

GOSPEL TREASURE

Compiled and Edited

By

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INTRODUCTION

Our brethren have written and printed numerous tracts on a wide range of subjects. These efforts have been very fruitful over the years with many coming to know the truth and obeying God.

While working here in India many of these tracts have come to us. Dozens of them have been printed in our monthly magazine, The Bible Teacher. Others have not been so used because of their length or some similar reason.

Since we are involved in printing and distributing books throughout India, and being in constant need of new materials for this programme, then I have gone through our tract collection and selected some twenty for this particular volume. We will no doubt follow this up with other such volumes in the future.

With the emphasis of these tracts being on salvation then we have chosen to give this book the title of GOSPEL TREASURE. There is indeed no greater treasure in the World than gospel treasure, the good news of salvation, and the way to God. I would urge you to read this book of treasure and allow it to introduce to you the gems, precious truths, and the great treasures of the Bible. I would hope that once you find the pearl of great price that you will want to do whatever is necessary to make it your own.

We want to thank the various authors of these tracts for making it possible to share this treasure with you.

J. C. Choate

Church of Christ

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Oct. 16, 1978

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THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

B.C. Goodpasture

Is the Bible a product of human reason? Is it merely a book of literature, or is it an inspired volume? If inspired, in what sense? Is it inspired only in the sense that it bears the marks of literary genius as do the writings of Shakespeare, Milton, and Browning? Or is it inspired in the sense that it was written by men under the influence of the Holy Spirit?

The question of inspiration is vital. If the Bible is not of divine origin, we cannot rely upon its statement of fact; we need not bow to its claims of authority; and we cannot derive hope and comfort from its promises. If it represents only the efforts of uninspired men, we may view its contents with little or no concern. On the other hand, if the Bible came from God, its authority is unquestionable and its statements are infallible.

THE BIBLE CLAIMS INSPIRATION

The nature and contents of the Bible are such that the rank and file of its readers in all generations have recognized God as its author. Man would not have written such a book, if he could; and could not, if he would. It moves on a superhuman plane in design, in nature, and in teaching. It caters not to worldly desire and ambition. It condemns much which men in the flesh highly prize, and

commends much which they despise. Its thoughts are not the thoughts of men.

Moreover, the Bible claims to be inspired. Even the casual reader has been impressed with the frequent use of such expressions as : "Thus saith the Lord," "God spake," "The Lord testified, saying," and "The Lord hath spoken it." It is said that in the prophets alone these expressions occur 1,300 times; and in the Old Testament, 2,500 such phrases, attributing the authorship to God, are found.

The writers of the Bible never pretended that they wrote with no illumination other than the dimly-burning light of human reason. They claimed to speak as they were moved—borne along—by the Holy Spirit. They spoke of the Bible and its various parts as having been given through the guidance of the Almighty. Paul said : "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness : that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17.) Paul said "all scripture." It is evident that he did not have in mind any "theory of partial inspiration." What he said is quite different from the modernistic statement : "The Bible contains the word of God." According to Paul, the Bible IS the word of God; it is all given by inspiration. Peter declared "that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man : but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1 : 20, 21.) When Moses was about to begin his work as deliverer and lawgiver, God said to him : "Now therefore

go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." (Ex. 4 : 12.) At the end of his life, David bore this testimony : "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." (2 Sam. 23 : 1, 2.) And the Lord said to Jeremiah : I have put my words in thy mouth." (Jer. 1 : 9.) Jesus endorsed the Old Testament in its entirety. He said that "all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." (Luke 24 : 44.) These three divisions—"law of Moses," "prophets," and "psalms"—according to Jewish usage, included all the Old Testament. Further, Jesus specifically endorsed those portions of the Old Testament which have most often been under attack by the enemies of the Bible. He put the stamp of his approval upon the story of creation (Matt. 19 : 8), the account of the flood (Matt. 24 : 37), and the story of Jonah and the whale (Matt. 12 : 40). He put Satan to flight during the temptation in the wilderness by using quotations from Deuteronomy, a book has been often under the fire of modernists. It is not surprising, therefore, that the devil does not think well of Deuteronomy. Almost from the time of his defeat in the wilderness he has been denying the canonicity of this book. In modern times he has moved his most trusted henchmen, the modernists, to wage a relentless war on the fifth book of Pentateuch. Jesus also endorsed the New Testament before it was written. He promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would enable them to know "how" and "what" to say (Matt. 10 : 19), and that he would guide them into all truth (John 16 : 13). On Pentecost the Spirit came on the apostles and they began to speak as

he gave them utterance. (Acts 2 : 4.) Paul commended the Thessalonians for having received his word—not as the word of men, but, as indeed it is the word of God. (1 Thess. 2 : 13.) He spoke not in “words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” (1 Cor. 2 : 13.) And John, speaking of his writings, frequently urged his readers to “hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.” (Rev. 2 : 11.) The apostles claimed the very guidance of the Spirit which Jesus promised. Other Scriptures could be cited in support of the claim of inspiration for all parts of the Bible, but these are sufficient.

THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION

In view of the various modern uses of the word, it is hardly enough to say that the Bible is inspired. Almost any modernist will admit that it is inspired, if you will let him define what he means. In like manner he will grant that Christ is divine, but he means only in the sense that we all are divine. He will not admit the deity of Jesus. As a rule, in granting that the Bible is inspired, he means it only in the same sense that Shakespeare, Milton, and Browning were inspired. He strips the Bible of its inspiration just as he strips Christ of his deity. All modernistic views of inspiration are wholly inadequate.

What is meant by inspiration as applied to the Bible ? Paul said : “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” (2 Tim. 3 : 16.) What does he claim for the Scriptures in this statement ? Our word “inspiration” literally means a breathing in. It is derived from two Latin words, *in* and *spiro*, which mean to blow or breath into. In the

original the Greek word *theopneustos* is employed. It is composed of two words—*Theos*, God; and *pneustos*, breathed, from *pneo*, to blow or breathe. *Pneuma*, meaning spirit, comes from the verb *pneo*. "*Pneustos* then might mean spirited, and then *theopneustos* would mean God-spirited, or God-breathed, or 'filled with the breath of God,' or the product of the divine breath (or Spirit), or given by God through the Spirit. The word implies an influence from without, producing effects which are beyond natural powers." (Miller.) "The book that is in this sense inspired is one into which something of another spirit or mind has been breathed; in other words, its author has been overshadowed by a power *outside* himself." Inspiration means that influence which God exercises through the Holy Spirit over the minds of Biblical writers to make them infallible in the receiving and recording of his will. There is a difference, however, between revelation and inspiration.

Revelation has reference to the communication of knowledge. It renders its recipient wiser. It is the means through which God imparts facts and truths not previously known. Persons uninspired sometimes received revelations in Bible times. The children of Israel, assembled under the burning crags of Sinai, heard God speak in awful majesty (Ex. 20 : 18-21; Heb. 12 : 19) ; but no one would claim that they were all inspired. When the martyr, Stephen, was being stoned, he said : "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." (Acts 7 : 56.) This was a revelation, but who would claim that the unbelieving Jews who heard it and stoned Stephen were inspired ? On the other hand,

inspiration has reference primarily to the accurate communicating of knowledge. It preserves its recipient from error in teaching. It is possible that some of the writers of the Bible received no revelations. This is possibly true of some of the writers of the historical books of the Old Testament. The writers were certainly inspired in the selection and recording of facts within the realm of human experience, but this would not require revelation. The account of the wilderness wanderings was not a matter of revelations, but rather of fact known by personal observation. Luke does not claim to be the recipient of any revelation. He says he derived his material from those "which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word." He "traced the course of all things accurately from the first." (Luke 1 : 2, 3.) He did this by inspiration, but in doing so he was not primarily the recipient of any revelation. Thus it is possible for one to receive revelation without inspiration, and to receive inspiration without revelation. Not all the Bible is revelation, but is all inspired. It contains revelation; it is wholly inspired.

The words, as well as the thoughts, of the sacred penmen are inspired. Jesus promised this very type of inspiration. He said that the Holy Spirit would teach the apostles "how" and "what" to speak. The "what" means the thought; the "how" means the verbiage, the manner of expression. This is verbal inspiration. It would be interesting for a modernist to tell us how God could inspire the thoughts without at the same time inspiring the words. How can we carry on a conversation without words? How can we express thoughts without words or

their equivalent? Jesus said: "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished." (Matt. 5: 18.) Thus he asserts the verbal inspiration and guarantees the verbal indestructibility of the text. Not even a "jot," small letter, or "tittle," part of a letter, shall pass until the law shall have been fulfilled. Paul said that he spoke "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth," but in words "which the Spirit teacheth." (1 Cor. 2: 13.) This is a positive claim of verbal inspiration. To deny it is to impeach Paul. Again, Paul makes an argument to turn on the number of a noun in Gal. 3: 16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." If the very words in this case are not inspired, Paul's argument is weak and untenable.

While the Holy Spirit moved the penmen of the Bible to write, yet they were free to speak through their own individual background, personality, vocabulary, and style. "Inspiration did not involve the suspension or suppression of the human faculties, so neither did it interfere with the free exercise of the distinctive mental characteristics of the individual. If a Hebrew was inspired, he spoke Hebrew; if a Greek, he spoke Greek; if an educated man, he spoke as a man of culture; if uneducated, he spoke as such a man is wont to speak. If his mind was logical, he reasoned, as Paul did; if emotional and contemplative, he wrote as John wrote." Their inspiration was not purely mechanical. There may be a few cases of mechanical, or near mechanical, inspiration in the Bible; but it is the exception, not the rule. When Balaam's ass spoke,

that was mechanical; and when men spoke in unknown tongues, as on Pentecost, that was mechanical, or seemingly so. If the writers had been mere pens, instead of penmen, in the hands of God the style and vocabulary of the Bible would be uniform. But such is not the case. Take, for example, the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Their plan, style, and peculiar expressions are strikingly different. Matthew was a Jew. He writes with a Jewish background. He gives detailed reports of what Jesus said, quotes often from the Old Testament, and speaks of the "kingdom of heaven," whereas the other writers say "kingdom of God." Mark features the mighty works of Jesus. He uses the word "straightway," or immediately, many times. Luke was a Gentile and a physician. He uses the expression "a certain" frequently. His medical background is evident in his writing. When Jesus said that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God, Matthew and Mark use the Greek word *raphis*, which means an ordinary needle; but Luke uses the word *belone*, which means a surgeon's needle. (Matt. 19 : 24; Mark 10 : 25; Luke 18 : 25.) In describing a man who had dropsy (Luke 14 : 2), Luke said he was a "dropsical man," *hudropikos*. This is a medical term common in the writings of the Greek physicians. It is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. John records much that is not mentioned by the other writers. He uses the solemn "verily, verily" twenty-five times. He is the only writer who uses this expression. Many other examples could be cited which show the differences of style and expression found among inspired writers. Dr. William Evans well says :

“We must conclude, therefore, that while from the divine side the Holy Spirit gave through men clearly and faithfully that which he wished to communicate, from the human side that communication came forth in language such as men themselves would naturally have chosen. We may, therefore, safely say that we believe in plenary and verbal inspiration—that is to say, the words as well as the thoughts have been given, whether mediately or immediately under the influence of the divine spirit.” It should be remembered that there are certain limitations on inspiration as related to the writers of the Bible. In the first place, it did not impart omniscience. Paul was inspired, but he did not know how many persons he baptized in Corinth. (1 Cor. 1 : 16.) He spoke as he was moved by the Holy Spirit, but he had to send to Thessalonica to learn the faith of the brethren there. Inspiration was limited to the purpose for which it was given—viz., “the communication of divine truth on certain topics by divine authority.” Inspiration did not render Paul immune to bodily affliction or make him a better tentmaker. Inspired men were infallible only as teachers and writers and when acting as the spokesman of God. Their inspiration made them neither astronomers nor farmers. It was limited to the immediate purpose for which it was given. It did not make them incapable of sinning in their manner of living. The man of God from Judah made a startling prediction concerning Josiah and his work, yet he died for his sin before he returned home (1 Kings 13.) David sinned grievously. (2 Sam. 12.) Peter denied his Lord, and Paul gave diligence lest after he had preached to others he might be a castaway. (1 Cor. 9 : 27.) Inspiration does

not vouch for the truthfulness of all statements which it quotes. Certain statements made by Satan are quoted by the inspired writers—for example, "Ye shall not surely die." (Gen. 3 : 4). It is true that the devil said this, but what he said is not true. Inspiration never lies, but it sometimes records the statements of those who did lie. "In 1 Sam. 31 : 3, 4 the Bible states that Saul killed himself. In 2 Sam. 1 : 1-10 the Bible states that a young man, claiming to be an Amalekite, reported to David, probably with a hope of reward, that he had slain Saul. This was false. The Bible does not state that the Amalekite slew Saul, but it does record the fact that he told David that he slew Saul. His statement was, according to 1 Sam, 31 : 3, 4, false, but the record of the statement is inspired and true." (Miller.)

THE EVIDENCES OF INSPIRATION

The evidences of the inspiration of the Bible fall into two classes—namely, external and internal. Josephus and Philo, learned Jewish authors, testify that the Jews always regarded the Old Testament as a product of holy men writing under the supervision of the Holy Spirit. From the very nature of the case, however, the chief arguments in favour of the divine origin of the Bible are largely internal. This fact does not militate against the arguments in favour of inspiration. If the contents of a given bottle were in question, the best way to find out the truth would be to make a careful analysis of what was in the bottle. The internal evidence would be more conclusive than any kind of external evidence that could be produced. If the nature of a nugget of metal, which many thought to be gold, was in question, the best way to arrive at the facts

would be to examine the nugget itself. In like manner we have a book, the Bible, which we claim is inspired. Does it bear the marks of inspiration? Will it stand the acid test of internal investigation? We have a right to examine this book to see whether or not it bears the marks of divine origin. It has nothing to fear from the most rigid investigation.

1. As an evidence of its divine origin, we mention the fact that the Bible has anticipated and answered every major departure from the faith which has been made during the past nineteen hundred years. Only an example or two can be cited. The Roman Catholic Church has denied the cup to the "laity," the rank and file of its members. Jesus, as if in specific anticipation of this error, said at the institution of the Lord's Supper: "Drink ye all of it." (Matt. 26: 27.) He did not mean, as some modern cranks have foolishly contended, that they must drink the entire contents of the cup, the fruit of the vine; but that each one must drink of it. The disciples so understood him. It is said that "they all drank of it." (Mark 14: 23.) Again, Paul said: "The Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, ... forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received." (1 Tim. 4: 1-3.) It is a matter of common knowledge that the Romish Church has forbidden marriage to its leaders and commanded its members to abstain from meats at certain seasons. In doing this it has followed the "doctrines of demons." Some so-called "Protestant" churches ape the "Mother of Harlots" in abstaining from meats. All such

practices have been anticipated and condemned. By no human wisdom or ingenuity could these errors have been foreseen and answered. The only adequate explanation is inspiration.

2. The Bible is abreast with the most up-to-date scientific knowledge. Yet the Bible was not written as a treatise on science. It was written in the language of the people addressed at the time it was produced, yet it contains no statement of fact which is at war with scientific truth. The order of events in creation, as enumerated by Moses, is in agreement with the latest scientific pronouncements. Jeremiah said that "the host of heaven cannot be numbered." (Jer. 33 : 22.) The ancients thought, however, that the stars could be numbered. They thought that they had counted them. Now no astronomer ever hopes to know the number of the host of heaven. How did Jeremiah know this? Job said many centuries ago : "He stretcheth out the north over empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job. 26 : 7.) How did the Uzzean sage know that there is a vast stretch in the northern heavens which is without stars? How did he know about the law of gravitation and the forces by which the earth is held in its proper place? He spoke far in advance of scientific discovery. He had no modern telescopic equipment, and he was not a world traveler. Whence came this accurate knowledge concerning the heavens and the earth? Isaiah used language which contemplated the rotundity of the earth. He said : "It is he that sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." (Isa. 40 : 22.) Isaiah had never, like Magellan, sailed around the earth. He had access to

no modern maps or geographies. How did he come into possession of such knowledge? Jesus used language which took into consideration the fact that people live on a round earth, a sphere. He said that when he comes the second time two men would be in the field; one would be taken and one left. Two women would be grinding at the mill; one would be taken and one left. (Matt. 24 : 40.) And in that night two men would be in one bed; one would be taken and one would be left. (Luke 17 : 34.) Normally, at the time Jesus spoke, persons were in the field by day, in bed by night, and ground at the mill by twilight. Jesus meant, then, that when he comes it would be daylight at some places, twilight at others, and at still other places it would be night. This could happen only on a round earth. How did Jesus know this? He lived and died in Palestine—was seldom outside that country. He lived in sight of the Mediterranean Sea, yet never mentioned it. There is no evidence that he was ever on its waters, yet he speaks of conditions which will prevail when he comes again in such manner as to show that he knew that the world is round. How did he know it? How did he and the others quoted in this connection know about matters of science so far in advance of their times? The only answer is that they knew by inspiration of the Almighty.

3. Another evidence of the divine authorship of the Bible is its utter impartiality in the delineation of human character. When uninspired men are writing about those whom they eulogize and adore, they are prone to leave unmentioned things which are uncomplimentary and sinful. But not so with the writers of the Bible. Moses, the great lawgiver, and prophet, is one of the most colossal figures

in all history. He is the most highly-honoured character of the Old Testament. His name alone of the Old Testament worthies is associated with that of the Lamb in the song of the blest. (Rev. 15 : 3.) Yet the Bible relates the sad story of Moses' sin at the rock and his consequent inability to enter the land of promise. David sinned, and the Bible records his sins. Peter sinned, and the tragic story of his thrice-repeated denial of his Lord is faithfully given. If men, apart from the moving of the Holy Spirit, had been writing about these men, they would either have left their sins unmentioned or would greatly have "written them down." We cannot account for such fairness and frankness in the portrayal of heroic characters except upon the ground of divine authorship.

4. As an additional proof of its inspiration, we suggest the fact that the Bible does not cater to human curiosity. It never stoops to satisfy the curious meddlesomeness of man. This is not true of books written by uninspired men. The Bible often leaves unrecorded that which men would like to know. It is said that upon one occasion Jesus wrote twice upon the ground. (John 8 : 1-8.) This is the only instance of his writing. What he wrote would be news of the first quality, yet we do not know what he inscribed on the sacred soil of Palestine. It is significant that the Bible does not contain one book—not even one sentence—from the pen of Jesus. His childhood and youth are passed in almost complete silence. From the age of twelve to his baptism at the age of thirty we have no word from his lips. How different if men had been writing about him apart from the influence of the Holy Spirit. The Bible mentions several persons who were raised from

the dead. Yet none of these brought back any word concerning what they saw and experienced beyond the veil. Their tongues were tied and their lips were locked concerning the great beyond. How different it would have been had men been writing according to the dictates of their own nature and learning! They could not, or would not, have foregone the pleasure of speaking some word to gratify the longing and anxious curiosity of men. Impositors have ever sought to solve the mysterious and tell of the world to come. Even the silence of the Bible is instructive. It, as well as its speech, is an argument in favour of its divine origin.

5. Again, the unity of the Bible is a mark of its superhuman origin. It is composed of sixty-six books, written by at least forty different persons, under a variety of conditions and in widely separated countries, during a period of sixteen centuries. Yet it is one book not only in form, but also in purpose, subject matter, and development. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." It was written to make men wise unto salvation. Each writer has made a distinct and fitting contribution to the whole. This can be accounted for only on the ground that a superior Intelligence directed these men to write what they did. "If," as Everest remarks, "forty sculptors, living in different countries, scattered through sixteen centuries, and belonging to several schools of art, should fashion, without knowledge of each other or concert of action, as many different parts of a marble statue, and if at the end of these centuries it should be found that these portions exactly fitted one another and resulted in a work of art the most perfect and the most sublime, then all

would recognize the miracle, and that there was a presiding Intelligence more enduring and more exalted than man. Such were the circumstances under which wrought the forty sacred writers, and such was the result of their labours"—the Bible. Its inspiration alone accounts for its unity.

6. Finally, we cite its prophecies as a conclusive evidence of the divine authorship of the Bible. Impostors have generally steered clear of prophecy. They have been afraid to jeopardize their reputations by making predictions. When they have yielded to the temptation to prophesy, they have invariably been embarrassed by what followed. On the other hand, the writers of the Bible have made frequent predictions, not one of which has failed of fulfillment, in due season. There are three kinds of prophecies in the Bible—namely, those which have been fulfilled, those which are in the process of being fulfilled, and those yet to be fulfilled. Obviously the first two classes are all that can now be used as evidence of inspiration. From these two classes we select a few examples.

In Josh. 6 : 26 we read that, after Jericho had been destroyed, it was predicted that the man who rebuilt the city would do so under a heavy curse—he would lay the foundation with the death of his first-born son and set up the gates with the death of his youngest son. Time moved on. Five hundred fifty years passed. This was too long a time for the man who did the predicting to have anything to do with the fulfilling. Hiel presumed to rebuilt Jericho. When he laid the foundation, his first-born son, Abiram, died; and when he set up the gates, his youngest son, Segub, died—exactly as it had been predicted centuries before. (1 Kings 16 : 34.) The length of time and the

number of details involved render it impossible to explain this prophecy apart from inspiration. Again, we read that a man of God came from Judah to Jeroboam as he stood by the alter to burn incense, and predicted that a descendant of David, Josiah by name, would burn on that alter priests and the bones of men in his efforts to destroy idolatry and restore the worship of the true God. This was a highly detailed and circumstantial prophecy, yet three hundred fifty years later it was fulfilled to the latter. (2 Kings 23 : 15-20.) The author of this prediction could have had nothing to do with its fulfillment. He died soon after it was made. Besides, the fulfillment came centuries later. How did the man of God know so far in advance that a certain man, Josiah by name, of the royal family, would do these specific things on Jeroboam's alter? Again, we answer, inspiration is the only adequate explanation.

