Christ and the fruit of the vine in remembrance of the Lord's blood. (1-Corinthians 11 : 23-29). Christians are to do this and therefore Christians have the right to serve the bread and the cup to each other. There is no merit in some particular person serving it. The important thing is not the one who serves it but whether the individual who is partaking of it does so as the Lord requested, that is, in the remembrance of his body and his blood. But please answer these questions : By whose authority are believers in Christ to meet only once a month, once every three months, on some weekday night, etc., to partake of this Supper ? By whose authority can only certain designated people wait on the Lord's Table ? My friends, instead of asking questions there are just any number of people who needs to be answering some questions.

In the Lord's church, which is the one true church of the Bible, we have no earthly head and no earthly headquarters. We have no man-made creed or confession or manual with the rules and regulations of the church. We have no bosses. Instead, we have complete freedom in Christ. We are one in him. One is not over the other. We do not have to answer to man but to the Lord. We believe in God and Christ, his Son. We strive to follow his word. We are just Christians. Where there are many of us in one city, village, or area we

gather together for worship. When one finds himself alone somewhere then by himself, with his family, or whoever may choose to meet with him, then he may take the lead, and should do so, in conducting worship. As a faithful Christian man he has every right to teach God's word, to lead in prayer, to direct singing, to partake of the Lord's Supper, and to offer it to any others who might be there, and to take up a collection for the work of the church. He also has the right to go out and teach his friends, and should they want to obey the Lord then he has the Lord's authority to baptize them. For a woman there are some problems since she cannot publicly teach, conduct worship, etc. She can teach privately, however, and once there is one or more men who are willing to obey the Lord then the responsibility falls on them to take the public lead in teaching and in conducting worship.

By what authority do Christians do this? By the authority of Jesus Christ. Please don't find fault, condemn, and reject us until you have investigated us in view of what the Bible teaches. If you will do so then you may find that the question of scriptural authority arises in relation to the things that you are doing rather than with members of the church of Christ. If you really want to be honest about the matter then while you are questioning the authority by which others are doing the things they are doing then at the same time ask yourself where the Lord authorizes you to do the things that you do. If you will do this, and if you will accept your findings, and especially if you will act on them, then this may be a time of real discovery with the result that you too will become a Christian and a member of the Lord's church. For after all, it is all a matter of authority.



associate editorial

Are You Sure ?

"For what is a man profited", asked Jesus, "If he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?" (Matthew 16 : 26). We live in a world where we wish to find answers to many of our problems and difficulties, but there is not a question as important as the one asked by Jesus. Man may want to seek education, wealth, health, and power. But none of these things can save a man's soul from the eternal destruction of hell. So Jesus asks, if a man possess and enjoys all the riches of the world, but after his death he finds himself in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, what profit did he make ? At another place, in Luke 12 : 16-21, speaking about such a man, Jesus declared him to be a fool. The fact is that a man's personal salvation is an important thing in all the world. Because it is the soul of man which is destined to live forever, having been made in the image of God, while the world and the things therein, including our physical body which is made of the dust of the ground, are destined to be destroyed. (Genesis 1 : 27 ; 2 : 7 ; Ecclesiastes 12 : 13 ; 2 Peter 3 : 10). Therefore, the most appropriate question that may be asked here is, "Are you sure you're saved ?"

There are some who may answer this question by saying, "Yes, we know we're saved because we have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour." But, I am afraid, this is not the right answer to our question". For merely believing in Christ or mentally accepting him as one's personal Savior is not an assurance to one that he is saved. When Jesus was upon the earth many believed on him, and among them were also the chief rulers of the synagogue who, we read, "believed on him ;

but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue". (John 12 : 42). So here we meet some people who believed on Jesus, but they never wanted to do any thing that Jesus commanded. Of course, we know, they were not saved. Because Jesus demanded, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6 : 46). James clearly tells us in James 2 : 17-26 that one cannot be saved by faith alone. Also the writer of the book of Hebrews, in 5 : 9, explains that Jesus "became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Another might say, "I am saved because the Lord has appeared to me in a dream and told me that I am saved." However, if the Lord would save a person by appearing unto him in a dream, then he could do this with all the people. Because the Bible says "God is no respecter of persons." (Acts 10 : 34). Also, he is not willing that any should perish. (2 Peter 3 : 9). But no, the Lord does not appear to a person in a dream, he has, in fact, given his word to man which must be preached unto all people, and they that believe in the word and obey they shall be saved. (Matthew 28 : 19, 20 ; Mark 16 : 15, 16 ; Acts 11 : 14).