When Frederic the Great, of Prussia, asked his court chaplain to give him in one word the evidence for the inspiration of the Bible, he answered : "The Jews." This was not a bad answer. The Jews do furnish strong evidence of the supernatural origin of the Bible. In Deut. 28 Moses gave a very detailed prediction concerning the future of the Jews. He told them that as long as they were faithful to the Lord they would be prosperous in the land, and that no enemy could stand before them. But if they proved to be unfaithful, he warned, they would be removed from the land and severely punished. The punishment and the captivities which they would bring upon themselves were vividly described. Moses even went so far as to describe the siege and destruction of Jerusalem and the subsequent misfortunes of the Jews. He predicted that

the Lord would bring against the Jews a nation from afar, as swift as the eagle flieth, whose speech the Jews would not understand; that this nation would besiege Judea and Jerusalem in all their gates until the walls were destroyed; that in the siege the inhabitants would suffer unparalleled misfortune, that the delicate women of Jerusalem would devour their own children by reason of the famine; that great numbers of the Jews would be killed in the siege; that multitudes, till no man would buy them, would be carried to Egypt and sold into slavery; that they would be removed from Palestine and scattered among all the peoples of the earth; that they would be oppressed and despoiled; that they would find no rest day or night, but be anxious and troubled everywhere; that they would be a byword and proverb among the nations. Josephus' description of the siege and overthrow of Jerusalem is the best commentary on that part of the prediction which has to do with the destruction of the holy city. The latter history of the Jews is in exact fulfillment of every feature of the Mosaic prophecy. Jeremiah said : "I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee but I will not make a full end of thee." (Jer. 30 : 11.) The ancient Assyrians are gone, the Babylonians are gone, the Old Roman Empire has perished; yet the Jews are still here. They are a living monument to the genuineness and inspiration of the Old Testament prophecies. How could Moses have foretold the destruction of Jerusalem fifteen hundred years before it came to pass or related the misfortunes of the Jews down through thirty-five centuries to our day except by divine inspiration ? How did Jeremiah know that the Jews would survive, even in the fires of

persecution, all their ancient foes? We can account for the Bible only on the grounds that its writers spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

The Bible has been in the fiery furnace of human investigation and opposition for these many centuries, yet it emerges without the smell of fire upon its garments. It has stood the acid test of practical experience. It has never failed when fairly tried. We have seen it in the forum of public discussion, we have seen it at the bedside of the dying, we have seen it at the graves of the dead; yet we have never seen it weighed and found wanting. It is God's book.

"A glory guilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun;
It lends its light to every age;
It lends to all, but borrows none."

TO REVEAL GOD

First, the Bible was written to reveal God to mankind as the Creator and Governor of the universe. There is a

WHY WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN ?

Harold Hazelip

Have you ever considered the question, "Why was the Bible written?" This book which has done more to change civilization than any other book ever written, this book which is always the worlds best seller, this book whose very name "Bible" means "the book"—have you ever wondered why this book was written and given to the world? Even those who do not accept the inspiration of the Bible have been forced to admit its wonderful influence. Many years ago Thomas Paine wrote a book entitled "The Age of Reason" in which he bitterly attacked the Bible. Before publishing the book Paine showed the manuscript to the famous American statesman, Benjamin Franklin. Advising him not to publish the book, Franklin said, "The world is bad enough with the Bible. What would it be without it?"

But what was the purpose of this great book, the Bible? Why was it written and given to mankind? It is usually true that the contents of a book reveal its purpose, and this is certainly true of the Bible. As we study the Bible, we discover several important reasons why this book was written.

TO REVEAL GOD

First, the Bible was written to reveal God to mankind as the Creator and Governor of the universe. Here is a

book that is unique and different, a book that claims to be a revelation of God to the world. Even without the Bible a man might believe in the existence of a Supreme Being who created the universe. As we look at the universe, we see evidences of design which argue the existence of great Designer. We behold evidences of thought which speak eloquently to us concerning an intelligent Thinker. We see the effects of a plan which tell us of a great Planner. We note the universe as it operates according to law, testifying of the existence of a great Lawgiver. We see the universe as a great engineering feat and we conclude that there must be a great Engineer. The Psalmist said, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." (Psalm 19 : 1).

Thus, without the Bible, we could still believe in God, a Supreme Being Who created the universe. But what could we know about the character of this Being? And what could we know about His will, His law, for us? Nothing, of course, without a revelation of His will. So the Apostle writes, "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 1 : 21). Again he wrote, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ : for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed . . .*" (Romans 1 : 16-17). The Bible was written to reveal God and His will to us.

TO REVEAL CHRIST

A second reason why the Bible was written was to reveal Christ to mankind. In John 5 : 39, Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Jesus here referred to the Old Testament because the prophets of the Old Testament revealed that the Christ would come. Jesus further said to those who did not believe in Him, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me : for he wrote of me." (John 5 : 46). But even though the Old Testament revealed that Christ would come, how much more does the New Testament reveal Christ to us. The four gospels are independent records of the life of Christ on earth : where and how He was born—what He taught, the highest moral standards the world has ever known—the mighty works He performed—His death on Calvary, and finally His resurrection from the dead. John said, as he approached the end of His record of Christ's life, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book : But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20 : 30-31).

TO REVEAL MAN

The Bible was also written to reveal man to himself. The Bible shows man what he actually is, where he came from, and where he is going. What was the origin of man ? What is his nature, and what will be his destiny?

Only the Bible can give answer to these questions. In Genesis 1 : 27, we read, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." This simple verse reveals both the origin and the nature of man. His origin is found in the truth that he was created by God. His nature is revealed in the truth that he was created in the *image of God*. Man was created upright, intelligent, and with a moral nature to distinguish him from the animals. Man is a spiritual being. Jesus told us much concerning the nature of man when He said, "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." (Matthew 10 : 28). But what of the destiny of man? Jesus again is our authority as He says, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." (John 5 : 28-29). In view of the destiny of man, it is no wonder that Jesus asked on another occasion. "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?" (Matthew 16 : 26). The Bible thus reveals man to himself. His origin is to be found in God's creation, his nature is described by God's image which he bears, and his destiny is determined by whether he serves God in the present life.

TO REVEAL SIN

Here is a fourth reason why the Bible was written.

Since this book was written to reveal man to himself, it reveals sin, showing what sin is and how sin has separated man from God. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened," wrote Isaiah the prophet, "that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59 : 1-2). Sin has separated man from his Maker.

Without the Bible, we would not understand the nature of sin, or how it comes to be such a serious barrier between man and God. Paul wrote, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (Romans 7 : 7). Again he wrote, "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3 : 20). The Bible reveals sin.

What, then, is sin? The Apostle John gave this brief definition: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3 : 4). Sin is transgressing, or 'walking across' God's law. God knows what is best for man; He circumscribes man's conduct with helpful commandments. Man, however, follows his own will and violates God's will. This is sin. Paul commented, "For where no law is, there is no transgression." (Romans 4 : 15). Sin is further defined in John's first epistle: "All unrighteousness is sin." (1 John 5 : 17). There is another side to sin; it is not only doing what God has forbidden, but it is also the omission of what God has required of us. James wrote, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it

not, to him it is sin." (James 4 : 17). The word 'sin' really means to 'miss the mark.' Man misses the mark God has set for him when he either walks across God's prohibitions, or neglects God's positive requirements. The Bible reveals sin!

We may describe the Bible, then, as a mirror for the soul, and in this mirror, man can see himself for what he really is. James uses this very figure in the first chapter of his epistle : "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass : For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was : But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1 : 23-25). The Bible lays bare the sin of our souls and tells us how God will see us on the final day.

TO REVEAL SALVATION

Let us now look at a fifth reason why the Bible was written. Just as it was written to reveal God—Christ—man to himself—and sin—so the Bible also reveals salvation. The Bible makes known to us what man must do in order to be saved eternally. Such a revelation was necessary, because man could not know what would please God without a revelation of God's mind to man. As Jeremiah the prophet said, "The way of man is not in himself : it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10 : 23).

Jesus Christ came as a Saviour, and He came declaring the way of salvation. The angels announced at His birth, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2 : 11). Jesus said, concerning His own mission, "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3 : 16). Our part in this salvation which God offers to us is to accept this Saviour in obedient faith. We are not saved the moment we believe in Christ, but we are saved by Christ when our faith in Him actually leads us to obedience to His will. "Though he were a Son," the Scriptures say, "yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5 : 8-9). He is the Author of our eternal salvation if we obey Him! And His Word is clear concerning the commands we are to obey. In Mark 16 : 15-16, Jesus gave the Great Commission which is to last until the end of the world : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." The Bible reveals the way of salvation to us!

TO PRODUCE FAITH IN CHRIST AS THE SON OF GOD

A sixth reason the Bible was written was to produce faith in Jesus, faith that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God : The writer of Hebrews tells us, "Without faith it is impossible to please him : for he that cometh

to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11 : 6). We must have faith in God and in His Son. Paul writes in Romans 10 : 17 that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The Word of God is to produce this faith in our hearts which pleases God. In John 20 : 30-31, John summarized the purpose of His Gospel by saying, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book : But these are written, *that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God* ; and that believing ye might have life through his name". John records certain signs of miracles from the life of Christ which are to cause us to believe in Him as God's Son.

What are these signs ? There are seven great miracles recorded in the Gospel of John, besides the resurrection of Christ, and a miracle performed following the resurrection. These seven great works performed by the Lord during His ministry demonstrates His complete and unlimited power. They prove His claim to divine Sonship. He turned water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana, proving Himself Master of quality; it was better than any of the wine which had been naturally produced. He healed a nobleman's son who was more than twenty miles from Him, showing that he was Master of distance. He healed an impotent man in John 5 who had been afflicted for 38 years, proving Himself Master of time. He fed 5,000 men, besides women and children, by miraculously multiplying a small boy's lunch, demonstrating Himself to be Master of quantity. He walked on the water, showing His mastery over natural law. He healed a man

who had been born blind, showing Himself Master over misfortune. And He raised Lazarus from the dead. Each of these signs demonstrates Jesus' Lordship in a different sphere, and all of them combined show Him to be what He claimed to be, the Son of God. The Bible was written to produce faith in Him as God's Son.

TO IDENTIFY THE TRUE CHURCH FOR US

Another reason the Bible was written was to identify the Church which the Lord established. Today, there is denominationalism, but denominationalism with its division was unknown to the people of the first century and is condemned by the principles of the New Testament. If we will but carefully study the New Testament, we can learn everything we need to know to identify the Lord's Church. If we ask, "When did this Church begin?", the answer is, "On the day of Pentecost, Acts 2". Everything before Acts 2 points forward to the establishment of the Church, such as the Lord's promise to build the Church (Matthew 16 : 18), but after the day of Pentecost, the Church is spoken of as an existing institution.

How did people become members of the Church? "They that gladly received his word were baptized : and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2 : 41, 47). Men became members of the Lord's Church by simple obedience to the commands of the Gospel which the Apostle preached.

How was this Church organized? This Church was not a denomination, and consequently did not have the ecclesiastical machinery which characterizes so many

religious groups of our day. Christ was the only Head of the Church. (Col. 1 : 18). Each congregation was overseen by elders chosen from its own membership in accordance with the qualifications of elders as stated by inspired men. (Titus 1 : 5-9). Each congregation also was served by deacons whose qualifications are stated in 1 Timothy 3 : 8-13. There were no councils or conventions to make laws for the congregations.

What name was worn by this Church? Sometimes it was simply called "the Church." On other occasions it is called the church of God, or churches of Christ, but never by any human name. The designation given always gave glory immediately to God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son.

All of these principles help us to reproduce in our own day the Church just as it existed in the days of the Apostles. And these marks of identity assist the person who is searching for the right way to serve God in being sure that he is a member of the Lord's true Church. The Bible was written to identify the Church which Christ established.

TO TEACH US HOW TO BECOME CHRISTIANS

The Bible was also written to teach us, both by command and by example, how to be converted to Christ, how to become Christians. First, let us look at the commands which tell us how to become Christians. The Great Commission of Christ contains these commands. After Jesus had told His Apostles following His resurrection that all authority in Heaven and in earth had been given to Him, He said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all

nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28 : 19-20). Mark also records the commands of that Great Commission very vividly : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16 : 15-16).

Not only do we have these commands telling us how to obey God, but there is a book in the New Testament which has been called "the book of conversions" because it is filled with examples showing how men did obey the Gospel under the preaching of the Apostles. It is the Book of Acts of the Apostles. The book tells us in its second chapter of people who believed in Christ as the result of Peter's sermon on Pentecost, and were commanded to "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins," which 3,000 of them did that same day. In the eighth chapter of Acts we are given the example of the Ethiopian eunuch who was a very religious man but who was lost because he had not obeyed the Gospel. Philip joined him as he rode along in the chariot, preached Christ to him, and the Ethiopian treasurer requested to be baptized as quickly as they came to a body of water. The Bible was written to give us such commands and examples as these, showing us that men become Christians by believing in Christ, turning away from sin, and by being baptized in obedience to Christ's command.

TO TEACH US HOW TO LIVE AS CHRISTIANS

We should underscore the truth also that the Bible was written to teach us how to live the Christian life after we have obeyed the Gospel; thus becoming members of the Church. There are twenty-one epistles, which are actually letters, including all of the New Testament books from Romans through Jude, which were written to give instructions concerning the Christian life. Christians are instructed to live godly, righteous lives. Paul wrote Titus, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly; righteously, and godly, in this present world." (Titus 2 : 11-12). To the Romans Paul addressed this appeal : "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world : but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God". (Romans 12 : 1-2). The epistles are filled with such exhortations towards godly living.

Christians were also commanded to attend the worship services of the Church faithfully. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works : Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another : and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Hebrews 10 : 24-25). The Bible was written to give instruction in Christian living and service to God.

TO REVEAL THE DESTINY OF THE SOUL

As a final reason in our attempt to summarize reasons why the Bible was written, God intended for the Bible to reveal the two eternal destinies which lie before us. In the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, Christ pictured the judgment scene: "Before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another... Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world... Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels..." These verses taken from that judgment scene lead to our Lord's conclusion in verse 46: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Here are two destinies: Heaven or Hell. And where your soul or mine goes is determined not only by what Christ has done for us, but also by what we have done in serving Him. (Matthew 25: 31-46).

AND NOW, OBEY THE BIBLE!

We have now summarized ten reasons why the Bible was written: to reveal God, to reveal Christ, to reveal man's nature and destiny, to uncover what sin is, and to make known salvation to us. The Bible is to produce faith in Jesus as God's Son, to identify the Church which He established, to teach us how to become Christians and how to live the Christian life, and to tell us of the two eternal destinies of the soul. Now, honestly, what does the Bible mean to you? Have you studied it as the sole

revelation of God's will for mankind? Are you willing to obey its commandments which we have seen in this study? The Bible is a message of salvation, guiding the lost to the Saviour. If you are searching for this salvation, won't you obey the commands of the Bible ?

Yes, the Bible is a book of revelation, given by inspiration of God, and preserved for us through the providence of God. The Bible has stood for all of these centuries, unharmed by the indifference of its friends or the attacks of its enemies. Men have tried to destroy this wonderful book, but they have always failed. These attempts are described in a well known poem :

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
When looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years
of time.
How many anvils have you had, said I,
To wear and batter all these hammers so ?
Just one, said he; then said with twinkling eye,
The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.
And so, I thought, the anvil of God's word
For ages skeptics blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was
heard,
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone!

THE DAY THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD

Mike Sinapiades

I. JESUS AT THE COURT

The world has witnessed many days when bodies were left hanging between heaven and earth, exposed to the torturous rays of a blazing sun from without, and from within to the fiery pains surging through every nerve and muscle. The world has also seen many days when the heavens were darkened and the earth trembled; when mountain tops came rumbling down as men shrieked in desperation and terror; but no day is to be compared with the DAY THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD.

Early during the preparation for the Passover season, Jerusalem was buzzing with talk about one called Jesus. Many of the people approved of him, especially remarking kindly about his acts of love. But our leaders, the Pharisees and Saducees, severely criticized him, even passionately asserting that he must be executed because of his claims to be the Son of God.

My attention was drawn to the mob gathering before the hall of Pilate, the Roman Governor. I followed the crowd there, realizing that something unusual was about to take place. As I approached the hall, I noticed many "chief priests and elders," in their official robes. I could not help sensing a murmur that was mounting, giving the impression that any moment it would break loose into an

uproar. A trial obviously was to take place, but everything indicated something was wrong about THIS trial. In the faces of the people you could observe expressions of premeditated murder, kindled by their hatred against the accused. I felt an urge to leave, fearing what this might lead to, but I stayed on.

Finally, the Procurator, Pontius Pilate, came down and calmly sat in the chair provided for him. Jesus was wearing a common robe and with hands tied, was standing before Pilate. With his back toward the people, who were shoving and pushing for a better view, he was standing there motionless. Pilate raised his hand. In a few seconds, the babbling of the crowd subsided. A centurion marched forward from the rear of the court, followed by four legionaires, taking his place by the prisoner. The temple guards dropped back.

With a loud voice, Pilate demanded: "What evil hath he done?" Impatient nervousness with uneasy glances of fear covered the leaders' faces. If Pilate were not convinced by now that Christ had to die, they feared that hearing their shallow evidence, Pilate would release him.

Immediately they struck back: "If he were not a criminal," and the high priest pointing to Jesus continued, "we would not have brought him to you." This was a legal sarcasm, and Pilate understood it. He threw his mantle over his shoulders, and turning to leave the scene of the trial, shouted back at them, "Then take him in your own charge, and try him by your own laws." "We have no power to put any one to death," argued the high priest, but this apparently had no effect on Pilate, who by now had almost disappeared from the scene.

The moment was critical. The accusers looked at one another in dismay! It appeared that the hearing was closed. The people looked stunned: No one seemed to know what to do next. But one of the ranking priests, well known for his shrewdness shouted: "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ, a King." The high priest anticipated quick results from this accusation. Blasphemy was one thing, but treason another. Any mentally unbalanced person might think himself to be God, and any faker might make the same pretense for profit. But when these people used the words "revolt" and "Caesar," they were charging the prisoner with a high crime against Tiberius and the Roman Empire. Pilate was obliged to smile, acknowledging to the high priests their point.

Jesus was now completely out of the hands of the Jews. He was accused of high treason against the Roman Empire. Pilate, buried in his own thoughts, paced the floor for a few minutes, then turning toward the mob said with a loud voice: "You have brought this man to me, as one who perverts the people." He was making an attempt to ignore the Caesar business. He continued, "I have found no fault in this man touching those things that you have accused him of. I will therefore scourge him and then I will release him."

The priests could hardly believe their ears. They realized that Pilate was just as determined to release him as they were determined to kill him. There was a moment of silence, and then a riotous rumbling of voices arose. The soldiers turned and faced the angry crowd. The

high priests, striking their foreheads repeatedly, turned to the people in mute appeal. The roar became louder and louder. Some of the off-duty officers ran into the garrison room for their shields and swords, then ran back to the hall of the Praetorium. With tension rising from every point, the atmosphere was electrified. The rulers realized that it was either now or never. The ranking Sadducees perceived that Pilate could not be persuaded to confirm the sentence of death upon Christ by any eloquence on their part. Their only hope now was to find something that would bring Pilate face to face with the feared Caesar.

Pilate, on the other hand, was smiling at their discomfort which he had finally been able to bring upon them. In reality, Pilate had no prejudice either for or against Christ, and his enjoyment at the Jews' frustration was purely on personal grounds. But his enjoyment was short-lived for, suddenly, without warning, the high priest cried out. "If you let this man go, you are not Caesar's friend; for whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar."

What these people were now actually saying was: "Pilate, you are not after Caesar's interests. You do not pay attention when we bring you a man that is working for the dethroning of Caesar, your lord. You are neglecting your duty as a representative of Caesar in this province, and sooner, or later, Caesar will learn of it; we'll see to that. Just remember that this Galilean is not on trial alone today." This last insinuation was employed to bring Pilate's resistance to an end, for it was well known throughout the empire how cruel Tiberius was, and that for an insignificant offence, others, of even higher rank than Pilate, had paid with their very life.

Pilate began for the first time to see clearly the danger of his position. Yet he made one more feeble effort to release Jesus. He spoke in low, resigned, yet half-hopeful voice, "It is, as you know the custom to release to you, at this season, a prisoner. I place before you two men. Whom shall I release unto you? Barabbas," and his voice now heightened in both pitch and volume actually pleading a case against the well-known robber, "or Jesus which is called Christ?" He paused, hoping against hope that luck would substitute for his lack of courage. There was a deadly silence. Then one voice from here, another from there, and then upon the "elders' persuasion" finally the whole multitude stormed out, "Barabbas, Barabbas, Barabbas. We want Barabbas." Pilate tried to silence them. When their voices calmed for just a few seconds, he asked again; "Then what shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" The cry of the crowd echoed through the air and the streets of Jerusalem. "Crucify him, Crucify him." It seemed as though everyone was trying to out do the one standing next to him, as they all frantically continued on, "Crucify him, Crucify him." Some of the Jewish leaders on the steps beat the time, as in unison the crowd chanted deliriously from a strange satisfaction that possessed them.

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail, but rather a riot was in the making, and fearing that his lack of control over the mob might be grounds for a reprimand from Rome, with a simple gesture dipped the tips of his fingers into water which had been summoned forth, and with an angry burst said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: Do whatever you want with him." The last voice

that I heard before the preparation for the crucifixion came from the mob, who by this time was deliriously happy that finally Jesus of Nazareth, the imposter who claimed to be the Son of God, was to die, "His blood be on us and on our children."

In demanding the particular mode of punishment, Jesus' enemies, knowing that slaves, rebels, and false prophets were normally crucified, intended to make public proclamation of three things: The false king was to be degraded by dying like a slave: Jesus was to die the death of a rebel to demonstrate the Sanhedrin's loyalty to the Emperor; and he was to die the death of a blasphemer to make clear, in the sight of God, their piety.

Christ stood there motionless, having his back to the hysterical crowd and his face toward Pilate. Now a soldier came, and taking him by the arm, brought him to "common hall" of preparation which was just across the yard. As the crowd was leaving the Praetorium completely satisfied with the success of their hellish plans. I followed Jesus to a small room. I had seen this room before and knew well its size and furnishings. On the walls hung some of the gear the soldier used. In the middle of the small room there were three thick stone pillars, each about three feet tall. Each stone had embedded in it two large iron rings.

They took Jesus first to the nearest post and tied him down to the rings. There he was, with back bent and bared I saw the swollen shoulders, already abused by the Jewish soldiers. I saw the black and blue ridges on the sides of his body. I saw the marks where the knots in the whips had gouged out the flesh. Some of these marks had

been given to him during Pilate's examination. But now, since his case was capital punishment, he was to be scourged officially before his death.

The Jews had a scourging of their own which they called "Intermediate Death." Theirs was the forty stripes save one which was given thirteen times to each shoulder and thirteen times to the loins. But the Roman scourging was more vicious and more deadly. It was administered by a trained man called the *lietor* who used a short circular piece of wood to which were attached several strips of leather. At the end of each strip there was attached a piece of sharp bone or a small piece of barbed iron. There was not a set number of stripes to be administered, and the Roman law showed no mercy in limiting either the number of stripes or the parts of the body to be scourged.

The scourger took his place behind Jesus. With his feet spread for balance (a form he had mastered by experience), and with his teeth clenched over his lower lip, as though to give intensified violence to his blows, he looked at the centurion for the starting signal. Oh! the furious and hellish look on their faces, grinning vengeance against the man whose claims they could not refute and whose arguments they could not answer. The signal was given. The flagellum was brought all the way back and whistled forward, making a dull drum as the strips of leather crushed against the back of the rib cage. The bits of bone and iron curled around the right side of the body and lashed out, bringing the first drops of wounded blood. A moan escaped the lips of Jesus and he almost collapsed. The knees bent, then by effort, straightened. The instrument of torture was raised again, and this time it aimed a

little lower, and again it crashed flesh and bones. The lips of Jesus seemed to be moving in a slow prayer between lashes. The brutish scourger raised his hands many more times and many more times he let the whip, now wet with blood, fall upon the bare and raw back of the man called Jesus. The centurion bent close to the victim to measure the portion of life left in him. With a simple gesture he stopped the scourger. Then, sending for clothes, he ordered the executioner to untie the ropes from Christ's wrists. The wrist ropes were unfastened, and Jesus at once fell off the pillar and rolled over to his back on the cold stone.

The time was passing swiftly, and yet they had to go to Golgotha and there crucify him. One of the soldiers stopped over the half-dead body and picking him up, set him in the nearest stone-chair. As though the scourging was not enough, they now peeled off what was left of his clothes and mockingly wrapped his bleeding body in a scarlet robe. At the same time some other soldiers with vile language and rough talk were busy plaiting a crown of thorns. With caution so their hands would not be pierced, they pushed it hard and deep against his head while at the same time drops of blood appeared streaming their way downward. An anguished sound was heard as his body shivered and trembled from the agony and pain. Then, a heavy reed was forced into his hand as he sat there with his face bleeding. Then altogether they bowed the knee before him and mocked him saying: "Hail King of the Jews." They laughed at him. They pushed him. They slapped him. They spit upon him. One soldier thinking as though all these were not enough homage paid to a king, snatched the heavy reed out of the hands of Jesus and struck him on his bleeding and wounded head.

II. THE ROAD TO GOLGOTHA

Everything was now ready for the journey to the Hill of Golgotha. Two of the soldiers had already brought the heavy cross; another soldier took care of the heavy spikes which were to support the hanging body; the hammer and other instruments were all ready. As a last preparation, a soldier, acting according to the orders of Pilate, was making a sign big enough for all to see, stating the offence and name of the criminal, The sign, read : "JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS." Though Jesus was half dead from the abuse and the scourging, and even though his body had weakened so much that it seemed ready to collapse at any moment, he was made to carry his own cross all the way up to Calvary.

The sun was almost directly overhead and the streets of Jerusalem were filled with Jews who had come to the city from every part of the world for the great Passover celebration. I took a station about 300 yards from Pilate's place, right around the first corner where the procession would pass. And then, down at end of the street. I saw the mournful procession starting its journey. The Jewish high priest moved aside and watched Jesus stagger under his burden. Other priests followed the procession, talking calmly of the behavior of Pilate who actually humiliated himself before them. They were making a joke out of his final act of washing his hands, noting that this was actually a Jewish act and not Roman.

The road from Pilate's place to Golgotha was almost $\frac{3}{5}$ of a mile. The people on the rooftops gathered near the edge to watch the mournful march, to see the faces of

the condemned and to try to read the signs. Along the sides of the road, people were pressing themselves against the walls, shouting jibes and accusations as the condemned passed by. At times the Roman soldiers used their spears to move the people back, making room for the procession.

The whole band was soon just a few feet from where I was standing and I could see and hear everything. There I could see the Romans on their horses, trying to make room in the crowded streets. Then I saw some women who were walking just a few steps ahead of Jesus, sobbing and wailing. Then my eyes fell on Jesus. He had been horribly abused. There were marks of inhuman treatment upon his face. His robe was stained, and in his bleeding hands he clutched his own cross, stumbling as he walked. He was passing in front of me now, and I could almost touch him; he stopped and looked at me as though he knew me. Then, with a great effort he started walking again. The hooting and yelling mob followed on. Although he had lost blood through his wounds, there was no water given to him. What a hot day it was; much hotter for him than for any of us who watched him, for by now he was burning with fever from his exposed wounds. His attempted swallows were only dry gulps and his lips were cracked and dry. Oh! how his thirst must have been tantalized as he thought of the waters of Euphrates, Jordan, and Amazon; and all the fountains of heaven and earth, which he poured out of his own hand. Under the weight of the cross, Christ, weary and sick, stumbled and fell. The crowd cried at him, "Get up, get up". Christ, putting one hand on the ground and the other on the cross, rose slowly, while his body ached from the wounds and

bruises. He moved a few more steps, but he stopped again. His body was waving from one side to the other as the tree tops wave when the cold wintery winds hit them. With a great effort he got one foot in front of him, but could not seem to bring up the other. He was not moving, but his body was trying to go forward. The other foot came forward suddenly and the entire body heaved forward out of control. The Christ was falling, but he could not free his hand from the cross and, in a moment, he collapsed to the ground. The front of the big beam hit the ground first, and slid against the right side of his face as it stood almost on end. He landed on his right knee and both elbows, and the cross piece hung in air for a split second, and then fell away from him. The thorny crown on his head pierced deeper, this time, and drops of blood were mingled with the dust of the ground. A Roman soldier came running to see why the procession stopped. Another ruffian put his foot on him and shook him, as he would a dog, ordering him to get up and continue on; but Christ's body remained there motionless.

A few minutes passed by, and then I noticed the centurion who was bringing a man with him to help Jesus carry the cross the rest of the way. As he was helped to get up, he started walking once again toward the hill. Now they were at the very bottom of the Golgotha Hill, when Jesus, turning toward the women that were sobbing and wailing ahead of him, said to them: "Daughters of Jerusalem," (it was an effort for him to continue) "do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and your children; for, mark my words, a time is coming when people will say How blessed the barren are! How blessed the wombs that

have never borne children, and the breasts that have never nursed! Yes," he said, nodding his head slowly, "If this is done to the green wood, what must be the fate of the dry?"

III. THE CRUCIFIXION

The procession was almost to the top of the hill. Jesus at times had to stop, take a deep breath, and start again. They finally came to the top of Golgotha Hill which bulged above the crossroads like a man's head. By this time many people had arrived at the place of crucifixion: Roman soldiers, Jewish authorities, people moved by curiosity, the sobbing women, Mary, Jesus' brothers and others. One of the soldiers passed a cup of slightly drugged wine. This was an act of mercy on the part of Rome, but Jesus refused it.

The time was past noon now. There were no clouds to shield the burning sun. Below the big bald rock, the leaves of the olive trees and the wild flowers stood motionless. The prisoners were made naked, and a cloth was wound around their loins between the thighs with the loose end tucked in at the back. Their clothes and sandals were gathered in small piles before them. The centurion gave the signal. The executioner laid the crossbeam behind Jesus and brought him to the ground quickly by grabbing his arms back, and thrusting him off balance. As soon as Jesus fell, the beam was fitted under the back of his neck, and on each side, soldiers quickly pressed Jesus motionless to the cross. Jesus gave no resistance and said

nothing, but he groaned as he felt the thorns again pressing harder against his torn scalp.

Once begun, the matter was done quickly and efficiently. The executioner took two five inch nails from the pockets of his apron, and put them between his teeth; and, with hammer in his right hand, knelt, beside Christ's right arm. A soldier rested his knee on the inside of Christ's elbow, and held his forearm flat to the crosspiece. With his right hand, the executioner probed the wrist of Jesus to find the little hollow spot. When he found it, he took one of the square-cut iron nails from his teeth and held it against the spot. Steadily he raised the hammer and brought it down with force. An involuntary cry escaped the lips of Jesus as the nail went through his flesh; a cry that even penetrated the Hadean world causing the demons to stop and look upon the results of their satanic plans. At the same time, that voice penetrated the veil of heaven, and the Father, who was seated on His throne, turned His Holy face to the other side, not wanting to see the tragic agony of His Son. He could not endure seeing the pain and torture that a sinned world was bestowing upon him. Next the executioner jumped across the body to the other hand, and put another square nail through it. Blood, spilled from the open and fresh wounds of Christ's hands, ran to the ground, as the muscles of the hand drew the fingers inward.

As soon as the executioner was satisfied that the condemned could not, in struggling, loose himself, he gave the signal. While soldiers grabbed each side of the crossbeam and lifted, two of them guided the lower part of the cross to the open mouth of the hole which had already been

chisled in the rock. As the upper part of the cross was slowly lifted up, the hanging body supported only by the nails in the wrists, caused the flesh to tear. Jesus was now almost vertical to the ground. Then, the cross fell suddenly into the slot, tearing the hands, and breaking the heart. His body writhed with pain.

Once the cross was secured to stay in its vertical position, the executioner, and two soldiers who hurried to help him, each took hold of a leg at the calf. The job now was to nail the right foot over the left. This was probably the most difficult part of the work. Over the years, the Romans had learned that, pushing with the feet, the condemned man on the cross could lean on the nails and stretch himself upward in order to breathe. Without the support of the feet, the hanging body closed off the lungs suffocating the victim. The executioner after placing the feet right, and the nail in its proper place, drew back, and with one brutal stroke, sent the nail most of the way through both feet, and with two or three more blows he finished his hideous task.

There Jesus hung between heaven and earth, overlooking the city of Jerusalem and the whole world which he had come to save. But the world, instead of receiving him, was crucifying him. This was his real suffering.

I could see his head at times lowered, with his chin touching his chest. At times, when moved by sudden spasms, his head tossed from one shoulder to the other and his eyes looked directly up into the sun as his lips moved. When his body sagged in fatigue, its weight hung more heavily on the nails in his wrists; and his knees bent forward at a greater angle. His arms were now in a "V"

position with muscle cramps knotting his forearms, upper arms, and shoulders. Then, again, his chest muscles were frozen in momentary paralysis; and, while he was able to draw air into his lungs, he seemed powerless to exhale.

The hours were passing slowly, but death would not come. By this time his wounds had swollen, and the nerves of his body were experiencing unbearable agony. The arteries of the head and stomach were filled with blood and a terrific throbbing pounded within his head; he was dying a thousand deaths. I took a last look at the suffering face; the purple lips drawn back against the teeth; the eyes red with weeping and pain, sunken as though grief had pushed them back swimming in death. I saw his sweat on his brow mingled with his blood from his lacerated temples. I heard the heavy laboured breathing of the sufferer, as he was dying: the weight of the world on his heart! I heard the soft padding sound of his blood from his brow, and hands, and feet, as it fell on the rocky earth beneath the cross - - -drop! drop! drop! The nails! How great the wounds were! They became wider and wider as his body sagged forward from its weight. The sun now had completely hid its face, and the whisper of the birds was hushed. The olive trees stood still, and the wild flowers held a steady repose as though they too, were sharing in his suffering. Christ seemed to be moving again. His breath was coming even harder as he was nearing his end; he was dying as a man, and with the limitations of man. Once again he pushed against the nail in his feet, and with a last, but painfully massive effort, he looked toward Heaven, the place from where he had received strength so many times in the past. But as his eyes penetrated the

vail and looked beyond, he was terrified. The throne of God was empty; he was left all alone to die. But worst of all, not only was he left alone to bear the pain and the agony of the cross, but he was also left alone to bear, on his own shoulders, the sins of the entire world. In his desperation and tragic agony; with weary and tired body; with death's cold breath already touching him, he cried to his Father, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME". I could sense that the end was very near. And, again, as his body was shivering silently for the last time, he looked toward heaven and his lips started moving again. And then in a soft whisper, I heard him saying: "It is finished. Father unto Thee I commend my spirit". His body, supported only by the nails in his hands, sagged forward and remained still.

It was all over. The people began to leave the scene of pain, and so I started my way down also. For the last time I turned my head to the three crosses that were standing outlined against the background of the darkened sky. Then all of sudden, I saw for the first time something more than outstretched hands pierced by nails. I saw the arms of Jesus open as an invitation, inviting the whole world to Him; the very world that crucified Him; the very world for which he suffered and died. And though his lips were sealed, I could hear him very clearly speaking to me: "I have suffered for you, and this I did for your salvation". His words pierced me like a sharp knife and lodged in my heart. For the first time, I realized that He was calling me; He was inviting me; He was asking me to either take His cross and open heaven, or reject it and usher myself unprepared into eternity; either accept Him

and have a part with Him, or reject Him and cast my lot with those who nailed him on the cross.

And you, my good friend, as you are looking upon the cross, what will you do? Will you love Him or despise Him? Will you accept Him or reject Him? Will you accept Him and clasp his outstretched hands, or reject Him and shake the bloody hands of those who crucified Him?

He invites you at this moment to come to Him. What will you do?

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

Stanley E. Sayers

The historian Matthew leaves us this record, "He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matt. 28 : 6). When we consider the evidences supporting this declaration, it seems indeed strange that men would question it—*ever*.

1. *Christianity Founded on a Risen Lord.* No other singular event can so account for the rapid growth of the church. R. H. Glover in his *The Progress of World-Wide Missions* estimates that by the end of the apostolic period there were half a million Christians! Paul spoke of the rapid growth of the church in his day (Rom. 10 : 18; Col. 1 : 23); that the entire world had already heard it some thirty years after the great commission was given.

"The NT proves not only that the Christians from the very outstart were fully persuaded, on what they regarded as adequate grounds in history and experience, that their Lord had risen from the dead, but also that this conviction mastered them, giving direction and purpose to their whole lives. Historical Christianity was erected on the foundation of a Risen Lord." (*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, p. 623).

On Pentecost a risen Lord was preached (Acts 2 : 23, 24), and people entered into the Kingdom of God by being baptized into His death and being raised in the likeness

of His resurrection (Acts 2 : 38, 41, 47; Rom. 6 : 3, 4; Col. 2 : 12). They died believing He had risen. They suffered tremendous pain because they were convicted of His resurrection. See for detail *Fox's Book of Martyrs*.

2. *The Fact of the Church Today.* If the church of Christ did not begin as the New Testament so states, and that being with a miraculous beginning when Christ was proclaimed risen Lord (Acts 2), then *when, where, and how* did it begin? The church is here today; its origin must be accounted for.

3. *The Fact of the New Testament Itself is Claim to Historical Truth.* "The real historical evidence for the resurrection is the fact that it was believed, preached, propagated, and produced its fruit and effect in the new phenomenon of the Christian church, long before any of our gospels were written...Faith in the resurrection was not only prevalent but immensely powerful before any of our NT books were written. Not one of them would ever have been written, but for that faith. It is not this or that in the NT—it is not the story of the empty tomb, or of the appearing of Jesus in Jerusalem or in Galilee—which is the primary evidence for the resurrection, it is the NT itself. The life that throbs in it from the beginning to end, the life that always fills us again with wonder, as it beats upon us from its pages, is the life which the Risen Saviour has quickened in Christian's souls. The evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is the existence of the church in that extraordinary spiritual vitality which confronts us in the NT. This is its only explanation for being." (Professor Denney, *Jesus and the Gospels*; p. 111).

4. *The Silence of the World as to the Whereabouts of the Body.* "How, too, is it possible to account for the failure of the Jews to disprove the resurrection? Not more than seven weeks afterward Peter preached in that city the fact that Jesus had been raised. What would have been easier or more conclusive than for the Jews to have produced the dead body and silenced Peter forever? The silence of the Jews is as significant as the speech of the Christians." (Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ*, p. 357).

"The body of Jesus had vanished so completely that all the authority they had at their command could not produce it; the apostles' claim that Jesus was alive again received public confirmation by the miracles of healing performed in his name. It was, for the Sanhedrin, a disturbing situation." (F. F. Bruce, "A Miracle and Its Consequence," *Commentary on the Book of Acts*, p. 103).

5. *The Testimony of the Empty Tomb.* The tomb was empty. The grave garments were folded neatly to themselves, so characteristic of the careful manner of Jesus who did nothing without due consideration (See John 6 : 12). Haste on the part of the disciples endeavoring to steal the body under the nose of the soldiers would have left evidences. Peter rushed into the tomb and John stayed at the entrance looking in. He observed the evidences of a risen Lord. (John 20 : 7).

6. *The Disciples Did not Expect to see Jesus Again.* We find them (1) Unable to believe in His death and resurrection (Mark 8 : 31-33); (2) Gathered in hiding for fear of the Jews (John 20 : 19); (3) Unwilling at last to believe they would see Him again following

His death but sad and pessimistic (Luke 24 : 16-24). (4) And even having received the report from the women, their words seemed to them like "idle tales" (Luke 24 : 11). (5) While at the mountain gathering, "some doubted" (Matt. 28 : 17). (6) And He upbraided them because of their unbelief and hardness of heart "because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" (Mark 16 : 14). See also Mark 16 : 10, 11 and Luke 24 : 24. That they did not expect to see Him would explode the vision theory; that they *imagined* they saw Him.

7. *The Witnesses.* (1) They were in a position to know the facts (Acts 1 : 21, 22; 5 : 32; 10 : 41). (2) They were honest enough to tell the truth about what they saw, for they went to martyrdom rather to deny their testimony.

8. *The Nature of the Appearances.* Jesus appeared to above five hundred witnesses over a period of forty days, on some ten different occasions (See Wilbur M. Smith, *Therefore Stand*, p. 387; Stanley E. Sayers, *I have Believed*, p. 144). The evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is not left the narrow margin of a single or a few witnesses!

9. *The Witnesses Did not Change Their Testimony.* Under extreme torture, some recanted; but where on record did any original *witness* of the resurrection change his mind about what he had seen? The witnesses were convinced!

10. *No Contradictory Evidence.* Nobody said "I was there, too, and know the story is false." Nobody said, "I saw all they saw, and know it is all a hoax."

11. *Scientific Evidence.* Men saw Jesus, they touched His body, they ate with Him (John 21 : 9-14). Upon

examination Thomas said, "My Lord and my God" (John 20 : 28). We have scientific proof of His resurrection. The Lord encouraged investigation (See Luke 24 : 36-39).

12. *The Confident, Unparalleled Manner of the Risen Saviour.* Standing on the seashore of Galilee, Jesus called out to His disciples, not, "Behold, it is I!", nor yet, "Hallelujah, I am risen!"—but, "Children, have ye any meat?" And they answered, "No" The human mind is not ready for this. It is calm, composed, so completely unanticipated.

Then they came to shore and they ate together. Jesus *was risen indeed.* The disciples could not have talked such a story into existence, could not have attached so significantly to time and history a myth that has so dynamically affected the whole world. We are left with the story as a solid portion of undeniable history.

But human nature being what it is, through time men have objected to the evidences, as to every positive position there is a negative stand whether right or wrong, and men have called the resurrection of Jesus into question.

THE FORCES OF UNBELIEF

On the morning the news of the empty tomb went out, the soldiers in fright rushed to the Sanhedrin who quickly offered them bribe money to say, "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept" (Matt. 28 : 13). "So they took the money, and did as they were taught : and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day" (Matt. 28 : 15)—that :

1. *The Disciples Stole the Body.* This presumption is immediately refuted, however, in the same passage in which it occurs. (1) If the disciples stole the body at night while the soldiers slept, they could not have known who took the body. (2) In the second place it is entirely evident that it should have required bribe money to relate such a story for it meant the life of a Roman soldier to fall asleep on post; thus they were afraid the story would reach the governor's ears (Matt. 28 : 14). (3) For that matter, the disciples had no need for the body when it had been honourably buried. They saw to that (Luke 24 : 55). (4) It is unreasonable that something could so *suddenly* have inspired them to go out and face the enemies of Jesus and the soldiers themselves. We find them huddled together *for fear* of the Jews in an upper room (John 20 : 19).

2. *Joseph of Arimathaea - Removed the Body.* When Joseph buried the body of Jesus then was fulfilled Isaiah 53 : 9, "And he made his grave with...the rich at his death." (1) There was no reason for Joseph to venture out under the heated animosity of the Jews to remove the body. It is likely he came at night the first time for fear of the Jews. (2) We see no reason for Joseph to have removed the body, and if he did remove it, there has never been any evidence either of this or of any place to whence he may have removed it. (3) The Roman soldiers were commanded to let nobody near the body or the tomb, and this included Joseph with the rest. (4) Had Joseph actually removed the body, the description of Mark and Luke that he was a good and just man, "an honourable counselor" would have called upon him to

testify to this fact when Christians began to die because they believed He had risen.

3. *The Women Found the Wrong Tomb.* This theory, remarkably enough, is held by two prominent New Testament scholars of our day, Professor Kirsopp Lake and Dr. Gardiner Smith. (Lake, *The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*; P. Gardiner-Smith, *The Narratives of the Resurrection*). "They believe that the reason the women missed the tomb was that they were convulsed with sorrow, their eyes being blinded with tears, and hardly knowing where they were going." (Wilbur M. Smith, "Resurrection of Christ", *Therefore Stand*, p. 381).

(1) But it is not likely that the women devoted as these were could so soon have forgotten where they had buried their beloved Master. People today do not so soon carelessly forget such things as this; no, not in a seventy-two hour period. (2) They saw the angels; the angels said He was risen, and told them to go quickly and relate the news to His disciples. When the disciples came, *they too* found the tomb empty (John 20: 1—10). (3) There were three women, Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene and Joanna (Matt. 28 : 1; (Luke 24 : 10). It is not feasible that all three should agree in unison on this most remarkable error! (4) And then, Jesus was not buried in a public cemetery, but "in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein never man yet laid" (John 19 : 41). This very greatly reduces the possibility of such a tremendous blunder. (5) And there is yet the

fact that there are multitudes of remaining witnesses with whom to reckon.

4. *The Swoon Theory*, Skeptics have proposed that Jesus did not die on the cross, but only fainted or "swooned" and once placed within the coolness of the tomb, having been passed for dead revived consciousness, removed the stone from the door and the something became of Him. *but what?* This theory is extremely weak. (1) Jesus was proved dead once when the soldiers pierced His side. They broke the legs of the two thieves to hasten death. But Jesus was dead, so they pierced His side (John 19 : 32-34) : "and forthwith came there out blood and water" which is (2) The second evidence that Jesus was dead; He evidently died of a ruptured heart from the total agony of pain. The Scripture was fulfilled, "A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced" (John 19 : 36, 37; see also Ps. 34 : 20; Ps. 22 : 16; Zech. 12 : 10. (3) Jesus was again proved dead when Joseph inquired concerning the body and Pilate sent a centurian to see if He were dead, "And when he knew it of the centurian, he gave the body to Joseph" (Mark 15 : 44, 45). (4) And when they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in burial linen and "laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone to the door" (Mark 15 : 46)—they knew He was dead. Jesus of Galilee was *dead*. If this were the end to the story, it would be the *horror of the ages!* But it is not.