Some people go to their graves feeling all through their lives that they were saved. But our feelings are not always true. Feelings are the result of education or what one has learned or studied. We have all heard of Apostle Paul. Before becoming a Christian he was a devout Jew and as such he opposed Christianity to the extent that the scripture says, he was "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogue, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them unto Jerusalem." (Acts 9 : 1, 2). Such were the feelings of Paul against Christianity before he became a Christian. Because this was the way he was educated. But later when he became a Christian, he confessed his ignorance in these words, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." (Acts 26 : 9). So

Paul's feelings were wrong, but when he learned the truth he changed and obeyed the truth. (Acts 22 : 16).

There is another example which shows how a man's feeling can deceive him. In the Old Testament we read about Jacob and his sons. Among his sons he loved Joseph more than the others. This was, however, resented by Joseph's other brothers. So we read, one day when they found him alone in the place where they were feeding their flocks, they decided to kill him. But when they saw a crew of businessmen going to Egypt, they said, let us sell him and in this way he would be gone forever to a far country. So they sold him, and he was taken by the group to Egypt. But Joseph's brothers wanted to tell their father that Joseph was killed. So we read, "They took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood ; And they sent the coat of many colours and they brought it to their father ; and said, This have we found : know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat ; an evil beast hath devoured him ; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and his daughters rose up to comfort him ; but he refused to be comforted ; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him." (Genesis 37 : 31-35). But was Joseph dead ? No. So Jacob's feeling were wrong. Likewise, one may believe and feel all his life that he is saved but at the end of his life may find himself in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. The example of the people in Matthew chapter 7 shows this fact very clearly. Isn't this true ?

How then can one be sure that he is saved ? Only the Saviour can give us the right answer to this question. So let us ask him. And he says, "For if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8 : 24). Therefore to be saved from our sins we must believe in him. Likewise, he said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13 : 3). Therefore, we must repent of our sins, or turn away from

them, to be saved. Then he promised, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16 : 16). So we conclude, that one must believe in Jesus, and repent from sins, and be baptized according to his command to be saved. There is only one assurance to man's salvation, and that is God's word. In other words, if one has done what the Lord has specifically stated in his revelation to man, then he surely knows that he has been saved from his past sins and that if he continue to follow the Lord according to his teachings as revealed in the New Testament, then he knows that he will receive the crown of life which the Lord will give to all who are faithful to him even unto death. (Revelation 2 : 10 ; 2 Timothy 4 : 8).

Life Without Fear

Ross W. Dye

One of the things from which men are delivered by Christ is fear. Repeatedly Jesus said, "Fear not." "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear." (Rom. 8: 15.) "God hath not given us the spirit of fear." (2 Tim. 1: 7.)

Despite the fact that the gospel is designed to rescue men from fear, many professed believers continue in this bondage. Well may the ungodly fear, but the faithful have no occasion to be afraid. It is of this latter people that we speak in this article.

It is true that there are numerous passages in the Bible in which we are admonished to "fear God." However, it should be understood that in these passages "fear" does not mean that we are to be afraid or terrified. "Fear," when used of God, has the meaning of reverential awe. Never are we taught to be terrified or frightened at the thought of our Father in heaven.

In the Hebrew Old Testament there are several words rendered "fear." One of the most common is "*yare*," which has a root idea of fear, awe or reverence. Another one of these words is "*shahan*," which has a root idea of falling down. These and other words of similar meaning are often used in the

Old Testament to express the attitude of reverence, awe or fear of God. Even in the Old Testament religion the principal idea is reverence for God, but of course there is the element of dread of the punishment of disobedience.

In the New Testament the idea in the "fear of God," which the Christian is to have, is reverential awe, and never terror or fright. God is revealed as a loving Father, and to be afraid of him is foreign to the spirit of a son. (Rom. 8: 15.) One of the words rendered "fear" in the New Testament is "*eulabes*," as in Heb. 12 : 28 of the King James. In the American Standard this word is translated "awe." The Analytical Greek Lexicon says its meaning is: "Reverence to God, piety." Thus there is nothing about this word to suggest that a Christian ought to be afraid of God. Another word rendered "fear" in the New Testament is "*phobos*." It is used of 'reverent respect.' (Rom. 13: 7 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 18.) A familiar passage where this word occurs is Phil. 2: 12 : "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Vincent comments, "Not slavish terror, but wholesome, serious caution." Then he quotes Wardlaw as follows : "This fear is self-distrust ; it is tenderness of conscience ; it is vigilance against temptation ; it is the fear which inspiration opposes to high-mindedness in the admonition 'be not high-minded but fear.' It is taking heed lest we fall : it is a constant apprehension of the deceitfulness of the heart, and of the insidiousness and power of inward corruption. It is the caution and circumspection which timidly shrink from whatever would offend and dishonor God and the Saviour. And these the child of God will feel and exercise the more he rises above the enfeebling, disheartening, distressing influence of the fear which hath torment. Well might Solomon say of such fear, 'happy is the man that feareth alway.'"