But should Jesus have actually revived consciousness within the tomb, not having died on the cross, there has

never been any evidence of what became of His body! The thing which would most effectively have silenced the rapid growth of the church and put it to an end would have been the presentation of the dead body of Jesus by the boiling Sanhedrin! But they did not produce the body and could not. Rather than there being scattered reports of having found the mutilated body of an unrisen Lord, reports came joltingly to the foreground of a resurrected Christ, and it put the entire populace of Judea into panic. Trying to put down the report was like denying He had lived.

Even David Strauss, bitter enemy of the Gospels, testified as to the swoon theory, "Such a resuscitation could only have weakened the impression which he had made upon them in life and in death,—or at the most could have given it an elegiac voice,—but could by no possibility have changed their sorrow into enthusiasm, or elevated their reverence into worship," (David Strauss, *The Life of Jesus for the People*, 1879, I., p. 412).

If Jesus did not die on the cross, then under what circumstances did He die and when? Refuting the New Testament record is no simple thing; men have been trying it for nineteen hundred years still without success.

5. *The Vision Theory.* One of the outstanding claims of critics is what they call superstition and imagination on the part of the disciples. They imagined they saw Him after His alleged resurrection. Professor Klausner writes, "There can be no question but that some of the ardent Galileans saw their Lord and Messiah in a vision." (*Jesus of Nazareth, His Life, Times and Teachings*, p. 359). But (1) it cannot logically be maintained that an entire

populace of five hundred witnesses at one time saw the vision (1 Cor. 15 : 6). (2) And that most certain fact that the disciples did not expect to see Him again discourages that frame of mind out of which visions and hallucinations so fruitfully arise. (3) And how can we account for the visions ceasing within the forty day period ? (Acts 1 : 1-3). Were the people seeing visions, they would have continued to see them even following the Lord's ascension to Heaven, or in the case of the skeptic's thinking, His alleged ascension. The circumstances surrounding the resurrection of Jesus keep bringing it to the foreground. It was scientifically impossible, totally improbable, but the evidences are undeniable; they demand that we take.

A FINAL CONSIDERATION

It is within the mind of man where pessimism and unbelief dwells, and out of these minds where impressions negatively disposed to the proclamations of the Bible are forth coming. When the facts of the case are considered, one finds himself without words to talk down the voices of the early centuries that loudly and unanimously declare that out of the hills of Judea there emerged of a sudden moment—a risen Lord! Life and all existence has been greatly enlarged and enhanced by the simple trust and acceptance of it as a concrete, undeniable fact. To make ones life conform to it and live with the resurrection message dear to ones heart, in the peace of mind and confidence it instills in the human being, is yet the greatest evidence of all.

Jesus of Galilee arose from the dead, and there thus looms before our eyes an ever nearer approaching Eternity at which time we will see Him face to face!

Henry M. Swales

The penalty for sin is spiritual death (Rom. 6 : 23 ; 5 : 12). Man in his sin is separated from God (Isa. 59 : 2). He is lost, undone, without hope and dead spiritually (Eph. 2 : 1). He cannot save himself. This is the spiritual condition of all men as "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3 : 23). Sin and its consequences are universal. Men of all tongues and nations are guilty of sin and stand in condemnation.

SIN DESTROYS

Sin is the great tragedy of our time, the poison of all people, the curse of our country, the leprosy of our lives, the sickness of our society, the cancer of our souls, the horror of every human being, the disease of our spirit and the ruin of man's mind. Nothing we can do of ourselves that will save us. None among us can forgive or pay the penalty of our sin. (Eph. 2 : 8; Rom. 7 : 10). Human philosophy, man's wisdom, not our social standing can heal our sin-sick souls (Jer. 10 : 23). Our cry is for help and salvation. But to whom shall we go? — The answer is Jesus. Sin demands death. This is the eternal law of God. The justice of God demands penalty

GOOD NEWS

Harvey M. Starling

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The answer is Jesus. Sin demands death. This is the eternal law of God. The justice of God demands penalty

for the breaking of law; but the love and mercy of God has brought salvation through Jesus (Heb. 2 : 9).

JESUS PAID THE PRICE

How can this be ? Jesus without sin, was sacrificed in my place. He "bear our sins in his own body on the tree." (1 Pet. 2 : 24). "For He hath made him to be sin for us ..." (11 Cor. 5 : 21). His soul was "an offering for sin" (Isa. 53 : 10). The death of the righteous one was the penalty for our sins (Isa. 53 : 11). The price was paid!

There is no way but Jesus (John 14 : 6). To reject Jesus is to pay the price of your sins yourself. Who can do that ?

We must turn to Jesus. Our faith and trust must be in Him. Of ourselves we are nothing. Through Jesus we are "more than conquerors" (Rom. 8 : 37). We are not left in doubt and anxiety. We are "loosed from our sins in his own blood." (Rev. 1 : 5).

BELIEVE AND OBEY

Will you accept this good news ? Will you believe in him and be saved ? (John 3 : 16). Jesus said "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...." (Mk. 16 : 16). "....Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins..." (Acts 2 : 38).

What glorious news! "Whosoever" will believe in Jesus with all of his heart and submit in obedience to him as the Lord has the forgiveness of his sins (Heb. 5 : 8-9). We

are added to the blood bought church of Jesus with the assurance that his blood will continue to cleanse us from all iniquity as we walk with him. (1 John 1 : 7).

Do not delay your salvation. Do not trust in yourself. Do not trust in what you do, but trust and believe in Jesus who is your offering for sin. To trust in Jesus is to believe and obey him. There is no other way.

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HOW DOES ONE BECOME A CHRISTIAN ?

Batsell Barrett Baxter

There are a great many people in our world who are not Christians. When we speak of those who are not Christians we usually think first of the millions who live in the pagan nations of the world, but we must also recognize that there are millions in our land, some of whom are within the shadow of the church building, who have never come to Christ. Many of these are not Christians because they do not know what to do in order to become Christians. They have never been taught in any complete sense what Christ commands.

To those of us who are Christians the act of becoming a Christian is very familiar and very simple. Even our children who are ten or eleven or twelve years old can explain accurately and well the acts involved in obeying the Lord. However, to those who are not Christians, who do not yet have a full understanding of the Bible, the act of becoming a Christian is not always clear. To them, it is often confusing, mysterious, and even a bit formidable. For that reason, we need regularly to answer the question, "How does one become a Christian?"

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

One of the wonderful things about Christianity is that all men are eligible to become Christians. The last

recorded words that Christ spoke on earth were addressed to the apostles and through them to all Christians. They are as follows. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you : and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28 : 19-20.) Every human being on earth is invited to come to Christ and be saved. There are no exceptions.

All races are invited to come. The apostle Paul in Galatians 3 : 28 said, "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus". Racial and geographic backgrounds are no impediment to becoming a Christian, because God is just as near to one locality as another and is just as concerned about one race as another.

In similar fashion it can be said that men of all walks and vocations of life are invited to Christ. God is not concerned with our vocation, just so long as it is honourable, but invites the farmer as well as the businessman, the sailor as well as the teacher, the secretary as well as the housewife, and so on through all honourable vocations. All ages, likewise, are invited to come. The old as well as the young have a place in Christ's kingdom. We understand, of course, that babies are not lost and therefore that they do not yet need to be saved. Everyone who is old enough to understand what sin is, to understand what it means to turn from sin towards righteousness, and to believe in Christ as the Son of God is old enough, to

become a Christian. On the last page of the Bible, Revelation 22 : 17, the apostle John wrote, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come : he that will, let him take the water of life freely." All men are eligible for salvation in Christ. All men are invited to come.

WHAT IS NOT REQUIRED ?

In the course of the centuries, many things have been taught as necessary for salvation which do not find a place in the inspired word of God. For example, a *direct call* from God is not required. There are many who believe and teach that before one can become a Christian he must have some special, spectacular indication that God has called him. Perhaps, it would be a dream, or a still, small voice or a great light. No such teaching is found in the scriptures. Rather, the New Testament pattern is : hear the gospel, accept it and obey it. In Romans 1 : 16 Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel : for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Notice that the gospel is the power unto salvation. In I Corinthians 1 : 21 we find, "It was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." And again in Romans, this time Romans 10 : 13-15, we read, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed ? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not

heard ? and how shall they hear without a preacher ? and how shall they preach, except they be sent ?”

The New Testament is filled with examples of people who became Christians with no miraculously call or sign of God's special approval to them. On the day of Pentecost more than three thousand people heard Peter and the rest of the apostles preach, after which they inquired what they should do to become Christians and then were obedient to the instructions given. Later in the book of Acts the same thing was true of the Ethiopian eunuch, who was instructed from the Bible by the evangelist Philip. He became a Christian during the same period of study. Lydia, in Philippi, also, is an example of one who had no direct call or supernatural evidence of God's election. She simply listened to the apostle Paul tell of Christ and after she had believed him she was willing to obey the simple commands given. Today, as through all the ages past, the gospel is the power that saves mens' souls, when that gospel is heard, believed and obeyed.

A season of agonized prayer at the mourner's bench is not required. There have been many in times past more than the present time who have advocated the use of the mourner's bench. However, when reading the New Testament we find no single example of the mourner's bench. Never was a person who wanted to become a Christian told to "pray through." Nor was he told to agonize in prayer until the Lord would give him some evidence that he was called. Rather, they were told immediately what to do : believe on the Lord Jesus, repent of your sins, confess the name of Christ and be baptized.

Still another unnecessary requirement is that of the *voting of a church* to receive a prospective member. Again, the New Testament does not provide an example of any group of Christians who voted on any person who desired to become a Christian. It is not possible for human beings to know the motives in the hearts of other people, so it is not possible for Christians to pass judgment on whether another person should be allowed to become a member of the church or not. Only God knows the inner workings of the heart, so only God can pass judgment on those who come. Fortunately, for all of us, this is the way the Lord's system works. After a person has obeyed the Lord's commands, God himself adds him to the church. Acts 2 : 47, "And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved." Voting on the part of a congregation is unnecessary and unscriptural.

Sometimes men have also believed and taught that before a person can become a Christian he must have a *knowledge that he can live the Christian life to the end*. While it is certainly commendable for a man to seriously consider the long view of Christianity before making a beginning it is unreasonable to wait until one is certain of successfully finishing the Christian life before giving himself to the Lord. We do not use such reasoning in any other matter. A student starts to the first grade. Without knowing that he can finish grammar school, let alone high school and college. A man takes an offered job with a new company, without knowing that he will be successful in the work, but believing that by hard work and study he will be able to satisfactorily discharge his duties. Even when we sign on the dotted

line to buy a car or a house, we do not know with certainty that we will be able to finish paying for these sizeable items. However, when there is a "presumption of success" we usually have the faith to undertake the work. The same must be applied in Christianity. It is our deep conviction that if we will begin, the Lord will help us find the strength to carry on until the end. It is far better to begin, even if we should later fall away, then never to try at all.

There might still be others who feel that some *financial consideration* is required before one can become a Christian. Such is not the case. While it is usually true in other organizations that there is an initiation fee, or a downpayment or some other financial requirement, this is not true in Christianity. The teaching of Christ is that after we have become Christians we shall give "as we have been prospered." (1 Cor. 16 : 2.) If God blesses us generously, we give generously back to him out of love, but financial matters are never mentioned in the process of becoming a Christian. The pauper is just as welcome in the church as is the millionaire

WHAT IS REQUIRED

Turning now from those things which are not required, we come to those things which the Lord does require of those who will be saved. The first of these is *faith*. Hebrews 11 : 6 reads, "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Christ said in John 3 : 16, "For God so

loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." This does not mean, however, that faith by itself will save. Unless faith leads a man to obey the other commandments of the Lord then it is not real faith and salvation does not result. On Pentecost, for example the three thousand who became Christians, after they had believed, were told to "repent and be baptized." Almost the entire second chapter of James is devoted to emphasizing the importance of deeds or works. James put it this way, "Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself...Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith...As the body apart from the spirit is dead even so faith apart from works is dead." (James : 2 17, 24, 26.) Christ also said it very clearly in Mark 16 : 16, "He that believeth *and* is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.

A second positive requirement is *repentance*, or a change of will in regard to sin. In the passage mentioned earlier, Acts 2 : 38, Peter said, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Similarly, the apostle Paul said to the Athenians in chapter 17, verse 30, of the book of Acts, the following words : "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent."

This is the most difficult part of becoming a Christian. Man must bring his stubborn will under control and give his love and his allegiance to God. It involves turning away from all past sins. It involves a positive commitment to love

and follow the Lord wherever he leads. It is relatively easy to believe, if one will take the time to read the Bible. It is relatively easy to do the other commandments that enables God to save one's soul, but the act of turning away from sin is an act that required tremendous will power. No one can reach heaven who has not repented.

A third requirement in becoming a Christian is that one *confess the name of Jesus before men*. Notice that this is not a confession of one's own past sins. Man repents of his past sins but confesses the name of Christ. Notice also that this is not, as the manual of one of the large churches of our day suggests, the confession "That God for Christ's sake hath pardoned your sins." No, for this is merely a confession that one believes that he is already saved. Rather, the confession required in the New Testament is a confession that one believes in Christ as the Son of God.

For example, in Acts chapter eight we read the story of the conversion of the nobleman from Ethiopia. Beginning in verse 36 and continuing through verse 38 we read, "Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."

This also agrees with the teaching of Christ earlier when he said, "Everyone therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men,

him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10 : 32-33).

There is one last requirement before one can consider himself a Christian. It is *baptism*. There are some who feel that baptism comes after one is already saved, but this is not the teaching of the scriptures. For example, in Mark 16 : 16 Jesus said, "He that believeth *and* is baptized shall be saved." Notice that it does not read, "He that believeth is saved and should be baptized." To read it in such a fashion would be to change the teaching of the Bible.

Further, we find in Acts 2 : 38 that when the people had heard Peter and had believed the message which he presented about Christ, they asked, "Brethren, what shall we do ? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ *unto* the remission of your sins." They were commanded to repent, be baptized unto (leading toward) the forgiveness of their sins. This is made even plainer in Acts 22 : 16 where Ananias, a faithful preacher of the gospel, was sent by the Lord himself to Saul of Tarsus, who had spent three days fasting and praying. When he arrived, this God-sent preacher said, "And now why tarriest thou ? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." There is an action in baptism that helps to cleanse and save the sinner.

Jesus had earlier taught, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." I Peter 3 : 21 finds the apostle Peter saying by inspiration, "Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the

putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The very significant place that burial in water, baptism, plays in the Christian religion is further pointed out by the apostle Paul in Romans 6 : 3-5. Surely all can see when these scriptures are examined that baptism is necessary in order to become a Christian.

Sometimes we hear it said, "Join the church, of your choice." No, this is not the language of the scriptures. Rather, the Lord teaches us that we must obey God's commandments and that he will then add us to *his* church. We need accept no man-made creed, no denominational doctrines. We need wear no name but the name of Christ. If all of us will simply take the scriptures for what they say, obey the simple commands as outlined within them, we will find that we are members of the one church described in the Bible. We will also discover that we are united with each other in a very wonderful way. It is our fervent prayer that these passages may guide you to become a part of God's family and reach heaven.

THINGS THAT SAVE

J.A. Thornton

There are many things that enter into the salvation of the soul but we can not single out any one of them as being the only thing that saves. To do so would be to deny all other factors. For each of the factors mentioned in this tract there will be a scripture reference which plainly states such.

THINGS THAT SAVE

1. **THE WORD OF GOD SAVES.** "Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your soul." Jas. 1: 21. See also Acts 20: 32.
2. **THE GOSPEL SAVES,** "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation....." Rom. 1: 16. "Moreover, I declare unto you the gospel.....by which also ye are saved....." I Cor. 15: 1, 2.
3. **GRACE SAVES.** "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God....." Eph. 2: 8. This simply says we are saved by grace, grace is unmerited favour. This would not make salvation without conditions but would show that the conditions would not merit the salvation received.
4. **MERCY SAVES.** "Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to His mercy hath He

saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit". Titus 3 : 5.

5. CHRIST'S BLOOD SAVES. ".....how much more shall the blood of Christ.....purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Heb. 9 : 14.

"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." Heb. 9 : 22. (That is, through the shedding of Christ's blood.)

6. CHRIST'S LIFE SAVES. "For if when we were enemies; we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. 5 : 10.

7. PREACHING SAVES. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." I Cor. 1 : 21.

8. HEEDING THE DOCTRINE. "Take heed unto thyself and to the doctrine; continue in them : for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." I Tim. 4 : 16.

9. FAITH SAVES. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him for they that come to God must believe that He is and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Heb. 11 : 6.

"Sirs what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house." Acts 16 : 30, 31.

10. REPENTANCE SAVES. "I tell you nay : but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Lk. 13 : 3, 5.

"At the times of this ignorance God winked at but now commandeth all men every where to repent." Acts 17 : 30

11. CONFESION OF FAITH SAVES. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Rom. 10 : 10.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." Mt. 10 : 32.

12. BAPTISM SAVES. "The like-figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." I Peter 3 : 21. This did not say baptism is a figure but the saving of Noah and his family is a figure or type of our salvation. This simply says "baptism saves us." Baptism washes away sins through the merits of the blood of Christ. See Mk. 16 : 16; Acts 2 : 38; 22 : 16.

13. WORKS SAVE. "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only.....For as the body without the spirit is dead even so faith without works is dead." Jas. 2 : 24, 26.

14. OBEDIENCE SAVES. "Though He were a Son yet learned He obedience through the things which he suffered and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Heb. 5 : 8, 9.

15. HOPE SAVES. "For we are saved by hope : but hope that is seen is not hope." Rom. 8 : 24.

In this article we have listed a few of the factors that enter into our salvation. For each of them we have given you a plain passage of scripture to substantiate it. We ask you sincerely to accept only what the Bible says. I have no right to single out any one factor and say we are

saved by it alone. Again I have no right to remove from this list any of the items that the Bible has plainly declared to be a factor in salvation. If I have a right to remove one, you have a right to, and if we have a right so would the infidel (he could remove faith). But we have not this right. I had as soon say we can be saved without any of them as to say we can be saved without one of them.

Why not allow these factors to save you today? If you will do this the Lord will add you to His church. Acts 2: 47.

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HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

J.C. Choate

In talking to various ones around the world about the church of Christ, many seemed to have never heard of it. What about you? Perhaps you have. Let me ask you, have you ever heard of the church of Christ? If not, then I am asking you as I have asked others: WHY? Don't you have a Bible? What church do you read about in its pages? If you will read again you will discover that just one church is mentioned and that is the church of Christ. Why, then, haven't you heard of this church? Why haven't all the others? You have had the Bible through the years. Quite a number of people in this area are members of some church. But what about *the* church? Well, it seems that everyone has a church here but the Lord. Perhaps one day soon his church will be here too.

The church of Christ exists around the world. It doesn't exist everywhere but it can be found where there are people who will follow the Bible and the Bible only. This church is not denominational, sectarian, or man-made. It is neither Catholic, Protestant, nor Jewish. Then what is it? It is simply the church that you may read about in your Bible, being made up of those who obey the Lord and are faithful to him.

Christ is the founder of the church. Read and see for yourself. In Matthew 16 : 18 Christ said, "And upon this rock I will build my church."

It had its beginning in the city of Jerusalem. Read Luke 24 and Acts 2 and you will see that this is true. It did not have its beginning in London, in Germany, in the U.S.A., but it Jerusalem.

The church was established in about A.D. 33. That means it is almost 2000 years old. Read again in Acts 2 of how the church had its beginning and thus the date is determined on this basis.

With Christ as its builder then it took the name of Christ. This was true as a church. "The churches of Christ salute you." (Romans 16 : 16). This was also true when it came to its members. "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11 : 26). The Bible only will make Christians only. Remember that.

Christ established but one church. In Ephesians 4 : 4 it is called the one body. In Colossians 1 : 18 the writer says that the body is the church. Therefore, one church.

Christ is the head of the church. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church : And he is the saviour of the body." (Ephesians 5 : 23). The Lord's church does not have an earthly head or earthly headquarters. Christ is the head and he dwells in heaven at the right hand of God.

Christ is the saviour of the church. This is also pointed out in Ephesians 5 : 23. That means that if one is to be saved then he must be a member of the church.

Christ died for the church. (Ephesians 5 : 25; Acts 20 : 28). This is how much it meant to him. What does it mean to you ?

The saved are added to the church. (Acts 2 : 47). And Christ adds the saved to the right church, his church.

He is coming back for his church. (Ephesians 5 : 27). What if you are not a member of it when he comes back ? Think about that.

If the Lord's church is not already in this area, in this city, or in this community, then it can be when you, and others, love the Lord enough to read and study his word and do what it teaches. In so doing you will come to believe the word of God, its author, and Jesus Christ, his Son (Hebrews 11 : 6; John 14 : 1-3; Romans 10 : 17), and then you will repent of all of your sins, or turn from them (Luke 13 : 3; Acts 17 : 30; Acts 2 : 38), confess Christ as the Son of God (Romans 10 : 10; Matthew 10 : 32), and then be baptized (buried in water) for the remission of your sins. (Acts 2 : 38; Mark 16 : 16; Romans 6 : 3, 4; Galatians 3 : 26, 27; 1 Peter 3 : 21). As a result, the Lord will add you to his church (Acts 2 : 47), and you will be a Christian only. (1 Peter 4 : 16). This will mean the beginning of the church of Christ in your area and it will remain here as long as there are people here who love the Lord, will obey him, and be faithful to him. This does not mean, however, that you will be a part of just another church. Neither will you be beginning a denomination, for the Lord's church is not a denomination.

For the time being, if you would like to know more about the church, read your Bible. You are also invited

to contact me personally for further information and for a free home Bible correspondence course. Write to :

Church of Christ
Box 3 15
New Delhi-110049

“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” (Ephesians 3 : 21).

THIS IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rollo Tinkler

Over 1900 years ago Jesus built His church. The centuries have witnessed its division. Now some 400 denominations exist in the U.S. alone.

The world is tired of such endless division. Homes are torn by it. Fine People are discouraged by it. And Bible study is neglected because of it. But there is a thrilling movement back to the unity of Jesus' church. Churches of Christ are demonstrating that the simplicity of original Christianity can be restored.

This movement is the fastest growing religious movement in America. The church of Christ doubled in the last decade. Over the past twenty years it has mushroomed at the astonishing rate of 580 per cent and now stands as the tenth largest church of the nation.

Such explosive expansion has stirred the thinking of thousands with numerous questions. Perhaps you also would like more information about the church of Christ. If so, the following questions and remarks should prove helpful.

WHAT IS ITS PLEA ?

The original church was a united church. (Acts 2 : 42f & 4 : 32) Hence, the church of Christ pleads for the restoration of the original church and the unity of all believers in that church.