Thus it is apparent that Christians should not be afraid of God. When "fear" is used in the sense of terror, it obviously has no place in the heart of the Christian. John said, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment : because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love : but perfect love casteth out fear :

because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." (1 John 4: 17, 18.)

Christians are also delivered from fear of harm. "We may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." (Heb. 13 : 6.)

Likewise Christians are free of fear of death, if they trust in God as they ought. Christ came to "deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. 2: 15.)

Furthermore Christians are delivered from fear of hell. A part of the fear of death is fear of meeting God in judgment, but Jesus delivers us from fear of hell. We are warned to "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10: 28.) Surely we are not to conclude that we are not to be terrified of evil men or of Satan, but rather to be afraid of God! Who could believe that? Far from teaching that men should be afraid of God, this teaches them to trust in him. The context is designed to show that God provides, and in verse 31 Jesus said, "Fear ye not therefore." Hell does not terrify the Christian, for Christ is his Saviour. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have all boldness in the day of judgment. . . . There is no fear in love." (1 John 4: 17, 18.)

It is wrong to imagine that Jesus came to frighten men ; it is a perversion of the gospel to say that it is designed to torment men with a doctrine that offers no peace. It is not the function of the gospel to create fears and neuroses. Instead of leading toward poor mental health, the gospel is productive of a "sound mind." (2 Tim. 1: 7.) Far from gripping men in fear, the gospel brings a peace "which passeth all understanding." Our blessed Lord said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14: 27.)

It is utterly impossible really to trust in God and be afraid of him at the same time. If one would truly be free, if he

would know the peace of Christ, and if he would experience the joy of salvation, let him say with Isaiah : "Behold, God is my salvation ; I will trust, and not be afraid : for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song ; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." (Isa. 12: 2, 3.)

The Gospel Preacher

Homer Putnam Reeves

Jesus magnified and dignified preaching. Jesus was the Master Preacher. In the outset of his public ministry he announced, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the good tidings to the poor : he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind ; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The great, high-minded, and loving heart of Christ yearned for the souls of men. His marvelous work of redemption was to be accomplished by the preaching of his glorious gospel.

The Apostle Paul was truly a great preacher. He declared, "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of ; for necessity is laid upon me ; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." (I Cor. 9: 16.)

Young Timothy, another great preacher, was instructed by Paul : "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom : preach the word ; be urgent in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching . . . But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry." (2 Tim. 4: 1-5.) No task is more stupendous, more noble or more serious than that performed by the faithful gospel preacher.

Preachers should learn that there is such a thing as ministerial ethics. Good pulpit manners are important. In school we were taught to avoid wearing unusual attire ; stuffing our

outer pockets with pencils and pens ; crossing the legs on the platform; riding the pulpit ; flopping into a seat; affectation of speech; mimicking others; trying to become a big-shot. The gospel preacher should never be jealous of his brother preachers. Raving and ranting, bluster and bombast, grandiloquent speech and sesquipedalian language do not belong to the gospel preacher. He should always avoid "I" trouble (not spelled "e-y-e"). We should watch our pulpit manners, social manners, and brother-preacher manners.

The time was when preachers were invisible six days during the week and quite incomprehensible on the Lord's day. No more ! The successful preacher must be a very versatile character. He should possess the physical stamina of an athlete ; the prowess of a soldier; the finesse of a diplomat ; the wisdom of a sage ; the frugality of a monk; the patience of Job ; the purity of a saint ; the self-discipline of a Puritan and a faith which cannot be shaken.

What a polygonal pursuit preaching is! Its geometrical parallel is in the solids, not in the plane figures, so numerous and so varied are the angles and the facets. His primary work is preaching! But alas, the least amount of [his precious time is usually devoted to this most important work. In addition to pulpit work and the teaching of two or three Bible classes each week there is the time consuming ministry of visitation ; the inescapable task of funerals, calls for speeches of sundry sorts, marriages, discussions, writings. He has been referred to as a "physician without pills, a lawyer, a social worker, a taxi driver, an entertainer, a bone of contention and a handy piece of decoration for public functions."