Experience and the Bible teach that division is sinful. (1 Cor. 1 : 10; John 17 : 20). The need of the hour is not for a new church but the original church with its unity. The need is for those who will lay aside party names, creeds and ties and be Christians only. Jesus' church can be restored if men will but do Bible things in Bible ways and call Bible things by Bible names.

The early disciples were just Christians (Acts 11 : 26)—neither Protestants nor Catholics. Protestantism and Catholicism were unheard of until centuries later. Thus the restoration of the Biblical church will lead us once again to be just Christians—neither Protestants nor Catholics.

Neither were Christians denominationalists. Paul was not a member of one denomination, Peter another, and James and John members of a third. Instead, they condemned division and the wearing of additional names as carnal (unspiritual). (1 Cor. 1 : 10-13 & 3 : 3-4)

Churches of Christ are pleading that all should be only Christians and only members of the Lord's church. This is not a plea for a new church but for the restoration of Jesus' church in its unity and simplicity. It is a plea for undenominational Christianity and the abandonment of all denominational names, creeds and ways in favour of Biblical names, teachings and ways.

This basic appeal by the church of Christ is the basic reason for its rapid growth.

WHO IS ITS FOUNDER ?

Jesus alone is recognized as the founder of the church. (Mt. 16 : 18). Early leaders of this restoration movement

are appreciated but are not viewed as founders of the church.

If football should disappear for a century and then be revived, the new players would not have founded a new game. Neither should those leading in the revival of New Testament Christianity be regarded as founders of a new church unless they abandon the true pattern. (Heb. 8 : 5) Examine the Bible with us! Let's restore the church as Jesus would want it!

WHEN DID IT BEGIN ?

Acts 2 : 1-47 describes the birthday of Christ's church in Jerusalem (c. 30 A.D.). The church of Christ, therefore, views this date and place as the time of its beginning. To claim another date or place of origin is to forfeit any claim to being the church that Jesus built!

WHO CONTROLS IT ?

Jesus is the only head of the church. (Eph. 1 : 22 & Col. 1 : 18). Elders and deacons are appointed in keeping with 1 Tim. 3 : 1-13 & Tit 1 : 5-9. These elders oversee the church among them. (Acts 20 : 28).

Since a hierarchy, synods, or policy making conventions are unauthorized by the Bible, churches of Christ have no earthly headquarters. Instead, each church congregation, is free to determine its own policies under the direction of its heavenly head—Jesus.

WHAT DOES IT BELIEVE ABOUT THE GODHEAD ?

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are personal beings in the Godhead. (Col. 2 : 9). They are one in

purpose, doctrine and attitude but are still separate persons. (2 John 9; Lk. 3 : 21f). In like manner we speak of some as being of "one heart" (Acts 4 : 32) but understand that they are separate persons.

Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God. He was born of Mary, a virgin. (Mt. 1 : 20f). He died for our sins, was buried, and was raised from the dead. (1 Cor. 15 : 3f). He now reigns over His kingdom. (1 Cor. 15 : 24f).

WHAT DOES IT BELIEVE ABOUT THE BIBLE ?

The Old and New Testaments are the Word of God. They are sufficient unto every good work. (2 Tim. 3 : 16f). Creeds, manuals, catechisms, and disciplines possess no authority from God. Often they divide believers and help maintain existing divisions. They, therefore, should be abandoned, and the Bible alone should be exalted as the rule of faith. (Mk. 7 : 8-9). What God demands in the Bible, men should preach. What he has not demanded, they have no right to demand!

Moses' law guided the Jews until the death of Christ. It is not binding today. (Gal. 3 : 23f; Heb. 8 : 6f; Rom. 7 : 6). Instead, Christians are under the law of Christ which is contained in the New Testament. (1 Cor. 9 : 21). Men who add to this law are accursed! (Gal. 1 : 8f).

WHAT DOES IT BELIEVE ABOUT HEAVEN AND HELL ?

The good and the evil will be resurrected. (John 5 : 28f) The righteous are to enjoy eternal life with God. (Mt. 25 : 34, 46) The wicked are to be condemned to

eternal torment. (Mt. 13 : 41f; Rev. 20 : 10). Purgatory is not taught by the Bible. Instead, the evil and righteous are to be separated by a gulf that cannot be crossed. (Lk. 16 : 26). There will be no second chance for salvation after death. For men will be judged by their deeds in this life. (2 Cor. 5 : 10).

WHAT DOES IT BELIEVE ABOUT MIRACULOUS GIFTS ?

The nine miraculous gifts of 1 Cor. 12 : 4-11 ceased at the completion of God's perfect law (1 Cor. 13 : 8f). & Jas. 1 : 25). Since that time, God has not given to anyone these gifts of miraculous knowledge, the ability to prophesy, to speak in an unknown language, to heal or to raise the dead.

WHAT DOES IT BELIEVE ABOUT INHERITING SIN ?

Sin is an action. (1 John 3 : 4 & Jas. 4 : 17) : The actions of others cannot be inherited. Children do not inherit or bear the sins or righteousness of their fathers. (Ezek. 18 : 20). Hence, the sin of Adam is not inherited. Infants are without sin. Therefore, if they die, they are not lost! Instead, the kingdom of heaven belongs to such little ones. (Mt. 19 : 14).

WHAT DOES IT BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHURCH ?

Jesus died for the church! (Acts 20 : 28). He has promised to save it. (Eph. 5 : 23). As men are saved, God adds them to it. (Acts 2 : 47). The saved then are

not outside the church but are in it. No, the church does not save! But God adds the saved to the church! (Acts 2 : 47).

God teaches that the church is the body. (Eph. 1 : 22-23 & Col. 1 : 18). There is but one body as there is but one God. (Eph. 4 : 4-7). And Jesus prayed for the unity of all believers in this one body. (John 17 : 20-21).

WHAT IS ITS WORSHIP LIKE ?

True worship must be in spirit (from the heart) and in truth (authorized by the Bible). (John 4 : 24). God is not honoured by insincere, ignorant worship (Mt. 15 : 9 & John 4 : 22), or vain repetitions (Mt. 6 : 7), or worshippers seeking to be seen of men. (Mt. 6 : 5-6).

Worship in the early church consisted of prayers (Acts 2 : 42), communion on every Sunday (Acts 20 : 7), singing (Eph. 5 : 19), preaching (Acts 20 : 7) and contributions according to prosperity. (1 Cor. 16 : 1-2). The church of Christ worship in the same manner today.

To the early church communion was a memorial—not a sacrament. (1 Cor. 11 : 23f). Prayers to saints, masses, rosaries, images, instrumental music, and liturgies were not employed in its worship. Neither were cake sales, gambling, raffles, fetes or the like used in financing Christian work. Such unauthorized practices have crept in over the centuries. God is not their author. (Mk. 7 : 6-9).

HOW CAN ONE ENTER IT ?

Neither a vote by the church nor completion of a study course were necessary to entering the early church.

(Acts 8 : 36f and 16 : 25-34). God did not require such then nor now!

To be saved and thus added to the church, one must believe (Acts 16 : 31), repent of his sins (Acts 2 : 28), confess Jesus (Rom. 10 : 9-10), and be baptized to obtain the forgiveness of his sins (Acts 2 : 38 & 22 : 16) and to enter the one body. (1 Cor. 12 : 13). Everyone doing these things from the heart is saved and added by the Lord to the church. (Acts 2 : 47).

WHAT MODE OF BAPTISM IS USED ?

In Bible times the preacher and the one to be baptized went down into and came up out of the water. Acts 8 : 38 & Mk. 1 : 10). Baptism involved a burial and a resurrection (Col. 2 : 12 & Rom. 6 : 4) and a washing of the body. (Heb. 10 : 22). Jesus spoke of it as being "born of water." (John 3 : 5).

These references indicate that immersion and not sprinkling was the practice of the early church. The church of Christ, therefore, only recognizes immersion as baptism.

WHY IS BAPTISM SO IMPORTANT ?

Baptism is in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Mt. 28 : 19). This indicates it is important. Baptism unites us with Christ and His death. (Gal. 3 : 27 & Rom. 6 : 3). Salvation (1 Pet. 3 : 21), cleansing (Eph. 5 : 26), forgiveness (Acts 2 : 38), and the washing away of sins (Acts 22 : 16) are received in baptism. Being "born of water and the spirit" is essential to entering the kingdom of God. (John 3 : 5).

Obviously, water itself cannot remit sins. But God can! And he has conditioned salvation on this act of faith. (Col. 2 : 12 & Mk. 16 : 16). Baptism, then, is not to show that we are already saved. Instead, it is to obtain the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 2 : 38).

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED ?

In Bible times baptism was preceded by teaching (Mt. 28 : 19), belief (Mk. 16 : 16), repentance (Acts 2 : 38), and confession of Christ. (Acts 8 : 36-37). Infants are unable to obey these commands and, therefore, are not to be baptized. Thus the Bible does not record a single case of infant baptism under Christ's law.

Infants are without sin! (See section on inheriting sin.) Hence, they are not lost and thus have no need of baptism for the remission of their sins. (Acts 2 : 38). This is why the Bible only speaks of believers being baptized. (Acts 8 : 12f & 18 : 8).

WHAT OF THOSE ALREADY BAPTIZED ?

Everyone baptized in keeping with the Bible is a Christian. He does not have to be baptized again to enter the church of Christ but is already a member of it. (Acts 2 : 47).

Anyone whose former baptism is not according to the Bible must be baptized again to please the Lord. (Acts 19 : 1-5). Those merely sprinkled as infants need to be baptized, for baptism is immersion (Col. 2 : 12) and is only for believers (Mk. 16 : 16). Likewise, those immersed without a desire to obtain the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2 :

38 & 22 : 16) or to enter the one body (1 Cor. 12 : 13) must be baptized again to please the Lord and be added to His church.

The church has no right to demand more than God has demanded in this matter. Neither should it condone less than He has demanded. If a person's baptism is Scriptural, he has no need of rebaptism to enter the church. He is already a member of it.

CLOSING REMARKS

The Bible only makes Christians only! It takes something more than or less than the Bible to make one a "type" of Christian. Anyone reading the Bible alone would never conceive of being a member of any denomination. For the Bible only encourages us to be Christians and members of Christ's church. (Rom. 16 : 16).

Churches of Christ do not claim perfection. Neither was the church perfect in Biblical times. However, the principles upon which we stand are perfect. And they are the same principles upon which first century Christians stood. Hence, we do claim to be an example of what the New Testament church would look like in the 20th century.

Weigh the evidence! We only ask that you be fair to yourself, your family and to God. Search the Scriptures concerning these vital truths. Compare the Biblical church with the church of Christ as it is today. Ask yourself if they aren't the same.

Our plea is that you will "ask for old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6 : 16). "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened." (Mt. 7 : 7).

TO EMPHASIZE CHRIST MUST WE DE-EMPHASIZE HIS CHURCH ?

James W. Boyd

Emphasizing Christ is an activity with which no Christian can quarrel. But I wonder why some seem to think it necessary to de-emphasize the church in order to emphasize Christ. We read such statements as, "We do not read in the New Testament Scriptures of Christians urging men to 'become members of the church' nor do we read of anyone ever doing that." Again, we read, "When a great persecution arose in Jerusalem, Christians went everywhere 'preaching the Word,' not 'establishing churches'."

While all know such exact words are not found in Scripture as "becoming members of the church" or "establishing churches," the idea is indisputably there just as much as the statement used by the same author in the article where he derides such phrases but says, "The Christian's job today is, in a word, to communicate Christ to the world." Why do brethren feel they must cast off at the church and call it emphasis on Christ ?

We are told that most passages that speak of the church speak of people as individuals, not as groups. But the truth is, the term "church" most often refers to a group of people (check the references in any complete concordance).

Since when is it "selling yourself" to promote God's church? Why do some feel it necessary to brand preaching about the church as a failure to preach Christ? To proclaim to the world that body for which our Lord died is not partyism.

To ask whether the church is an organism or an organization is like asking if Jesus is God's Son or the Saviour of men, as if the two were in conflict. He is both. Why run from one while trying to emphasize the other?

Again we read, "And since the church is neither an organization nor in itself a body, it is not really accurate to speak of it having 'members' in any sense." To claim the church doesn't have members is not only foolish but directly opposite to Paul (I Cor. 12: 12). A member of anything is a part of the whole, according to Webster. If one belongs to the body, he is a member of it. Since the body is the church, he is a member of the church. When one is saved by Christ, he is a member of the body. Why shouldn't we strive to get people to "become members"? If you want them saved you will want them to become members. If the gospel is preached where none were in Christ before, and some are saved, you have established the church there.

While I do not know why some brethren like to write such things that de-emphasize the church, I do know why the denominational clergy say such things. They have been telling people all along that churches don't matter; one is as good as another. It makes one wonder whether some brethren prefer to imitate that line or proclaim Scriptural concept and word. We have no cause to be ashamed of talking about the church. Peter talked about

it; Paul did; Christ did. Are we to become so up-to-date that we shy away from it? Is this to be our contribution to the "ecumenical spirit." Are we to get others to like us by taking up their false ideas about the church? Why not quit teaching on the Lord's Supper, need for worship, Godly living, etc., and emphasize Christ? You accomplish the same thing.

Denominational people have tried a long time to separate Christ and His church. It isn't new for brethren to emphasize Christ. Such was being done when most of us were not yet upon the scene of life. But it is rather new to hear brethren de-emphasizing the church under the guise of emphasizing Christ. It doesn't make good Bible sense.

THE FOUR FOLD FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

The Apostle Paul, in II Corinthians 10 : 12, declares that "we dare not.....compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

In trying to determine what *Christians* and *churches of Christ* OUGHT to be, therefore, let us compare ourselves neither with what is approved by such in *other nations* nor even with what is approved by such in our *own* nation, state, city, town or community. The example of *others* (whether for good or evil) is not our measure. Nor is what we once may have been ourselves in the "used to be." For not he that commendeth *himself* is approved, but whom the *Lord* commendeth. (Read verse 18.) Therefore, rather, let us compare spiritual things with "spiritual" (I Corinthians 2 : 13), "according to the measure of the *rule* which God hath distributed to us..." (II Corinthians 10 : 13).

The "rule" here referred to—God's word—approves in at least three ways :

- (1) By **COMMAND**;
- (2) By **APPROVED EXAMPLE**; and
- (3) By **NECESSARY INFERENCE**.

According to God's word (the "rule"), the *function* of the church is *fourfold* :

- (1) The *evangelization* of the WORLD;
- (2) The *edification* of the CHURCH;
- (3) The *doing of good* unto ALL MEN; and
- (4) The *glorification* of GOD.

In fulfilling such a fourfold function, let us consider—point by point—what the church should both *be* and *do* :

In the first instance, SATURATION EVANGELIZATION of the WHOLE WORLD should be our *No. 1 reason for existence*. If GOD loved the world enough to give his only begotten SON for it (John 3 : 16); if the SON loved the world enough to give his LIFE for it (Romans 5 : 6-8; I John 2 : 2); if, upon being raised from the dead, and just before ascending into glory, the SON commanded his DISCIPLES to "go ye therefore into ALL THE WORLD and preach the gospel to EVERY CREATURE"—for us to question the command but betrays our own *lack of faith* in God as well as our *lack of love* for both God and man!

There are *two reasons*, at least, why the evangelization of the whole world is entirely possible .

(1) God does not *tempt* man (James 1 : 13), yet God *commanded* that it be done). (Read Matthew 28 : 18-20; Mark 16 : 15-16; Luke 24 : 46-47; and Acts 1 : 8.)

(2) Anything which has been done by man *once* manifestly *could* be done by man *again*—and the gospel was preached to the *whole world ONCE*—in the *first generation* of the church! (Read Romans 10 : 18 and Colossians 1 : 23.)

In fulfilling this basic, fundamental, underlying purpose for the church's very *existence*, if we are actually to *accomplish* it in our lifetime, we must set nothing short of the *evangelization of the whole world* as our No. 1 goal to reach before we die.

Having thus set the GOAL, we must then become GOAL-oriented, rather than oriented to *tasks, positions* or *facilities*. In analyzing problems connected with world-evangelism, we must work out *plans in harmony* with such a goal. Our plans must be workable. We must put workable plans into *action*—and *persevere*, nothing doubting, until final *results* are obtained.

In our endeavour to evangelize the rest of mankind, let us be PRACTICAL rather than merely THEORETICAL. Note that in Acts 5 : 42 they taught and preached the gospel DAILY both PUBLICLY and in EVERY HOUSE. To be *effective*, we must put such *action* into *operation*. This requires that our members must become properly *trained*, *intelligently organized* and *effectively led*.

If we are to be *scriptural* in our *vision* as well as our *action*, we must not limit *either one* just to the *community, village, town, city, area, state, nation* or *region* in which we happen to reside. Remember Jesus' words, just before he went on high : "...and ye shall be witnesses unto me BOTH in *Jerusalem*, AND in all *Judaea*, AND in *Samaria*, AND unto the *uttermost part of the earth*." (Acts 1 : 8).

WITHOUT discounting the WORLD evangelizing process—in fact, while pressing *this* phase of our work even harder—not only must we "go on unto perfection" OURSELVES (Hebrews 6 : 1-3), but, having been *converted*, we must "STRENGTHEN (THE) BRETHREN." (Luke

22 : 31-32). This function of the church was included in the Great Commission itself. Jesus said not only to "GO" and "TEACH" all nations, "BAPTIZING" them, but "*TEACHING* them to observe ALL THINGS whatsoever I have COMMANDED you..." (Matthew 28 : 19-20). Such teaching done to a person *after* he has been baptized is to *strengthen* him, to *edify* him, to *build him up* in the most holy faith.

For this cause Jesus "gave some *apostles*; and some, *prophets*; and some *evangelists*; and some *pastors* and *teachers*; for the *perfecting* of the saints, for the *work* of the ministry, for the *EDIFYING* of the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4 : 11-16).

Hence, Paul instructed Timothy, "the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same *commit* thou to *faithful* men, who shall be able to TEACH OTHERS ALSO." (II Timothy 2 : 2).

Edification results not only from one's being *taught* God's word, but also from putting it into PRACTICE. Christians are to be "DOERS of the word, *not hearers only*..." (James 1 : 22). Among the things that we are to *practice* is the DOING OF GOOD "unto ALL MEN, *especially* unto them who are of the HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH." (Galatians 6 : 10).

Some seem to feel that this service to mankind should be limited to those within the church. Jesus said that we should DO GOOD even "to them that HATE you." (Matthew 5 : 44). And if ye "salute *your brethren ONLY* what do ye more than others?" (vs. 47). He taught us to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us. (Matthew 7 : 12). Remember the example of the Good

Samaritan. (Luke 10 : 30-37). Jesus said, "Go, and *do thou likewise.*"

By *serv*ing others, we also are *serv*ing and *GLORIFYING Him*. (Read Matthew 25 : 31-46). Jesus said that "inasmuch as ye have done it" (or "did it not") "unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it" (or "did it not") "unto me". (Compare verses 40 and 45).

In glorifying God, we are to let our light so shine before men, that they may see our "*good works*, and *GLORIFY* our *FATHER* which is in heaven." (Matthew 5 : 16). "Herein is my Father *glorified*," Jesus declared, "that ye *BEAR MUCH FRUIT*; so shall ye be my disciples." (John 15 : 8). *Fruit-bearing* characterizes ALL functions of the church. A man's children are said to be his "fruit". (Read Acts 2 : 30). Even so *God's* children are his fruit. By winning others to Christ, through evangelizing, we thus *BEAR FRUIT* unto God. (Romans 7 : 4). Just as well-trained children reflect glory to their parents, even so *EDIFIED CHRISTIANS* reflect glory to God, our heavenly Father.

In addition to which, lifting up our hearts in *PRAISE* to God *further* glorifies Him in our worship. Hebrews 13 : 15 says, "therefore let us offer the sacrifice of *praise* to God continually, that is, the *FRUIT OF OUR LIPS* giving thanks to his name." Colossians 3 : 16-17 teaches us to *SING* with "grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving *THANKS* to God and the Father of him." Even in the *COMMUNION* we glorify him by "showing forth the Lord's death until he come." (I Corinthians 11 : 26). And in our *GIFTS*, we glorify

him by acknowledging that we are giving into his cause even as he by his grace has prospered us so we can! (I Corinthians 16 : 1-2).

Therefore, brethren, let us not content ourselves with being and/or doing anything *less* or *other* than *God's word teaches*. Let *God's word*—and *only* *God's word*—be our only rule of faith and practice. Then—and only then—will Christians and churches of Christ be what we OUGHT to be!

YOU HEAR SUCH STRANGE THINGS ABOUT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Roy Beasley

The Twentieth century church of Christ is widely known and discussed; but because of misinformation or misunderstanding many sincere people possess a weird and distorted picture of what the church is and what it stands for. With the hope of clarifying some of these misconceptions, it is the purpose of this treatise to discuss a few of the strange and uncomplimentary things most often heard.

“You Do Not Believe The Bible : You Reject The Old Testament.”

This may be one of the strangest things you will ever hear about the church of Christ. The truth is that we do believe that all 39 books of the Old Testament are inspired. “All scripture is inspired by God...” (2 Tim. 3 : 16). “...because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” (2 Pet. 1 : 21).

A profitable study of the scriptures, however, requires that one “rightly divide the word of truth.” (2 Tim. 2 : 15. KJV). First, he must recognize the two grand divisions of the Bible :

the Old and New Testaments. Second, he must be aware of the three dispensations, or religious periods of Biblical history; namely, Patriarch, Mosaic, and Christian. The Old Testament tells of the Patriarch and Mosaic, while the New reveals the ending of the Mosaic and the beginning of the Christian age. The Patriarchy (the father-rule period) extended from the creation until the Law of Moses was given on Mt. Sinai. The Mosaic period lasted 1500 years until the death of Christ. The Christian age began with the death of Christ and will continue until the end of time. These are the "last days." (Acts 2 : 16, 17).

No man is now living under either the Patriarchy or the Mosaic law, for each has served its purpose and has been taken away. Christ came to "fulfill" the law. (Matt. 5 : 17, KJV). To "fulfill" can mean to bring to an end or completion. Suppose, for example, you have an appointment with the dentist. When the time comes, you "fulfill" your appointment : you bring it to an end or completion. Now, that is exactly what Christ did for the Law : He brought it to an end or completion. This was done when He died on the cross; for in Col. 2 : 14 we read : "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Hence, when Christ died, the Law of Moses died. It is now a dead law.

The Hebrew writer described the Law of Moses as "obsolete", and declared that man is now living under a "new covenant" or testament. (Heb. 8 : 13; Cf. 9 : 15-17). He also declared that Christ is the "mediator" of this new covenant and described it as "much more excellent." (Heb. 8 : 6). In Jn. 1 : 17 (KJV) we read : "For the law

was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Hebrews 1 : 1, 2 reads : "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by His Son, whom he appointed heir of all things through whom also he created the world." From the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17 : 5) the thundering voice of Jehovah spoke concerning His Son : "hear ye Him". Both Moses, the lawgiver and Elijah, the prophet, were present, but God said, "hear my Son."

Indeed, we do believe in the inspiration of both the Old and New Testaments; but we also believe that we are now living under the new covenant of Christ, not under the Law of Moses. A realization of this would help clear away much of the misunderstanding and confusion that plagues the present world of religion.

"You Think That Only You And Your Little Group Will Get To Heaven".

It really doesn't make any difference what I *think*. Our *opinions* don't amount to anything concerning such matters as pleasing God and receiving eternal salvation. The *important* thing is what God says, and this is what each of us should be interested in knowing.

According to God's word both *faith* and *obedience* are essential to salvation. Hebrews 11 : 6 : "And without faith it is impossible to please him." James 2 : 26 : "For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead." Matt. 7 : 21 : "Not every one who says to me, "Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in

heaven." Mark 16 : 16 : "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

Faith is important, but faith *alone* is not enough. According to James 2 : 26, "faith apart from works (of obedience) is dead." The conversion of the 3000 on Pentecost (Acts 2) illustrates this point. As a result of Peter's sermon the people were "cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do ?." This was the question of *believers*. These believers wanted to know what to do to be saved; and Peter replied, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins." (Verse 38). Faith alone was *not* sufficient.

Verse 47 reads : "and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (KJV). Who were added to the church ? Those who *should* be saved. Why should they be saved ? Because the Lord said they should; for in Mark 16 : 16 He had said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved..." Had they believed ? Yes. Had they been baptized ? Certainly. Hence, they *should* be saved, and because they should, the Lord *added* them to His church. If the Lord did this for them, don't you believe He will do as much for you and me ? If we do what they did : If we believe and are baptized, don't you believe we should be saved as they were ? And, if we should be saved, don't you believe He will add us to His church ?

The saved are added to the church because the church is composed of the saved. Christ is the "Saviour of the body" (Eph. 5 : 23), and according to Eph. 1 : 22, 23 the body is the church. Outside the church-body, there-

fore, there is no salvation. "In him (the church) we have redemption." (Eph. 1 : 7).

Salvation is in the body of Christ, the church. (2 Tim. 2 : 10). The only way to enter this spiritual body is to be added by God, and God adds only those whose faith results in obedience to His will.

"You Believe in Water Salvation."

A thousand times, No!! The *efficacy* of baptism is not in the water, but in the manifestation of faith and obedience which it implies. One is baptized because of his faith and desire to obey God.

God offers promises upon certain conditions. This principle has always been true. In the story of Naaman, the leper (2 Kgs. 5), Naaman was not healed until he had met the conditions of dipping himself seven times in the river Jordan. He had to do *all* that was commanded of him. In the battle of Jericho (Josh. 6), the city was not delivered to the Israelites until they had met *all* the conditions of marching, blowing the trumpets, and giving a great shout. In the record of the healing of the blind man (Jn. 9), Jesus anointed the man's eyes with clay and commanded him to wash in the pool of Siloam. Only after he obeyed were his eyes opened. There was, of course, no power in the water. God had the power to heal; and when this man demonstrated his faith by doing as he was told, God opened his eyes.

This principle is true of baptism : God offers promises upon conditions. God offers the forgiveness of sins with baptism as a condition. (Acts 2 : 38; 22 : 16). There is no power in the water.

“You Don’t Believe Music in Worship.”

Unfortunately this is sometimes said in such a way as to make the church appear strange and fanatical. Of course, we believe in music in worship; but *which* kind shall we use? There are *two* kinds of music: vocal and instrumental. Which kind does God approve? There is only one way to be sure: go back to the Bible and find what it says.

The New Testament teaches Christians to *sing* in worship: “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,” (Eph. 5 : 19). “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Col. 3 : 16).

We have authority to sing in worship, but there is not a single command nor example in the New Testament that authorizes the playing of an instrument. But, someone may say: “The Bible doesn’t say *not* to play an instrument in worship, does it? Of course, it doesn’t; but that would be unnecessary, because the Bible does tell us which kind of music God approves, and that is *vocal* or *singing*. The command to sing *includes* singing and *excludes* every other kind of music. The principle involved here may be called “the law of inclusion and exclusion.” Perhaps we can better understand this principle by considering the following illustrations :

God's command to Noah to "make thee an ark of Gopher wood" (Gen. 6) *included* Gopher wood and *excluded* every other kind of wood. God didn't need to say: "Don't use cedar; don't use poplar; don't use pine; etc." Noah understood that he was to use only Gopher wood. Also, when our Lord instituted the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26 : 26f), He commanded the use of the bread and the fruit of the vine. This requirement excluded every other kind of food : orange juice, cake, pie, fried chicken, etc.

God, therefore, doesn't need to say, "Don't play an instrument in worship." because He has clearly specified singing as the kind of music He approves. This is the extent of God's word, and this is the extent of our practice. We offer to Him "the sacrifice of praise..... that is, the fruit of our lips....." (Heb. 13 : 15, KJV).

"You Do Not Believe in the Work of the Holy Spirit in Conversion."

We believe what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit : that He came on Pentecost to abide with the church forever. On the night before His crucifixion our Lord met with His apostles in the upper room where he promised them "another Comforter" (Jn. 14 : 16) who "shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you..." (Jn. 14 : 26) and shall "guide you into all truth : for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak..." (Jn. 16 : 13). This promise was kept, for on the first Pentecost following His resurrection He baptized the apostles with the Holy Spirit: (Acts 2 : 1-4). Only

the apostles (including Matthias) received this baptism, for the promise had been given only to them. The purpose was twofold: (1) to guide them in their preaching, and (2) to give them power to do signs and wonders to confirm the truthfulness of what they preached.

A second instance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was at the house of Cornelius. (Acts 10). As Peter preached "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." (Verse 44). This was not for the purpose of saving them because Peter then "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Verse 48), and later he declared that "baptism doth also now save us." (1 Pet. 3 : 21). This was an extraordinary event for the purpose of convincing Peter and the Jewish Christians that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles. Although the church had been in existence several years, Jewish pride and prejudice had prevented them from preaching to the Gentiles; but when Peter reported these happenings to the Jerusalem church, "they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts 11 : 18, KJV). Hence, this was a special miracle for a special purpose.

Some believe that Holy Spirit baptism is necessary for salvation, but these are the only two instances of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit recorded in the Bible and in neither case was it for the purpose of saving the lost. There is only *one* baptism (Eph. 4 : 4) necessary for salvation, and it is the baptism of the commission. (Mk. 16 : 16; Matt. 28 : 19). This baptism is a burial (Rom. 6 : 4) in water (Acts 8 : 36) for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2 :

38; 22 : 16), and it is for all penitent believers. (Mk. 16 : 16; Acts 2 : 38).

Some say that Holy Spirit baptism is to purify hearts, but Peter wrote, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth." (1 Pet. 1 : 22). Some say that it will save our soul, but James wrote, "Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." (Jas. 1 : 21). Some say that it will give faith, but Paul said in Rom. 10 : 17, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Some say it is to experience the new birth, but Paul said in 1 Cor. 4 : 15, "I begat you through the gospel." Some say that it is to sanctify us, but Jesus, said, "Sanctify them in the truth, thy word is truth." (Jn. 17 : 17). Some say it is to build us up and to make us strong, but Paul said, "I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified." (Acts 20 : 32).

The Holy Spirit does have a part in the salvation of sinners, but it is clear that He operates through the gospel.

"You Do Not Believe in Salvation by Grace

Of course, we do! Salvation by grace is plainly taught in the scriptures : "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2 : 8).

Grace means unmerited favour. Man does not merit or deserve salvation : he is not saved by his own works of

merit. He is a sinner, but God loves him (Jn. 3 : 16) and desires his reconciliation. Hence, by His grace has He provided a scheme of redemption, a plan of salvation, as is revealed in the Bible.

Salvation by grace does not mean that man does not have a part in his own salvation. Man is a free-will moral creature, and he can either accept or reject God's offer of grace. God's grace is extended to all men (Titus 2 : 11), but it must be accepted by faith. "For by grace (God's part) you have been saved through faith (man's part)." Man must have faith; and true faith involves obedience, for "Faith without works is dead." (Jas. 2 : 26). Man must accept God's offer of salvation by meeting the conditions, which are : (1) faith in God and Christ (Heb. 11 : 6); (2) repentance of past sins (Acts 17 : 30); (3) confession of faith in Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8 : 37; KJV; Rom. 10 : 10); and (4) baptism for the remission of sins. (Acts 2 : 38; 22 : 16). Thus, by the grace of God man can become a child of God.

**"You Are Too Narrow :
We Like A Broad Religion."**

Yes, we are narrow; but, strange as it may seem, we are also broad. We try to be just as broad and just as narrow as is the word of God. We strive to speak "as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4 : 11), because it is sinful to add to or take away from God's word. (Rev. 22 : 18, 19; 2 Jn. 9).

We have but one creed : Christ. (Acts 16 : 31; Acts 8 : 37, KJV). We have but one doctrine; the New Testa-

As we delve into this matter we must realize that the real problem of division is **basically, primarily, and almost altogether a doctrinal one.** Until we are united doctrinally these division will continue. Now, in the ecumenical movement some came to that realization, but for some reason failed to abide accordingly. In fact, the motto of the Stockholm Conference was, "Doctrines Divide; Service Unites." This was a good motto, but the Stockholm Conference failed to bring about unity, for the 91 churches represented at the Conference failed to live up to that motto and thus give up their various doctrines. We just cannot hold onto our separate creeds and doctrines and be united. If we want to **eliminate human divisions,** then we must **eradicate human doctrines!** Here, my friends, is the real key to the problem that is before us.

God wants us to be united, and He has made provision for that unity. **New Testament Christianity is God's ecumenical movement!** God's system has made unity possible, and our subscription to it will make it **probable.** God's way will work. It has worked in the past, and it will work in the future. If we really want to bring about unity, then we must submit to God's way! Let us take a look at the arrangement God has made.

GOD'S PLATFORM FOR UNITY

Mention was made a moment ago of "New Testament Christianity." Really, there is no other kind, but this terminology is used to distinguish between what is taught in the New Testament and what is taught by man. Some seem to think that any teaching having to do with belief

in Christ is a part of Christianity. This is erroneous, and our minds must be cleared of this misconception. There are many things taught by man that are not taught in the New Testament.

In the New Testament we find this platform for unity : "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4 : 4-6). You will notice in the very middle of this list of seven ones there is "one Lord." In the very middle of God's platform for unity we find Christ! Everything revolves around Him. It is through that one Lord that God speaks to us today (Hebrews 1 : 2). To Him God has given all authority, both in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28 : 18). In Ephesians 2 : 14-17 we learn that Christ is our peace, He made peace, and He preached peace. It is in and through Christ that we can be at peace both with God and with our fellow man.

Before there can be Christian unity three must be in agreement—you, your brother, and the Lord. You and your brother might be in agreement, but it is not Christian unity unless you two are both in agreement with the Lord! For instance, in Acts 5 : 9 we are told that Ananias and Sapphira "agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord." These two people were united, but it certainly was not Christian unity! There can be no Christian unity without perfect agreement with Christ.

Christ then is the common denominator upon which all our factions and frictions can be reduced. It is in Christ that all are one (Galatians 3 : 28). Since Christ

is the central plank in God's platform for unity, let us examine this platform.

It calls for "one body." That one body is the church over which Christ is the head (Colossians 1 : 18). Over how many different churches is Christ the head? The New Testament says, "but now are there many members, yet but one body" (I Corinthians 12 : 20). Christ did not promise to build churches (plural), but He did say, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16 : 18). That one church which Jesus built is called "the house of God" (I Timothy 3 : 15). God has only one house, one church, one body! A multiplicity of churches is contrary to God's order!

God's platform for unity calls for "one Spirit." That one Spirit is the Holy Spirit. The scripture says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12 : 13). God through that one Spirit has revealed to us His Word (II Peter 1 : 21). There is "one body," "one Spirit."

Furthermore, there is "one hope of your calling." That one hope is built upon faith, for faith is the substance or foundation of things hoped for (Hebrews 11 : 1). In Colossians 1 : 23 Paul says, "Be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." In the 27th verse of the same chapter he tells us that Christ in you is the hope of glory. This is the one and only one hope men have of eternal glory!

There is "one faith." Since there is one hope, and that hope rests upon faith, we could expect but one faith. There are many faiths today, but the New Testament furnishes only one! Faith comes by hearing the Word of

God (Romans 10 : 17). We never read in the scriptures of the "doctrines of Christ." When reference is made to a plurality of doctrines, it is either the doctrines of men, or of demons. For instance, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15 : 9). "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines" (Hebrews 13 : 9). In I Timothy 4 : 1 reference is made to the doctrines of demons.

Every time the word "doctrine" is used with reference to Christ, it is always singular. For instance, "whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 9). In Hebrews 6 : 1 again it is "the doctrine of Christ." In Acts 2 : 42 it is called "the apostles' doctrine." In Titus 2 : 10, "the doctrine of God." You will notice in all of these cases it is singular, not plural. **The Lord has but one doctrine.**

In II Timothy 3 : 16 we are told that the Holy Scriptures are profitable for doctrine. **Not for doctrines, plural, but for doctrine, singular!** Paul told Timothy to charge some "that they teach no other doctrine" (I Timothy 1 : 3). Then notice Paul's admonition in Romans 16 : 17, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Who are those that cause divisions and offenses? This passage says it is those who go contrary to the doctrine which Paul had taught them. For that reason he admonished Timothy to charge some **that they teach no other doctrine.**

Let me say again if we want to eliminate human divisions, then we must eradicate human doctrines! We must be united doctrinally, or divisions will continue. The New Testament presents the one doctrine of Christ, and all other faiths or theories are called the "doctrines of men" or "of demons." We will never "all come in the unity of the faith," as Paul mentioned in Ephesians 4 : 13, until we give up human doctrines and embrace the one doctrine of Christ. This is the "one faith," God's platform for unity called for.

There is "one baptism." That one baptism is an immersion (Romans 6 : 4). It must be in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28 : 19). It is "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2 : 38). It is therefore a definite part of salvation (I Peter 3 : 21). It is through that one baptism that we come into Christ, and thus put on Christ (Galatians 3 : 27). That one baptism enables us to walk in the newness of life (Romans 6 : 4).

Finally, there is "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Notice how everything in this platform for unity is related to and revolves around Christ. The "one Lord" is in the middle, and very appropriately so. The one body is the church over which Christ is head. It is by one Spirit that we are baptized into that one body. Christ in you is the one hope of glory you have. The one faith is centred in and built upon Christ and His doctrine. The one baptism brings us into Christ and enables us to put on Christ. The one God can be reached only through Christ! This is God's platform for unity!

THE LORD'S PRAYER AND PLEA FOR UNITY

Unity must have been of great concern to our Lord, for during His closing hours on earth He so earnestly prayed for it. Why did He pray for unity? Here is the reason He gave: "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17 : 21). Isn't that reason enough? Did He not say that a kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and that a house divided against itself shall not stand (Matthew 12 : 25)?

For what kind of unity did Jesus pray? Not for a mere confederation of religions, nor for a mere union of churches, but for the kind of unity that exists between Him and the Father. "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee" (John 17 : 20).

Notice the plea Paul made: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1 : 10). Paul was in perfect agreement with Christ in the kind of unity for which he pleaded, for it was by the name of the Lord Jesus that he made his plea. Heaven's plea is that we all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among us, and that we be perfectly joined together in the same name and in the same judgment. If we really want the world to believe that God sent Christ, then we must put forth every effort possible to bring about that kind of unity which exists between God and Christ.

THE EARLY CHURCH'S PRACTICE OF UNITY

The unity for which Jesus prayed is not an impossibility. Speaking of the disciples of the first century it was said, "all that believed were together, and had all things common" (Acts 2 : 44). And, we are told that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul" (Acts 4 : 32). Here is an actual practice of unity.

When such unity did exist there was not a multiplicity of churches, nor a diversity of doctrines, but believers in the Lord constituted one body, and preached and practiced one doctrine. Is it unreasonable then to plead for the same unity to exist today that existed then ?

OUR PROMOTING OF UNITY TODAY

Having recognized the **problem of division**, and having become aware of the **possibility of unity**, and having examined God's **platform for unity**, and having listened to Jesus' **prayer and plea for unity**, and having seen the early church's **practice of unity**, let us now turn our attention to the **promoting of unity** today. Are we praying for this unity as did our Lord ? If so, shall we pray for a thing and not strive to obtain it ? Or, shall we pray for it and not use the necessary means to have it accomplished ? Are we putting forth every effort possible to effect a permanent scriptural unity upon the basis of the self-evident truths of the New Testament ?

As we seek to promote unity we might ask the question Paul asked, "Who is sufficient for these things" (II Corinthians 2 : 16). Paul answers his own question in

the next chapter, "Our sufficiency is of God" (II Corinthians 3 : 5). In the promoting of unity, our sufficiency, too, is of God. He hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness (II Peter 1 : 3). The inspired scriptures are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness : that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3 : 16, 17). Let us, as Paul admonished, "speak the things which become sound doctrine" (Titus 2 : 1). Let us heed the admonition that we teach no other doctrine (I Timothy 1 : 3).

In the long ago God said to His people, "Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people" (Isaiah 57 : 14). To promote unity today we must take up the many stumblingblocks out of the way of the Lord's people. There are the stumblingblocks of human opinion, human doctrines, human inventions and innovations. All of these stumblingblocks must be taken out of the way, or we will never have the unity for which Jesus pleaded.

Several years ago a plea was made for a restoration of New Testament Christianity. This plea called for a giving up of denominational names and creeds, and called for men and women to take the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice. There are two ways of regarding this noble plea—one is to **complete it**, the other is to **compete with it**. Which way will you regard it? Isn't this God's plea?

To advocate unity while espousing anything that would disturb or destroy that unity, is like starting a fire with one hand and putting it out with the other! Or, it

is like asking that a certain law be passed, and then not abide by it. We must remember that if any one note is dropped from Divine harmony, the music will be sadly lacking! Let us therefore **give up human inventions, and be governed by heaven's instructions!** Let us **take away the husks of human opinions, and take to heart heaven's ordinances!**

New Testament Christianity is God's ecumenical movement! Here is the answer to all of our problems! God calls **not for a reformation, but for a restoration and a transformation.**

If we would keep the **unity of the Spirit**, then we must keep the **spirit of unity**. With the spirit of unity in our hearts let us say with the prophet of old, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." Then the prophet said, "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory" (Isaiah 62 : 1, 2). In one united effort let us not hold our peace, nor rest, until God's righteousness does go forth as brightness, and His salvation as a lamp that burneth. Then the world can see God's righteousness, and all kings His glory!

WHY ARE YOU A PROTESTANT ?

Gynnath Ford

Makes you think, doesn't it? Why am I a Protestant anyway? I know I am against the Catholic Church but why? There must be a reason!

There is and the next couple of pages will tell you why.

(The following is quoted from the tract, "Where Protestants Differ from Roman Catholics and Why." It is written by Protestants for Protestants, Whittemore Assoc., Inc., Boston, Mass.)

"Something should be indicated at the outset regarding the purpose of this pamphlet. It is to put Protestants in remembrance of some of the foundations on which their faith rests."

"The Reformation was a protest against hierarchical rule in the Church, a rule which is still the essential, unvarying characteristic of the Papacy . . . Against this hierarchical rule the Fathers of the Reformation rose up in revolt. They made a principle of the priesthood of all believers. Why? Because, studying the *New Testament*, they discovered that Jesus, so far from establishing the principle of a religious hierarchy, abolished it . . . Nor is there anywhere in the Gospels anything that hints at, much less sanctions or vindicates, the establishment of a Church which is in essence a political institution, a world power, with as its head a Pope housed in a palace

and surrounded by his own diplomatic corps, his own police, his own military guards.”

“Note another difference between Protestants and Roman Catholics, one that deeply affects the life of personal devotion, the attitude adopted toward Mary, the Mother of our Lord. What a striking, startling difference it is! The devout Roman Catholic believes not only that Mary, a virgin, gave birth to Jesus but that she remained a virgin throughout her life, this notwithstanding the references in the Gospels to the brothers and sisters of Jesus and the specific designation of Him as Mary’s “first-born” Son. He believes also—the belief is a dogma and as such binding on the faithful—that Mary was sinless because she was preserved at her conception from the stain of original sin. Since 1948 when the dogma was promulgated by the present Pope, it is also binding on Roman Catholics to believe that three days after her death Mary was physically translated to heaven and that her tomb was found empty.”

“But the dogmas of her immaculate conception, and of her assumption, and the role given her as intercessor, we cannot accept. In the judgment of Protestants there is simply no valid biblical evidence for them.”

“Note one more major difference between Protestants and Roman Catholics, namely, the difference between the Mass and the Lord’s Supper. The Mass is not so much a sacrament as a sacrifice . . . it is held that the bread and wine become, not represent, but become, the true body and blood of Christ, and the priest offers them up to God as a propitiatory sacrifice for the ‘sins, punishments, satisfactions and other necessities of the faithful.’ ”

“Protestants look in vain in the New Testament for anything that lends support to the doctrine of the Mass.”

THE AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

From the above quotations the impression is firmly made that the New Testament of Christ is the sole authority in religion. Certainly this is contrary to Catholic doctrine but this is the only way in which Protestants can successfully refute their teachings. Note the expressions in the quotations, “Nor is there anywhere in the Gospels anything that hints at, much less sanctions . . . the establishment of a Church which is in essence a political institution . . .,” “In the judgment of Protestants there is simply no valid biblical evidence for them,” “Protestants look in vain in the New Testament for anything that lends support to the doctrine of the Mass.” In refuting three cardinal doctrines of the Roman Catholic church, the New Testament and the scriptures, are appealed to as being the final word in religion. Certainly, if there is an authority in religion it must be the word of God.

WHERE IS AUTHORITY FOR PROTESTANT SYSTEM OF RELIGION?

Believing that the Bible is the final word in religion and that the silence of the Scriptures must be respected, on what basis does present-day Protestantism have a right to exist? Where are the scriptures which sanction the pyramid form of government which is prevalent in many of the leading denominations? Certainly the New Testament is silent on systems which have “one bishop presiding over many churches” and “synods and councils

forming rules by which the churches are ruled and governed." In the Bible we read concerning the government of the churches. "And when they (Paul and Barnabas) had ordained them elders in every church . . ." (Acts 14 : 23). ". . . ordain elders in every city . . ." (Titus 1 : 5). "The elders which are among you I exhort.....Feed the flock of God which is among you . . ." (I Peter 5 : 1, 2).