The gospel preacher in the twentieth century should be highly literate. While holding a meeting in Alabama some years ago, I discovered that the Church of God was offering pretty keen competition a few blocks away. I went down one night after our services (they were just getting started). Shortly after I arrived, the preacher began to denounce these "college-bred preachers." He said, "I thank God, I'm an ignorant man, Lord, make me more ignoranter!" A young fellow, slightly

inebriated, standing in the back of the house cried out, "Lord, you'll shore have a hard time." Great care should be given to proper pronunciation, diction and grammar. One should avoid saying "him" for "he"; "without" for "unless"; "their" for "his"; "these kind" for "this kind." Pronouncing Jerusalem, Jeroozlum is almost unforgivable! Time was when preachers were not concerned whether a hen sits or sets, but only whether she lays or lies. No more!

God's people have need of more, much more than first principles. First principles are great; they are important, But there are many other important themes. The preacher of small subjects is doomed. The great themes hold the field; and they hold the field simply because people, tired to death of trifles, need a tonic of "big things." The pulpit is a place for magnificent virtues. It is the home of immensities, infinities, eternities. The gospel preacher is urged to dwell more upon the great texts. We must preach upon those tremendous passages whose vastness almost terrify us as we approach them.

The pulpit is a place of high dignity. It is not a duck-blind from which the preacher takes pot-shots at individual members. Individual messages should be communicated privately. No unfair advantage should ever be taken, least of all, from the pulpit. Nothing cheap or tawdry should emanate from the pulpit.

The gospel messenger should be a practical man. Preaching, to be effective, must address itself to present-day life. We must cope with matters as they are; not as we hope them to be. Sermons must be marked by a note of helpfulness. We should aim at achieving definite spiritual results. Spiritual discernment should ever characterize the preacher. His goal must be not the creation of correct opinion but Christ-like character. He must constantly aim at the sublime task of the development and guidance of Christain personality. We must present a Christ-o-centric gospel! We must speak as *living* men to *living* men, rather than dying men to dying men.

Preaching is certainly to be classed as a learned calling. It is a sacred trust. To the gospel preacher is committed the

stewardship of the gospel. Any ulterior motive ; any love for prestige, money, power or ease, will surely profane his work and cloud his ministry. Place-hunters, money-lovers, and power-seekers have no right to enter the pulpit. If one has ambitions for world acclaim or a hankering for riches he should never enter the ministry.

Science and the Bible

G. K. Wallace

Science and the Bible go hand in hand. The word science means to know. There is not anything that man can prove that contradicts the Bible. When science and the Bible are properly considered, they illumine each other.

Disagreement among churches and preachers is no proof that the Bible is unscientific. Various scientific groups disagree. The age of the earth by some scientists is considered to be about one million years ; and on the other hand, another group who claims to be equally scientific claims that the earth is five billion years old. If men of science cannot get any closer together on the age of the earth than this they ought not to be disturbed when preachers fail to agree on some point in the Bible.

Preachers are not always Biblical. That does not prove that the Bible is unscientific. Men of science are not always scientific. It is when the man of science gets unscientific and the man of religion gets unbiblical that there is a clash between them.

The beginning of life and the nature of God are with us a matter of faith. We are not governed by blind faith, as faith is not blind. Opinions and theories are blind, but faith is built upon evidence. When jurors decide a case in court they do not decide blindly ; they decide in harmony with the law and with the evidence. Both in science and in the Bible we have ample evidence that God is. The book of Genesis indicates order, design, system and law. Science cannot exist

without design, order, system, and law. The solar system is evidence of design and order. One could not have a design without a designer, and law and order without intelligence. The world, being a place of law and order, could not come into existence by mere chance. If I were to tell a little boy that the watch that I carry came about as a result of an automobile running over a pile of debris I would be called a fool. Yet on the other hand, I can take the same boy out and show him the great time piece of God, our solar system, and tell him that it came about as a mere accident and I will be proclaimed a scholar.

A casual glance at the books of the Bible shows that they are not unscientific. Take, for example, the following books of God's word :

A. *The Book of Genesis.* Mr. Herbert Spencer, near the turn of the century, announced the five manifestations of the unknowable. These manifestations were by him called time, force, action, space and matter. In the first chapter of Genesis we read, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep : and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1 : 1, 2.) Here are the five laws of Mr. Spencer. You will note that fifteen hundred years before Christ Moses wrote ; describing what had taken place in the beginning, and said, "In the beginning"—that is time. Moses also said, "God created" "God" is force. Too, it is stated that God "created," and "creation" indicates action. The record says that God created "the heavens" and that is space. Also, it is said that God created "the earth" and that is matter. Thus, we find that time, force, action, space and matter are all mentioned in the first two verses of the Bible.