These elders were to be appointed in every church and they were commanded to tend the flock of God which was among them or at one church or congregation. Also we find no distinction between a bishop and an elder in the New Testament (Acts 20 : 17, 28, RSV). Therefore their office is the same and they have the same qualifications (I Timothy 3 Titus 1). In New Testament times each congregation was independently organized and governed.

Not only is there no biblical evidence for such a church government system but there are other Protestant doctrines which are not based on scriptural teachings. Where in the scriptures is the basis for the following teachings and practices?

1. Sprinkling for baptism.
2. Titles for preachers such as Reverend, Most Holy, Most Reverend.
3. Non-essentiality of baptism unto salvation.
4. Raising money through bazaars, pie suppers, bingo parties, fete, for the support of the work of the church.
5. Distinction between brethren, through use of terms, Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, etc.
6. Use of instrumental music in New Testament church worship.

INVESTIGATE!

Before you destroy this leaflet, remember the statement by the Protestant author in the first paragraph of this booklet, "The tolerance that says you shouldn't criticize another person's religion is a false tolerance . . . To keep peace it sacrifices truth and lets error grow."

Martin Luther, John Calvin, and others did not fail to speak when truth came into view. Neither can I hold my peace. Certainly you will agree that indifference can cause us to be lost as much as any one thing. Therefore I plead with you to examine your stand as a member of a group which practices and encourages division among the ranks of those who are called God's people in a system of denominationalism. Ask yourself this question: Am I a member of this system because of Biblical teaching or because of tradition? Martin Luther said: "I pray you to leave my name alone and call not yourselves 'Lutherans,' but 'Christians' . . . Cease my dear friends, to cling to those party names and distinctions, away with them all; let us call ourselves only 'Christians' after him from whom our doctrine comes" (*Stork's Life of Martin Luther*, page 289). Charles H. Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher, said, "I hope the 'Baptist' name will soon perish, but let Christ's name last forever" (*Spurgeon Memorial Library*, Vol. 1, page 168). Episcopal Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, a president of the World Council of Churches, said: "I can't believe that Christ . . . wanted to establish 250 sects. In the mind of God there must be one Church" (*Look Magazine*, July 21, 1959).

Certainly it is not wrong to leave a system that is not based on scriptural teaching. If so, the Protestant movement is erroneous for that reason. Men left Catholicism because the Catholic system was not found in the scriptures.

Our plea is the same as that of Christ and his apostles. He promised to build his church and bring all nations into that one body. By obeying his commands we can be brought into that kingdom where his word is authority and there is no basis for division or denominationalism. Let us go back beyond Protestantism and Catholicism to that which Christ established, his church. Please investigate the restoration plea of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ in your community.

THE SOLUTION

The honest person will, of course, go to the Bible and let it speak to him. Now, suppose he finds that he has

IS IT WRONG TO CHANGE ?

Wallace Alexander

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED A CHANGE IN YOUR RELIGION ?

Of what church are you a member? Have you ever seriously thought about why you are a member of it?

“Do I have a reason based on the Word of God for the religious beliefs that I hold?”

“Perhaps I just inherited my religion from my parents and have never seriously considered my beliefs in the light of God’s Word.”

“Could it be that I am affiliated with a religious group because of its position of respect in the community or because of its elaborate rituals and beautiful structures?”

* * * *

These thoughts naturally come into the minds of people when seriously considering reasons for their beliefs. And many, even though realizing these are true, try to justify themselves by the Word of God—they turn to the Bible to justify themselves instead of letting God plainly speak to them. One’s attitude in studying the Bible should be, “Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth.”

THE SOLUTION

The honest person will, of course, go to the Bible and let it speak to him. Now, suppose he finds that he has

been wrong in his religion : what should he do? It is easy to see that all conflicting groups cannot be right unless the Bible is a book of confictions and confusion.

The Bible tells of many who were in the same position of people today who are sincere, yet mistaken. There have been people like that, perhaps, since the time sin entered into the world. Notice two examples of such people and what they did :

The apostle Paul formerly was an honest murderer and persecutor of Christians. He plainly stated that he had led this kind of life with a good conscience before God. On the road to Damascus, the Lord appeared to him convincing him he was wrong. He gave up power, fame, popularity, and the favour of his own people in order that he could serve the true God (Phil. 3 : 4-8). Paul changed his life; he changed his religion.

Notice also the example of Cornelius (Acts 10). Cornelius was a good man—a man with whom very few could favourably compare today. But he was wrong religiously. He changed. He believed in Christ and was baptized.

Paul and Cornelius learned they were wrong and they changed. They did not believe they could be pleasing to God while continuing in their former ways. They had the courage to change.

WHY DO PEOPLE NOT CHANGE TODAY?

People today must be just as noble if they please God. God placed His Book in men's hands for them to study, to learn His will, and to pattern their lives after what He

says. One cannot please God and continue in a religion that cannot be supported by God's Word.

But changing religion in the 20th century is not usually looked upon as an act of nobility. Indeed, it is not good, if the change is from one error to another. However, the wisest step a person could take would be to forsake a religion unauthorized by God and accept pure New Testament Christianity.

Suppose you change your religion in order to live closer to the Word of God: You may be scorned in many circles. You will be considered a traitor, perhaps, by many of your former associates. The one who taught you the truth may be considered a "sheep-stealer" or be accused of trying to "build up his church by tearing down another." But regardless of this, follow after truth!

Will you not study the will of God—not to justify your belief, but letting the Lord speak to you? Then accept what you learn, free from the ideas and opinions of men, and obey it immediately. God will be pleased. Your soul will be saved—that is all that really matters!

WHY NOT BE JUST A CHRISTIAN ?

THE ADVANTAGE OF IT

In these days of many sects and conflicting teachings, it is a great advantage to be simply a Christian, and nothing more than a child of God, a follower of Jesus Christ.

“But,” you ask, “is such a thing possible under the religious circumstances of our day?”

How is the average man ever to find his way where so many paths cross one another, and each one seems as good as the rest? Where so many guides shout, “Come this way!” and “Go that way!” and “Lo here!” and “Lo there!”?

It does indeed seem impossible; and many who would be glad to be on the right ground before God, have despaired of the undertaking.

Some have concluded that none are right, and have settled down in indifference. Some think that all are right, and drift on, compromising and without convictions. Some, weary of the problem, have found a false rest in trusting in an “infallible church,” or some “infallible” man who settles all questions by his simple dictum. Another says, “I go to hear them all, and when I find the right one I will accept it.” That latter way seems fair to the average man. But what an impossible task it would be to investigate all the creeds and doctrines! Time would fail, and head and heart be confused and bewildered if

anyone should seriously attempt it. It usually terminates in the man's accepting the first thing he happens to meet that seems good and plausible. Barring the case of many who lack the interest and sense of need to make any personal, independent search after truth, it is the general way for a man religiously inclined, to take up the first view that strikes and pleases him, or to fall in with any sect or denomination with which he has happened to have been thrown in contact. Having identified himself with the said view or sect he considers himself thenceforth bound to loyalty to that party, and is henceforth set for its defense, and supersensitive to any criticism of it.

Such are the usual courses men pursue in regard to religious views and affiliations. But that none of these ways will lead a man to the truth ought to be clear to any man who will think a moment. It is a mere chance game. And the chances are not as good as one out of a hundred. In fact truth is never obtained by blind grabbing or by following the plausible teachings of men.

Instead of trying to examine and decide upon any or all beliefs and teachings extant, there is a shorter and better way. That way can be summed up in one word :

"CHRIST"

"Come unto *me and learn of me*" (Matt. 11 : 28, 29). There is an instant relief in the very thought. We can set aside the whole troublesome tangle of religious beliefs and go straight to Him who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14 : 6). He alone is right and true, and

everyone who would be His disciple must come directly to Him and learn of Him.

But after the first flash of light and hope such a thought would bring, there rises a misgiving. "Do you suppose that *I* could understand, that *I* could find the one, true way by taking the matter up personally with the Lord, through His word? Have not others done so and failed? Is there not vast room for differences and misapprehensions? Where so many good people have erred and strayed can I hope for, better success? I am not learned: where the scholars and doctors differ, how can I know I am right?"

But the difficulty is not so great as it appears. In the first place it is not a matter of scholarship, or of man's wisdom and ability, but a question of *Attitude* and of *Trust*: of trust, in that we cannot afford, like Peter, to look at the winds and waves of difficulty (Matt. 14), but we must rely on the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord that calls us, He who will let no true soul perish in its search of Him and His ways; and it is not to the wise and prudent that God shows His ways (Matt. 11 : 25; I Cor. 1 : 26, etc.), but to the poor in spirit, the humble, the hungering and thirsting after righteousness; to those who want to do His will, to the "sheep" who hear His voice (Matt. 5 : 3-6; John 7 : 17 ; 10 : 4, 27). It was in the same breath in which Jesus stated this, that He invited the weary and heavy laden to come to Him that He might give them rest; and to assume his yoke and to *learn of Him* (Matt. 1 : 25-39). This then is the one great step, for every man who would find the Way : Commit your life with all its hope and prospect to the Lord Jesus, and address yourself

to learn from Him. There is a sphere in which scholarship is helpful; and I do not say that men may not help one another; but the only true help a man can after all render his fellowman is to point him to the word of the Lord that there he may find and see for himself what is the will of God in Christ Jesus to us-ward.

THE RESULTS OF THIS STEP

If everyone should do this it would be fatal to many a thriving business and institution. The religious philosophers who for ages have darkened counsel with learned words; the theologians; the "infallible" dogmatists; the theorists with spin out "systems of truth"—they would find little market for their wares. True unity would come. It has been feared all along that if every man should go to the Word of God for himself independently, confusion and division would result. Not so. The divisions come by departing from the Word, by adding to it, taking from it, setting up men's one-sided views for standards. And, above all, the divisions are kept alive because the vast majority of professed believers blindly follow their religious leaders, and have almost all their religious knowledge at second hand. But those who will open desirous hearts, come directly to Jesus for light, obtain such a view of truth, such a mutual consideration, and such a free scope for growth that having become one in Christ they will tend more and more to be one with one another.

THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO ALL TRUTH

Every theory, every system, every sect has *some* truth. But the *Christian* has all, has a right to all, and access to all. If any sect in the world holds any portion of truth, the Christian, has the great right to accept and proclaim it. He does not need to join the sect in question to get what truth it may happen to have. He does not even need to sift through the chaff of those human theories. In Christ he has all beforehand. It is his good and pleasant task to explore the rich mine of truth, Jesus Christ, "in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (Col. 2 : 3). At the same time he does not say, "I am right," in the sense that he knows all about everything; but he says, "The Bible is right : Christ is right." He holds his mind open. Every day he comes to the truth revealed to get just the ideas of what he learned before and to learn more. He has no "axe to grind"; no position to force; nothing to "harmonize" or to "explain away"; no theories to promulgate; no human creed to defend. The truth makes him free. He calls no man "Rabbi," no man "Father" upon the earth : One is his Teacher and Master, even Christ; and One is his Father, God (Matt. 23 : 8-10). No man may bring him into that bondage of human theory and creed which is today so gravely affecting the religious world.

A minister of a certain denomination once said to one of these simple Christians, "I should like to have a talk with you—I think I could make a—————ist out of you." "How would you go about it?" asked the Christian. "Why, I would show you where you are wrong," answered the preacher. "But that would not make me a—ist. It would just make me a better Christian," he replied.

These simple children of God come to the Bible with new, fresh minds, divested of all human preconceptions as far as they can know, with open hearts, to drink in the teaching of the Lord. They strive to give Him a clean tablet to write on, not one already scrawled over with opinions of their own or other men's. They are not so foolish as to let some theory-spinner and system-builder prepossess their thoughts by filling their hearts and minds with his specious reasonings wherewith he hopes to build his sect. For when we commit ourselves to a human teacher and leader, we lose the voice of one true "Rabbi" above. And the prepossession resulting may easily be fatal. It puts colored glasses before the seeker's eyes, and insinuates basic notions and opinions which ever after he reads into the text of the Bible, and which he thinks thenceforth he sees standing out on every page, although they exist only in his mind. It is needless to say that a man who has any regard and desire for just pure, unbiased truth will not allow his judgment to be affected beforehand by putting himself under the influence and dominance of some man's plausible theories. "And this I say lest any man should beguile you with enticing words," says Paul. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in Him; rooted and builded up in Him and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding in thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy or vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him" (Col. 2 : 4-10).

Now if it were only a matter of preference and taste as to what a man should religiously believe and be, no man would need to be greatly troubled over this question. One could adopt whatever belief he likes best and follow it sincerely and the outcome would be safe. But "there is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the ends thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14 : 12). "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10 : 23). Most people think that any course honestly pursued will lead to glory; which is but another proof that man's ideas of religious things are usually wrong. Jesus declared that many would come to Him "in that day" and protest that they had prophesied in His name and done many wonderful works; to whom He will confess "I never knew you : depart from me ye that work iniquity." "Therefore," He adds, "Whosoever heareth *these sayings of mine*, and doeth *them*" (not what priest or doctors have commanded), "I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock." And vice versa, "Every one that heareth these saying of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand" (Matt. 7 : 21-27).

It is not by what some man said you ought to do, nor by any human teaching or theory (no matter how correct it seems, and how perfectly it "fits in") that we shall be measured "in that day," but what Christ has said : "The word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12 : 48). He that rejects the Word of Christ today does so at terrible loss and infinite peril.

HOW CAN WE BECOME CHRISTIANS?

The reader who would become a Christian, a simple child of God and follower of the Lord, can become such in exactly the same way that men were taught of God to persue in the days of the apostles. In Acts, chapter two, verses 36-41, an account is given. Read, believe and obey. "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him. And with many others words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation. They then that received his word were baptized; and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls."

The path here marked out is not only infallibly right, but exceedingly simple. It is *God's way*. Follow its simple pattern, and it will solve the great initial problem for you. For thus men became Christians, and members of the true church 1900 years ago, under the preaching and direction of the inspired Apostles. And eventually the man who takes these steps of faith today will be nothing else, and belong to nothing else. Afterwards he may "go on unto,

perfection," to find milk and meat in the Word of Christ and to grow in His likeness (1 Pet. 2 : 1; 2 Cor. 3 : 18).

The Book of Acts is replete with teaching and illustrations on this point. Anyone perplexed on the matter of baptism should get a concordance and by means of it hunt up every passage in which "baptize" and "baptism" occur. The Word of God will leave the right impression on the unprejudiced mind. In fact it is hardly a matter of disagreement, for it is generally acknowledged that whatever else may or may not be baptism, immersion certainly is baptism. And we should want nothing else than what is certainly right.

As to church-relationship—there is but one church mentioned in the Scriptures. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." To this God will add him as He did those who were being saved in apostolic days (Acts 2 : 42). On any question the Word of God will shed true light, and as much light as is needed. So shall a man stand on a firm rock, and be responsible directly to God alone, and deal with Him at first hand through His Word, free from all fear and bondage, except the fear of God and the yoke of Christ, which is easy and light, and he shall find rest for his soul. This is the exalted privilege and calling of the simple Christian. Let every man see that he fall not short of it.

A WAY THA ITS RIGHT AND CAN NOT BE WRONG

Jesse P. Sewell

No. 1

Beloved, I shall read as my text three passages of Holy Scripture. The first is John 17 : 20, 21, and it reads as follows : "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." The second is Rom. 16 : 17, which reads as follows : "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." The third is 1 Thess. 5 : 21, to which I now ask you to listen : "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

With these scriptures in your minds, I shall state the proposition for my sermon tonight, which is, Let other ways be right, or let them be wrong; the church of Christ presents a way that is **right and can not be wrong**. I realize that this may sound, to many of you, both conceited and extremely narrow; but I pray you to hear me, in the same spirit in which I shall speak to you, before you pass judgment.

I shall do a thing tonight which I rarely ever do; that is, I shall mention the names and some of the doctrines of some of the most prominent denominations.

I have long been convinced that it, generally speaking, is best for me (I speak not for others) to simply "preach the Word," without reference to denominations or doctrines; but on this occasion I have some things which I can better get before your minds by departing from my general rule, hence I do so. I beg that you understand that these references are made with the most sincere respect for the honesty and sincerity of every believer in Christ. I can not conceive of a man being dishonest in reference to things having to do with the destiny of his own soul. Hence I ask only that you hear me in the same spirit in which I speak to you.

Let us suppose that our city is badly divided, and torn into various contending factions. Its progress is being greatly retarded by this unfortunate condition of affairs. One of our citizens, a "newcomer," let us say, calls us together and presents to us a plan by which we may all unite without the compromise of a single principle of right on the part of any man. Now, beloved, would this citizen not be right, and would he not be performing a worthy task in presenting the plan and appealing to us to accept it? Would he not be worthy of commendation, whether or not he succeeded or failed in getting us to accept the plan?

The believers in Jesus Christ, in this city and elsewhere, are divided and torn into various contending factions. This awful condition of affairs is as much as, if not more than, any one thing preventing the accomplishment of the

purpose of God in sending his Holy Son to earth to redeem and save man. If we would have the world believe that God sent Jesus to seek and to save lost souls, we believers must be one, even as the Father and the Son are one. The honest man looks on us with one Bible, one God, one Saviour, divided into hundreds of conflicting bodies, and says, How am I to know the right? He either becomes discouraged and gives it up, drifts into the church with his kinsmen, without any individual faith or convictions, or becomes an infidel. Beloved, this condition of affairs can not exist and the responsibility not rest on some one. It does not exist without a cause. Let us not, without due consideration, cast all of the responsibility onto our neighbours. Let us examine ourselves and see whether any fault be found in us.

I now invite your attention to the proposition: Let other churches be right or let them be wrong; the church of Christ presents to them a plan by which they may all unite without the compromise of a single principle of faith or duty, and thus do away with the divisions and dissensions which exist among them. Our plea is, that all believers should take the Word of God—all of that and only that—as the infallible rule of faith, discipline and practice. Our motto is, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent"; or let us speak only "as it were oracles of God." We beg the churches of the world to give up all human names, creeds, strifes and divisions, and unite upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone. Whether we succeed or fail

in this appeal, we are right, and can not be wrong in pleading for union on the Word of God, and that alone.

No. 2

1. **The church must have a creed.** There can never be the union and harmony prayed for by our Master as indicated by our text, and declared by him to be necessary, that the world may believe, without a common faith. There can never be a common faith without a common creed. Is there a creed upon which all believers may unite without sacrifice of principle or compromise of conscience?

My good Methodist friends suggest the Discipline. But my Baptist, Presbyterian and Lutheran friends promptly object. So with the believers of all other denominations. My Baptist friends offer, as a substitute, the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, and insist that, as a whole, if not in each detail, it is far superior to the Discipline. But they are having a difficult time convincing our good Methodist friends...Just here my good Presbyterian friends offer as a substitute for both the Discipline and the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, the Westminster Confession of Faith; and strongly insist that it is far superior to each of the others. So the offers and discussion might continue until the hundreds of denominations are heard from, each presenting a different creed with a claim of superiority for it.

The church of Christ comes forward and presents as a creed, superior to all others, and upon which all believers may unite, the Bible, the Word of God, all of that,

and only that. Can not all accept this without compromising either principle or conscience? If not, then some one is holding to principles not from God, and some one's conscience is based on human and not divine teaching. All divine teaching is in the Bible. But it is objected, all people can not understand the Bible; it must be simplified. If this be true, God did not intend for man to understand him when he spake, or, intending that man should understand him, he has failed in his purpose. In either case God's revelation is not a revelation at all.

But, it is insisted again, the people who reject other creeds and take only the Bible are not united on the Bible. But they are. There are no differences or divisions among them about what the Bible says. The divisions all come in when one party or another insist on introducing into the faith, work or worship of the church something not in the Bible. This will appear as we proceed.

David said, "The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul." Psalm 19 : 7. Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1 : 16. Our Master said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." John 17 : 20. John said, "But these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." John 20 : 31. Thus the law of God, the Gospel, the things spoken by the apostles and written in the Bible, constitute a perfect creed for the salvation of the lost.

Our Master said, to certain people who had believed on him, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disci-

ples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8 : 31, 32. James said, "Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." James 1 : 21. James was talking to Christians. Paul said, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." 2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17. Thus, the Bible, the Word of God—all of that and that only—is a perfect creed for the salvation of the lost and development and final salvation of the redeemed. Can not all believers accept it as a perfect and sufficient creed?

In reference to the creed we insist, let others be right, or let them be wrong, as to their creeds, the church of Christ is right and can not be wrong in taking the Bible alone and urging all believers to give up other creeds and unite upon God's Word.

No. 3

2. **The name.** The individual followers of Christ and the church must have names. There is a great deal of division and dissension among the believers in reference to these names. Can we find a name on which we can all unite without the compromise of principle? Let us see. Our good Methodist friends suggest their name, but other believers, just as sincere and pious, object that they are not willing to accept and wear a name which only honours a characteristic procedure. Our Baptist friends suggest the name Baptist, but other believers promptly object that

they will not accept a name which honours only an ordinance of Christianity. Our Presbyterian friends then try, but are promptly told that a name which only indicates a form of government is not acceptable at all. And so the discussion continues until the hundreds of denominational names are presented and rejected.

Just here some sincere, consecrated believer suggests that there is no reason for all this discussion and division over the name; that there is nothing in the name anyway. Let us see. I say to my Methodist friend, "I will not call you a Baptist." He is not offended. I say to my Baptist friend, "I will not call you a Methodist." He is not offended. But I say to both, "I will not call you Christian." Now they are both angry. Why? There is something in a name—that's all.

The church of Christ suggests that all believers discard all human denominational names and accept and use for all individual followers of Christ and for his church just such names as are to be found in the Bible. In the Bible the followers of Christ are called saints, disciples, Christians, etc. The church is called the Church, the Church of the First Born, the Church of God, Church of Christ, etc. All believers, regardless of the distinctive denominational names they have taken, claim a right to these Bible names. Their human names cause division and we can agree on none of them. Not one believer is willing to concede to any one else the exclusive use of the names of the Bible.

Then, let others be right or let them be wrong as to their names, the church of Christ is right, and can not be wrong, when it accepts and uses only the names given by

divine authority and invites and urges all believers to unite with them in this practice.

3. **Election and reprobation.** Some believers teach, "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated into everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death." Other believers, just as sincere, just as learned and just as devout, stoutly deny this proposition. The discussion waxes warm and fierce. Is there no ground upon which all believers may unite without the compromise of principle? The church of Christ suggests that the Bible clearly teaches that men should :

(1) Believe in Christ. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." Mark 16 : 16. "And without faith it is impossible to be much pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Heb. 11 : 6.