B. *The Book of Proverbs.* The most ancient scientific man believed that the earth was flat. He believed that if a man traveled in a certain direction he would come to the edge of the earth. Yet, in Prov. 8 : 27 the Bible says that the earth is a circle. We read, "He set a circle upon the face of the deep." Too, in Isaiah we read, "It is he [God] that sitteth

upon the circle of the earth." (Isa. 40 : 22.) The shape of the earth was known by Isaiah and Solomon long before science had a place in the world.

We must remember that God *creates* and man *discovers*. The scientists discovered what God knew before our scientists were born. Scientists discovered the atom, but God created the atom. Scientists discovered many laws of health, but God made them. Scientists discovered how to harness and use electricity, but God created electricity. When Columbus discovered America, he did not go back to Spain and say, "I created a new world." He knew he had not created a new world; he had simply discovered a new world. Scientists only discover that which God has created. None of the laws of science that has been discovered contradicts the Bible. The doctrine of organic evolution is only a theory, and is not taught by anyone who is a real scientist as a matter of knowledge. True scientists teach this simply as a theory. There are some would-be scientists who are so limited in their information as to proclaim evolution as a fact.

C. *The Book of Job*. Scientists have found that the earth is suspended in God's great galaxy. We have learned that by putting satellites into orbit that a spaceship containing a man like John Glenn or Scott Carpenter, can be suspended in space and held up by nothing. In Gen. 1 : 17 we read, "And God *set* them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth." Here we see that the sun and the moon were set in the firmament of the heaven. The book of Job tells us that the earth is suspended upon nothing. "He hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7.) Thus, the earth is poised in space—a fact that scientists discovered, but God created.

D. *The Book of Psalms*. A scientist discovered the paths of the sea, but God created them. The paths of the sea existed long before they were found by man. Matthew Fontaine Maury, the father of the science of oceanography, discovered the paths of the sea as a result of reading the book of Psalms. When he was ill, we are told, he asked his son to read to him.

From the Bible, his son read to him these words, "The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." (Psalm 8 : 8.) He said to his son, "If the Bible says there are paths in the sea, they are there and we shall find them." He then set out to chart the principal paths of the sea. As a result of his teaching, Annapolis Academy was founded. In Richmond, Va., there is a statue of this great scientist with the Bible in one hand and his charts of the sea in the other. Thus, Matthew Fontaine Maury simply discovered what God created. Again, I repeat, scientists discover ; God creates.

If there are some things in either the Bible or in nature that we do not understand, that proves only our limited knowledge. As Marshall Keeble has often said, "The Bible is right."

Love Is the Tie That Binds

Albert Gardner

Love is the tie that binds. Love is the bond of peace. Love is the basis of peace and unity. Love is a root virtue. Many other virtues are rooted in the fertile soil of love. The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace. Love is the grace that provides the climate for sowing the seed of the kingdom. A divided church is not concerned with sowing the seed whose fruit is righteousness. That seed must be sown in peace. Since love is the bond of peace, the more lovely, loving, and lovable a congregation is the more it will preach the word at home and abroad. Strife, envy, and jealousy will destroy the tie that binds. That which is pure, holy, and peaceful will not grow in the dark dungeon of hatred.

Love God

Our first duty of love is directed to God. It is first because God is first. It is first from the standpoint of importance, greatness, and relation to other duties. The Pharisee lawyer asked Jesus what is the "greatest commandment of the law?" Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with

all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment." (Matt. 22 : 37, 38.) All of our being is to be used to the glory of God because we love him. We will be faithful in our worship, work, our daily lives and in our dealing with one another because we love God. All other commands are an outgrowth from this one.

We assemble when fellow Christians come together because we love God. (Heb. 10 : 25.) If we "go to church" for some other reason, it would be well for us to re-examine our motive. We eat the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20 : 7) because we love God. We give liberally of our money (1 Cor. 16 : 2 ; 2 Cor. 9 : 7) because we love him. We teach others because we love God. We deal honestly because we love God. We help the needy because we love God. In fact, obedience to every command must be founded on love. Jesus said it is a test. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14 : 15.)

It would not be possible to obey God completely without love. Paul said : "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have no charity [love, ASV], it profiteth me nothing." (1 Cor. 13 3.) Ananias and Sapphira tried it. They sold their possession but in order to gain the praise of men and yet keep their money, they lied about the sale of it. (Acts 5.) There is no command that one can obey without love. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision ; but faith which worketh by love." (Gal. 5 : 6.)

Love one Another

Our second duty of love is directed to others. "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." How we treat our fellow man is based on our love for him. We will not lie to him or about him. We are to love him "as thyself." With that kind of love we will treat him with respect.

Not only will we refrain from hurting him, we will not withhold what is good for him. "When I say unto the wicked O wicked man, thou shalt surely die ; if thou dost not speak to

warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity ; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it ; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity : but thou hast delivered thy soul." (Ezek. 33 : 8, 9.) We would want someone else to warn us, would we not ? We ought to be thankful to anyone that would guide us to the path that leads home. The practice of the golden rule will cause us to be deeply concerned about the teeming millions of the earth that are without God. If we had never heard the sweet story of Jesus, would we not want someone to show enough interest in us to tell us ? There is little need for us to claim to love our neighbour without telling him the truth that will free him from sin. How we treat our fellow man and how we treat the commands of God will be determined by love. Love will give us peace with God and peace with man. Love is the tie that binds.

The Holy Spirit And Tongues

Franklin Camp

When I first began preaching, the Holiness people claimed to be able to speak in tongues. I had several debates with them on this question. They taught that one was saved and then should seek "a second blessing" which was supposed to be the baptism of the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues as evidence of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I debated one Holiness preacher that claimed he had been baptized in the Holy Spirit and could speak in tongues. The truth was he could hardly speak English, much less a tongue (foreign language) and he could not read at all. He had to have some one else read his scriptures for him throughout the debate. It was not difficult to show he had not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and could not speak in a "tongue."

There were three groups in the New Testament that could speak in tongues. 1. The apostles that were baptized in the

Holy Spirit. 2. The ones in the church that received this gift by the laying of the apostle hands. (Acts 19 : 1-7 Acts 2:1-4)

3. Cornelius received the Holy Spirit directly and spoke in tongues. (Acts 10:44-48; Acts 11 : 15). The apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit for inspiration. We have no living apostles today and no inspired men. We have an inspired book the Bible. This eliminates any today receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues as the apostles did. The second group received the gift of speaking in tongues through laying on of an apostles hands. (Acts 8 : 11-19; Acts 19 : 1-6). This gift was one among several miraculous gifts that belonged to the early age of the church while the New Testament was being written. If the gift of tongues continue, then all the other miraculous gifts continue, for they all were for a special purpose during this period. To claim to speak in tongues, while not claiming any of the other gifts is false on the very face of the claim. We do not need the other gifts. They have fulfilled their purpose. The same is true of speaking in tongues. In the next place, we have no living apostles to impart the gift of speaking in tongues. To claim to speak in tongues today, apart from the impartation of the gift by an apostle, which is impossible, indicates either ignorance of the scripture or a lack of respect for what the Bible teaches. In either case one would be disqualified as a teacher. Third, Cornelius spoke in tongues as evidence that he had received the Holy Spirit directly, and not through the hands of an apostle. He received the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues to prove that the gospel was for the Gentiles as well as Jews. "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." (Acts 15 : 8,9). This happened only one time. It accomplished its purpose. The gospel is being preached to Gentiles. None are receiving the Holy Spirit as Cornelius did and therefore none are speaking in tongues as he did. Here are the three groups that spoke in tongues in the New Testament. Each group did it for a special purpose which was limited in time and scope. There does not live the

man that can prove that we have a single one of those needs in the church today and therefore not one of these groups can be found in the church. **THERE ARE NONE IN THE CHURCH THAT SPEAK IN TONGUES** today.

But some may claim that the tongue in First Corinthians 14 was not a language and can be practiced today. It is pure assumption, and false at that, to claim that the tongue of 1 Cor. 14 was not a language. Where is the proof that it was not a language? The word "*unknown*" is an *italics* which shows that it is not in the original. It simply reads "a tongue." In the next place, the ones in Corinth not only spoke in tongues, they prayed in a tongue and sang in a tongue. Read verses 14,15,16. When the tongues, (language) was used in an assembly where people did not understand the language they could not say "Amen." This shows that they prayed in a tongue. Third, Paul said he spoke in tongues "more than ye all." (14 : 18) Paul was an apostle. Where is the proof that his reference to his speaking in tongues—note the plural—was any different than that of the other apostles in Acts 2? But the tongues of Acts 2 was a language. (Acts 2 : 6) In the next place Paul quotes Isaiah 28 : 11, 12 and makes a double application of it. The tongue and lip of verse 21 refers to the language of the Assyrians. The Jews did not understand their language. Then it is used in a figurative sense in reference to speaking to the Jews through their captivity. But again this shows that the tongue of 1 Cor. was a language, not jabbering.

The Holy Spirit through Paul said, "whether there be tongues, they shall cease." (1 Cor. 13 : 8) If we have any in the church today that speak in tongues it would certainly be by the power of the Holy Spirit. Now, shall we believe what the Holy Spirit said through an inspired apostle, or shall we accept the claim of the so called tongue talkers today? Both cannot be right. It is either Paul or modern day claims. W.E. Vines comments on this verse as follows : "The gift of tongues was about the first to be discontinued. All attempts to re-introduce it are **EITHER FRAUDULENT OR THE OUT-**

COME OF DECEPTION ; THEY ARE CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE, AND ARE VOID OF THE ACTUAL OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD." Paul said they would cease. He said that what he said was the commandment of the Lord. (1 Cor. 14 : 37) He further said that any man that rejected what he taught was an indication of ignorance and he should be considered as such. (1 Cor. 14 : 38).

A few in the church that claim to speak in tongues look on it as a superior spirituality. What is the truth about this claim ? Well of course it is false but look at what the Bible teaches on this very subject. The only discussion of the use of tongues, when they were actually capable of speaking in tongues, is in this chapter to the church at Corinth. They prided themselves on this particular gift. What was their spiritual condition ? "Ye are yet carnal" and "babes in Christ." (1 Cor. 3 : 1-4) The very congregation that claimed to thrive on speaking in tongues was the least spiritual of all the congregations that had letters written to them. What a strange paradox. Tongue talking today is supposed to be a sign of spirituality, but the one congregation in the New Testament that really went in for tongues, when it was possible to speak in a tongue, is the least spiritual of any of the congregations—mentioned in the New Testament. If tongue talking produces spirituality, Corinth should have been the most spiritual, but it happened to be the very opposite. The emphasis in Corinth on tongues indicated a **POOR SPIRITUAL CONDITION**. What do you think all the ado about it in the church proves today. Certainly not superior spirituality.

In each instance where the gifts are listed—I Cor. 12:8-10 ; 12 : 27,28 ; 12 : 29,30—tongues are put right at the end. The order of the other gifts are varied but tongues always comes out at the end. If tongues indicates superior spirituality why did Paul put it so far down on the list ? If a church ever needed spirituality Corinth did. If tongue talking would help spirituality this would have certainly been the place to put it at the head of the list. Paul put it at the bottom. What would you conclude as to its relationship to spirituality ?

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge—to another divers kinds of tongues." Even when there were miraculous gifts all did not have a gift of tongues. But if tongues was a sign of spirituality, they must have aided in spirituality. Why limit this gift to some? All need spirituality. Verse 30 says, "But covet earnestly BEST GIFTS." This shows that tongues was not even to be desired as one of the best spiritual gifts.

Finally, in this chapter where Paul deals with the question of spiritual gifts it is indeed remarkable that in every single mention of tongues it is compared **UNFAVORABLY WITH PROPHECY**. Since prophecy was placed first in importance, if any of these gifts were intended to continue beyond the miraculous age, would it not have been prophesy instead of tongues? If I were going to be foolish enough to try to claim any of these gifts today I would select the best one, not the least gift. Divine wisdom placed them in this order. Sensible men know they would be acting foolish to try to claim to prophesy and everybody would know it was a false claim. Deceived men can jabber and call it speaking in tongues and people without any Bible knowledge will accept it. But those that believe the Bible have no desire to claim to speak in tongues and know that the ones that make such a claim are just deceived.

Brag Now Big Boy.....

Colin McKee

It seems to me that Satan enjoys tempting people to be over confident. Christians who think they are ready to face every situation but are relying on their own strength to overcome are ready targets for the fiery darts of the evil one. Often we think we are strong; often we think we are ready to do battle, only to find out that we were not as prepared as we had thought. It reminds me of Gaal, the son of Ebed who lived during the time that Abimelech was judge of Israel.

Abimelech had reigned for three years over the people, and Gaal thought he should be judge and leader. He went over to Shechem and got with some of his kinfolks who thought like he did and they had a party. Then Gaal got to thinking that he was stronger than he actually was. He said, "Who is Abimelech?", implying that Abimelech was a nobody to be afraid of. Zebul heard Gaal's foolish ravings and reported them to Abimelech. Wasn't long before Abimelech came with his armies. Gaal got up one morning and he saw the armies on the mountains. He turned to Zebul and said, "People are coming down from the mountains. Zebul answered, "You're just seeing shadows." Pretty soon though, Gaal knew for sure it wasn't shadows he was seeing. Then Zebul said, "Where is now thy mouth where with you said, "who is Abimelech?" (Judges 9 : 38) (Brag now big boy). Gaal wasn't so vociferous at that point. We should not get carried away with the enticement of the hour or the atmosphere of the world and think that we can place ourselves in ungodly environments and situations and come away unscathed and clean. We need to be ready to fight as well as talk about it; we need to count the cost and then stick to it. Many think that Satan is really not so strong ; he can't really harm me ; I don't have to be careful. Perhaps we should consider that he is already saying to multitudes who have fallen, " Where is now thy mouth ?" "Let him that thinketh that he standeth, take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10 : 12).

Are you Committed to Christ ?

Ricky Brooks

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and of a sound mind. For the which cause I also suffer these things ; never the less not ashamed ; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2 Timothy 1 : 7, 12).

We hear a lot about committing one's self to God, but not often told how or what it means. The result is : many who

think they are committed to Christ are really far from it. Those who were taught yesterday that they needed to commit themselves to God, today need to be taught what real commitment is. But first let us look at what it is not.

Being committed to Christ is not just saying, "Lord, Lord." (Matt. 7 : 21-23). Too many people come to church, and sit on a pew and go home thinking they are committed to Christ when really all they have done is said, "Lord, Lord". These people will not visit, will not invite people to come to church, and will not try to set up Bible studies with people. Are they practicing pure religion ? (James 1 : 27).

Being committed to Christ is not just having a form of godliness. (2 Tim. 3 : 5). Some people keep the Lord's appointment but renounce its power and influence over their hearts and lives. Showing that they neither acknowledge its guidance or even wish to do so.

Being committed to Christ is not just being a hearer and not a doer of the word. (James 1 : 22). Many people know what they should do and what God requires of them and yet refuse to do it. (Romans 2 : 13). This is not real commitment to Christ.

Real commitment to Christ is POWER. (2 Tim. 1 : 7). We can't be scared and minister for God at the same time. However, we live in a time when men are afraid to tell the world they are followers of Christ. Being committed to Jesus will give the power to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Phil. 4 : 13).

Real commitment to Christ is VICTORY. Brethren we are on the winning team, but we must not stop short of the finish line. We must run the race that is set before us. (Heb. 12 : 1). We must have faith in God and continue to strive to win the race. After all, faith is the victory that overcomes the world. (1 John 5 : 4). Commitment to Christ is victory over the hold of sin and death. (1 Cor. 15 : 52-57).

Real commitment to Christ is JOY. People committed to Christ have a reason to be joyous. They have a reward after this life that is greater than any treasure now on earth. The gift of eternal life. (Matt. 5 : 12 Acts 8 : 39).

Real commitment to Christ is SALVATION. (Acts 4 : 12). A man that is truly committed to Christ is a man that has salvation. (1 John 1:7). But if real commitment is salvation, then one who is not really committed is without salvation. He is without that Heavenly home that Jesus has gone to prepare, and shall some day as the "rich man" lift up his eyes being in torment.

ARE YOU COMMITTED TO CHRIST ?

Loving to Have The Preeminence

Mark H. Nunley

Down through history there have been people who were not content unless they were in complete control of whatever organization they were a part of. Whether the particular group they were in be a church, or government, a civil organization, or whatever else, they wanted to be in control and to have the final say as to what went on. Tragically enough, our world today is plagued by the same kind of people. And if they do not get their own way, they're going to cause trouble.

The truly pathetic part is that sometimes those who claim to be Christians also have this attitude: this desire for power, this disposition of wanting to run things by themselves.

But this problem was present in the church in the first century, just as it is today. Let's notice a couple of passages that make it clear that in the church at the very beginning that there were some that desired to be dictators :

III John 9-11 "I wrote unto the church : but Diotrephes, WHO LOVETH to have THE PREEMINENCE AMONG THEM, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words : and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that

which is good. He that doeth good is of God : but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."

Can you imagine a man like Diotrefes that would so treat the Apostle John ? But I am not so sure but that we might find a modern day Diotrefes in many churches today!

Now let's notice one other passage which we were referring to above : I Pet. 5:3 "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples (examples) to the flock."

Even certain of the elders in the first century and today run the risk of trying to be a dictator, of lording-it-over the church, instead of leading and shepherding, and thus the Apostle Peter by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit forbids such.

It is obvious to us from personal experience that the church is plagued with those who love to have the preeminence, who want to lord-it-over the church, who want to run things themselves and will cause trouble if necessary when not getting their own way. And it is likewise obvious from the Bible that such an attitude is CONDEMNED by God.

But one of the most tragic things is that those to whom the things in this article apply will not apply it to themselves but will apply it to those that differ with them. But I hope and pray that God will cause them to see themselves as they really are, and thus to change their ways.

WHO ARE WE ?

Christians Are Followers of Christ

"...The disciples were first called *Christians* in Antioch."

—Acts 11:26.

Christ Began his Church

"...I (Christ) will build *My church*"

—Matthew 16:18.

He is the only Head

"...Christ also is the *head* of the church..."

—Ephesians 5:23.

There is only One Church

"...You (Christians) are all *one* in Christ Jesus."

—Galatians 3:28.

(Contd. on back Page)