(2) Repent of their sins. "And he said unto them, thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations." Luke 24 : 46, 47. "Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish." Luke 13 : 3. "But now he commanded men that they should all everywhere repent." Acts 17 : 30.

(3) Confess Christ. "Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved : for with the heart man believeth unto righteous-

ness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10 : 9, 10.

(4) Be baptized. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Matt. 28 : 19. "Repent ye, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." Acts 2 : 38.

(5) Live a godly life until death. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." Matt. 28 : 20. "Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never stumble : for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1 : 10, 11.

Now beloved, we insist that inasmuch as all these things are required by the Word of God, it is clearly right for men to do them. If we do them, and at last it proves to be true that "some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others are ordained to everlasting death, our having done them will in no wise change our destiny. If, on the other hand, this doctrine proves to be untrue, and that God accepts all who believe, trust, love and obey him, and only such, then we are safe. Therefore, let others be right or let them be wrong, as to election and reprobation, the church of Christ is right, and can not be wrong, in believing and obeying the gospel and inviting and urging all others to do the same.

4. **Universalism.** Some believers believe and teach that all men, regardless of their faith and conduct in the present life, will ultimately be saved in heaven. Other believers do not believe this, and again we have division and dissension, contrary to the prayer of our Lord and the desires of all good men. We here suggest, because of the scriptures already read, and many others which might be read if I had the time, that men must believe and obey the gospel and live consistent Christian lives ever after. If at last Universalism proves to be true, and all men are happy with God, our faith, love and obedience will certainly not cause us to be lost. On the other hand, if it proves to be true that God saves and glorifies only those who believe and love and obey him, we are safe. Then, let others be right or let them be wrong as to Universalism, the church of Christ is right and can not be wrong in believing and obeying Christ and begging all others to do the same.

5. **Salvation by faith only.** Many believers insist that men are saved when they believe, and before and without obedience to God's commandments. Others deny this, and at this point the dispute becomes fierce. We insist, because of the passages of God's Word read to you, that men must not only believe and trust, but that men must also obey the Lord. If it proves to be true when we stand before God in judgment, that he does accept us and save us from our past sins the moment we believe and trust him, surely the fact that our faith is strong and vital enough to lead us to obey Christ will not cause us to be any less saved. But if it should prove, in that great day, that God demands not only faith but obedience also, we

are safe. Therefore, let others be right or let them be wrong as to salvation by faith only, the church of Christ is right and can not be wrong in believing and obeying also, and urging all others to do the same.

6. **Operation of the Holy Spirit.** Many sincere and pious people believe that God operates on the hearts of people, independent of his gospel, by the Holy Spirit. If this be true, God alone determines on whom he will bestow this blessing. We insist that if there is such a blessing for the human family as a direct or independent operation of the Holy Spirit, that God, in selecting the one on whom to bestow it, will certainly not pass by those who accept his word, as it is indeed the word of God; believe and trust his Son, lovingly obey his gospel and trust his promises, for those who do not. Then, while the church of Christ does not accept the doctrine of a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, let doctrine be true or let it be false, we are right at this point and can not be wrong. We insist that all men must believe, trust and obey the Lord's gospel and trust him for his blessings. God will certainly not pass by those who thus honour him for ones who do not.

7. **Action of baptism.** Three distinct acts are accepted by portions of the denominational world as baptism. We accept only one, the immersion of a proper subject into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I shall not enter into a scriptural demonstration of our position on this point. It is not the purpose of this sermon to present the strong Bible support of our peculiar teachings, but rather to establish our original proposition, "Let others be right or let them be wrong, we are right

and can not be wrong." In other words, if they are wrong, we are right, and if they are right, we are still right. Therefore we present a common ground on which all believers may unite without compromise of principle. Now as to the action of baptism: No believer will deny that the immersion, in the proper way, of a proper person, is baptism. They only contend that sprinkling and pouring will do as well, and that they are more convenient. But more than half of the believers of the world, of all the centuries, counting the Eastern Catholics, including as learned, sincere and pious people as ever lived, deny this contention and boldly affirm that immersion is the only acceptable act for baptism. This act is admitted by all to be acceptable. The genuineness of all others is called in question by a majority of all believers. At this point, then, let others be right or let them be wrong, we are right and can not be wrong.

8. **The design of baptism.** It is contended by some that baptism is an outward sign of an inward salvation; that people are saved when they believe and previous to the time they are baptized. We plant ourselves on the passages already read tonight and insist that baptism is a part of the gospel and must be obeyed before the alien has a promise of salvation from past sins. If it should prove at last that God saves men when they believe and before their obedience, surely we will be none the less saved because we, in addition to our faith, or as an act of faith, obey our Lord's commands. But if these scriptures stand, and they certainly will, and it proves that God requires not only faith but obedience also, those who believe and neglect or refuse to obey will be lost. Then

let others be right or let them be wrong, the church of Christ is right and can not be wrong in obeying the gospel as well as believing it and in insisting that all others do likewise.

9. **The Lord's Supper.** That the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the house of God is admitted by all who believe in Jesus as the Christ. But it is observed with a great deal of irregularity. Some churches attend to it once a month, some once a quarter, some once a year, and some just whenever it is convenient. We insist that this sacred supper should be eaten on the first day of each week. Our Master said, "This do in remembrance of me," and again, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me," Luke 22, in Acts 20 : 7, says, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread." The old law was, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." This did not say remember "every" Sabbath day. But the Jew understood that every Sabbath day had to be kept holy. So we understand that the disciples of Christ are to partake of the Lord's Supper on every first day of the week. But, as I said before, it is not my purpose to present the scriptural foundation for our faith, but rather to establish the proposition, let others be right or let them be wrong, we are right and can not be wrong. This is clearly true at this point. If it proves at the judgment that God is satisfied, if we observe the Lord's Supper once a month, once a quarter or whenever convenient, we will be none the less acceptable if we keep it once a week. If on the other hand, it proves that, as God required the Jews to keep every Sabbath, he requires

2 : 16), "Let no man judge you in meat, or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days." Since all these ceremonial commandments were nailed to the cross (Colossians 2 : 14), and therefore passed with Moses' law, I must not attempt to keep them.

SHALL I USE THE LORD'S DAY AS A DAY OF WORK ?

Yes. The Lord's day is not a day primarily of rest, but a day of service—service, not to ourselves, but to the Lord. Note, that since this day is the Lord's it is obligatory on Christians to give him this day in service. When a man does secular work for himself, it certainly is not for the Lord. Whatever part of the day I do not give to him, I have usurped for myself. God expects a man to do secular work, and the man who fails to support his family is worse than an infidel; but God has given us ample time for this type of work without encroaching on the Lord's day. Nor does this mean that we necessarily esteem this day above others any more than we esteem the Lord's supper above other commandments. It does mean that we must give the Lord's own day to him just as we give the Lord's own supper to him.

True, I am under the law of liberty, but I must not deliberately turn the liberty into license. If an unavoidable condition or emergency should force me to do some secular work on the Lord's day, I should cease to do such work as soon as reasonably possible. Sometimes people say, "Sunday is the only day I can call my own, therefore,

I will use it as I wish." But this is a great mistake. The Lord's day is the *one* day which does *not* belong to me, according to the Bible. It belongs to the Lord. (Revelation 1 : 10).

SHALL I USE THE LORD'S DAY TO ENJOY MYSELF ?

Yes, I should enjoy myself on the first day of the week, but it must be on a spiritual level. I should enjoy wholesome recreation at the proper time; but if on the Lord's day I cannot find my highest enjoyment in Christian fellowship, in worship, and in spiritual things, there is something wrong with me. I need to grow.

SHALL I WORSHIP ON THE LORD'S DAY ?

Certainly. I read in Acts 20 : 7, "And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." If I follow this approved New Testament example, I know that I am pleasing God. Someone may interpose the objection that this quotation does not say that they met every first day of the week to break bread. But I note that they met on *the* first day of the week, not "*a*" first day of the week. Let us look at an analogy. Moses commanded Israel to "Remember *the* sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20 : 8). The article *the* found in this verse meant every sabbath and any person violating the commandment was put to death. If "*the* sabbath day, meant *every* sabbath, then "*the* first day of the week" must mean *every* first day of the week.

I note, too, that Paul preached to them. I may certainly worship by listening to a sermon. And in I Corinthians 16 : 2, I read, "Upon the first day of the week, let everyone of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him . . ." On this day I am to give of my laid-by offerings, not my left-over funds. I know too that prayer and singing spiritual songs are a part of worship. But after I have done all these acts of worship, a large part of the Lord's day is still unused. What shall I do with the remaining part of the day ? This question elicits quite a difference of thinking on the part of people, and to it we now turn.

SHALL I USE THE LORD'S DAY WHOLLY FOR THE LORD ?

If I, as a Christian, would not think of using the Lord's supper or any part of it other than belonging wholly to the Lord (for example, I would not think of using the Lord's supper for a private meal), I should not use the Lord's day, or any part of it other than wholly belonging to him. If the Corinthians were condemned for diverting the spiritual significance of the Lord's supper into a supper of riotous feasting, shall not I who would divert the Lord's day into a day of riotous pleasure be guilty of a like offense ? And, if the Lord's supper must be observed spiritually, then the Lord's day must be observed spiritually. All, therefore, that I do on the Lord's day should contribute to the work and glory of the Lord, whose day it is. Finally, I know that if I give the day wholly to the Lord I will be absolutely safe; and safety means everything when eternity is involved.

When I count the Lord's day as any other day, I give support to those religious sects who do secular work on and openly flaunt the first day of the week. Also, if I do the same things on the Lord's day which the world does, I am abetting and allying myself and my influence with those forces of evil which would destroy all moral integrity and religion. Those who sell themselves to sin invariably have no respect for the Lord's day. And should an utter disregard for the sanctity of the Lord's day ever come, a mighty bulwark for decency and righteousness will have fallen.

WHY I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH BECAUSE JESUS IS THERE. "Where two or more are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18 : 20). Jesus have never forsaken an assembly, and I want to be like him.

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH BECAUSE I AM MADE STRONGER. Power is given in worship to live a noble life. There one is fortified against falling away. There is the sweetest fellowship on earth. There souls are made fit for heaven. There strength is given to bear the burdens of life. Why should I want to miss ANY service.

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH BECAUSE GOD WANTS THE CHURCH TO GROW. The church always grows when members put God first by loyal attendance. Since the church is the saved, the growth of the church means salvation of the lost. Here is a way all can help in the finest work on earth.

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE. Many are looking my way and following in my steps. Influence is either good or bad—there is no middle ground. Any hour the church meets, my influence is with or against Christ. If

I attend, it is for the Lord. When I neglect a service, my influence is for Satan.

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH TO PROVE MY LOVE AND GRATITUDE. So boundless was the love of Jesus for the church, he gave his life for it. If I would be his disciple, I must also prove my love. Since God has given me a multitude of blessings I do not deserve, it is indeed a small sacrifice to return a few hours in public worship. One who truly loves God does not ask if he must attend all services. His love compels him to! If I show love to God by attendance, I show lack of love by absence.

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH TO OBEY GOD. The Bible says, "forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." (Heb. 10 : 25). The first Christians met weekly and often daily. (Acts 20 : 7; 2 : 45; 19 : 9). ANY service where the Bible is taught, prayer is made, and God is worshiped, is good, and "to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin." (James 4 : 17). If it is good to be present for all services, it is bad to be absent from any.

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH TO PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST. "Seek ye FIRST his kingdom." (Matt. 6 : 33). Jesus said the church must be first to the Christian, even BEFORE seeking food, clothing, and drink. Nothing could be so important as being a faithful member of the Lord's church!

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH BECAUSE IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. All who forsake an assembly wonder if they sin, but I know I am perfectly safe in attending EVERY service. Yes, dangerous risks

are taken in forsaking ANY assembly of the church : Christ may return in that hour, death may come, a life of neglect may begin, and others may be lost by a bad example.

I GO TO EVERY SERVICE OF THE CHURCH TO ABOUND IN THE LORD'S WORK. A true Christian wants to do ALL he can and not as LITTLE as he can. Even after doing all possible, I am still an unprofitable servant. (Luke 17 : 10). Since the assemblies of the church are vital in the Lord's work, I must abound in attendance. "Finally, my brethren, be ye steadfast and unmovable, always **ABOUNDING** in the work of the Lord." (1 Cor. 15 : 58).

WITHDRAWING FROM THE DISORDERLY

James Pilgrim

INTRODUCTION

The plea of the churches of Christ is to "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent," to return to "the old paths where is the good way," and "to restore primitive New Testament Christianity."

When one compare the church today to that established on the day of Pentecost, he must conclude that the church of Christ has been fully restored. The organization of the two is identical. We, like they, have elders over the flock (Acts 20 : 28), deacons to serve (Acts 6 : 1ff; 1 Tim. 3 : 8), evangelists (Acts 8 : 5), and a flock (1 Pet. 5 : 2). Our worship is patterned after theirs. We sing (Heb. 2 : 12), teach, give, break the bread and pray (Acts 2 : 42) upon the first day of every week (Acts 20 : 7; 1 Cor. 16 : 2). We teach the same plan of salvation taught in the early church. Faith (Heb. 11 : 6), repentance (Acts 2 : 38), confession (Rom. 10 : 10), and baptism (1 Pet. 3 : 21) are necessary to be saved (Rom. 10 : 8-17), and thus, added to the church (Acts 2 : 47). Their creed was Jesus Christ; He is ours. We maintain that the structure of the church today is like that of the first century. Thus, we believe it has been restored.

There is, however, a failure to withdraw from the disorderly in some local churches. This does not mean the church has not been restored. If so, the church at Corinth would not have been called the "church of God" (1 Cor. 1 : 2). Discipline is a work of the church, not the church itself. One might restore an old car, yet never drive it. This would not mean the car had not been restored, but there is a work to do. So it is with the church. There is a work to do. One such function is discipline.

"Many churches today are hindered in their work for Christ because disorderly members are unrebuked; because wayward members are not restored; and because careless members are not exhorted and reprov'd. The results of such failures are numerous : souls are lost, abilities are not used for the Lord, work fails, the purity of the church is defiled, and the church loses its good report in the community." Foster L. Ramsey, "The Discipline of the Church," Minister's Monthly, Vol. IX, No. 11 (July, 1964), p. 538.

Correction is an unpleasant task because of what it requires. For this reason, we should not attempt to study the subject or perform the work without first asking God to fill our hearts with His truth.

NECESSITY OF WITHDRAWING FROM THE DISORDERLY

God commanded discipline. "Now we command you..." (2 Thess. 3 : 6-15). The Thessalonians were not told to vote on whether or not they wanted to withdraw. No choice was given. They were **COMMANDED** to "withdraw...from every brother that walketh disorderly

..." (v. 6). "In His name" is by His authority, with His approval. (Comp. 1 Cor. 5 : 4). Here, an additional statement is made, "With the power of our Lord Jesus Christ." The action would have the *power* of Jesus behind it. It would be just as effective as if Jesus were here in person helping us deliver the sinful to Satan.

1 Corinthians 5 deals with purging. Remember, the action which Paul commands the church at Corinth to take is in the name of Jesus and with His power. The charge, "To deliver such an one unto Satan" (v. 5) or "Purge out therefore the old leaven" (v. 7), is a positive command, not a request. No choice or opinion was involved.

2 John 9-11 is an injunction to "receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." Here is a "clear-cut" command to draw a line that will separate the Christian from the doer of evil deeds.

In Matthew 18 : 15-17, Jesus charges us to let any man who sins but will not repent be unto us "as an heathen man and a publican." 2 Cor. 13 : 1, 2 is a restatement of that law. The sinful are not to be spared.

"DO IT!" then, is the instruction. To reason that it is a matter of choice is to reason that baptism and like commands are matters of choice. The church isn't a democracy, but an autocracy. We do not vote to decide which laws we will obey, and which rules we will set aside, but we follow every ordinance of Jesus given to us. Anything short of withdrawing from the disorderly is disobedience to God, whether willingly or ignorantly.

It is not only scriptural to do this work, but it is absolutely necessary. If God had commanded the purging

only once, that would have been enough, but he has given us the injunction several times. There is more said of discipline than baptism. Let us be faithful to obey "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4 : 4). (cf. also, John 2 : 5)

FROM WHOM ARE WE TO WITHDRAW?

Does God direct us to withdraw from those who break any law or only certain laws? If only certain laws are grave enough to demand marking when broken, which are they? Who has the right to decide which sins shall be serious enough to demand purging? The answer lies not "in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Cor. 2 : 13).

Some of those from whom we are to withdraw are named. They are : one who commits a private trespass against another (Matt. 18 : 15-17); those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to sound doctrine "which ye have learned" (Rom. 16 : 17, 18); those guilty of fornication and covetousness; those who are extortioners, idolaters, railers, and drunkards (1 Cor. 5); those who walk disorderly, "not after the tradition which ye have received," sluggards, and busybodies (2 Thess. 3 : 6-15); those who teach other than the word, who consent not to wholesome doctrine; the proud and ignorant; those who dote about questions and strifes of words; those who produce envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds; those destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness (1 Tim. 6 : 3-5). These passages pretty well cover the sins specified in other inspired books on this subject. These are specified. There

can be no doubt. We must mark all who commit one or more of these sins.

Question : Are we to note those who commit *only* the sins specified, but no more? If the answer is yes, murderers, liars, (Rev. 21 : 8), abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves (1 Cor. 6 : 9-11), sex perverts, haters of God, etc. (Rom. 1 : 24-31) could not be marked. This is absurd. If these are included, by what authority? If we are to mark only those who commit the sins specified, we could not note one by the authority of God who committed sins other than those explicitly stated. By what right then? Not by man's. He would never be in complete agreement on which sins were serious enough to demand this action. The church would, therefore, be in division continually. Too, man's classification of sin (if there were such) would differ from God's. Again, man might make some evil serious enough to demand a withdrawal, while he might make others insignificant.

There are no small or insignificant sins. Any impiety will destroy one eternally (Ezek. 18 : 20; Rom. 6 : 23). The "small" transgressions that we tend to overlook sometimes hurt the most. The *small* foxes spoil the grapes (S. of Sol. 2 : 15). The author had a cat and a kitten. The kitten did his grape vines more damage than the mother, thus illustrating again the concept that the smaller things can be the most harmful. In Leviticus 4, we read of the sin of ignorance. It even had to be repented of when known. Baby rattlesnakes are as deadly as the grown ones. A few years ago, a boy was fishing, catching one right after the other. Two men not having such luck inquired about his bait. "Stinging worms," he

replied. They were baby rattlesnakes. When he put his hand in the can, they bit him. He thought they were only stinging, but he died in a few hours. SMALL? Would it be trivial if your banker took a few pennies from your account now and then? Would you not try to correct the man? If he continued to take the pennies, would you overlook it? No. Why? Because a law would have been broken, regardless of how small. Any sin that we commit is a transgression of the law (1 John 3 : 4) and will separate us from God (Isa. 59 : 2). Anything that will cause us to violate God's law or cause Him to separate from us cannot be minimal; thus, the need of dealing with all who sin. Instead of having a conscience that will be pricked only when we do something BIG, we need one that will be easily pierced.

Brethren, we set ourselves up as God when we try to legislate which sins, when committed, demand discipline. God forbid that any become that bold. Let God's law—all who sin—stand (2 Cor. 13 : 1, 2).

What does "walketh disorderly" mean? (2 Thess. 3 : 6). The context reveals it to mean one who walks not after the tradition, a sluggard, and a busybody. Disorderly comes from the Greek word ATAKTOS (Adj.), 1 Thess. 5 : 14 (unruly or disorderly). It "signifies not keeping order...not keeping rank, insubordinate; It is used in 1 Thess. 5 : 14 describing certain church members who manifested an insubordinate spirit, whether by excitability or officiousness or idleness." ATAKTOS (Adv.) "signifies disorderly, with slackness (like soldiers not keeping rank, out of one's place, undisciplined, to behave disorderly." (W. E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament

Words, "Disorderly," Vol. I, P. 320.) Webster says, "Lack of order...Neglect of order or system; irregularity...." Disorderly, then, is simply not doing what God says do, or doing what God says not to do.

"And if any man obey not our word..." (2 Thess. 3 : 6), gets all iniquity, not just certain sins. If this verse does not cover all unrighteousness, what part of the word may one fail to obey (commit sin) and not be noted? Let us not restrict God's law with our human imitations, but leave the matter as God has given order—ALL SIN. Ephesians 5 : 27 stresses the need of keeping the church free from any unrighteousness, not certain sins. Paul is specific as to the sins he means—ANY.

The personal trespass of Matt. 18 was not to be forgiven until the sinner repented. The offence was to be made public if the transgressor would not repent. It was not to be forgotten and/or overlooked. The man was to be marked if he did not hear them. So seemingly insignificant, yet as much in need of noting as the fornicator of 1 Cor. 5. The reasons are simple. Sin has been committed, the sinner was lost, a brother was wronged, and Christianity suffered.

We must quit overlooking these "small" sins. If one has the right to commit one "small" sin, all have the same right. All have the right to sin twice, if they have the right to break one law. Multiply one times the membership where you worship, and let all of the members forsake one assembling. Is it small? If they have the right to miss once, they have the right to omit two, all. How long would it take to destroy the church? Would that not be

sin? Make the same application with any sin of the flesh, eye, or pride of life. TINY?

Those who sinned at Corinth and did not repent would not be spared (2 Cor. 13 : 1, 2). Dare we try to exclude any sin from the inspired apostle's statement? The Holy Spirit told Paul to write "sin," not a few sins. We must leave it that way. The authority for dealing with all impurity is from Jesus (1 Cor. 5 : 4). He teaches us that a Christian (any Christian) who sins (any sin) and will not repent is to be "put away from" the church.

HOW IS THE DISCIPLINE TO BE ADMINISTERED ?

We have God's word only for our answer. The sinner is to be delivered to Satan only after exhortation (2 Thess. 3 : 12; 2 Cor. 13 : 1; cf. Tit. 3 : 10). The attempt to restore the wrongdoer should begin immediately upon knowledge of the offense, but the final act of rejecting him comes later, when the sinner will not repent.

The Christian's relationship to one from whom the church has withdrawn is established in the following passages. First, Matt. 18 : 15-17 : "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Secondly, Rom. 16 : 17 : "Mark them;" "Avoid them." Third, 1 Cor. 5 : 2, He should "be taken away from among you." We are to "deliver," "purge out," not "keep company" with, and "put away from yourselves" such persons. Neither are we permitted to eat with such an one. The ANT says of 1 Cor. 5 : 11, "[No] you must not so much as eat with such a person." Williams translates the verse, "With such a person you must even stop eating." TEV reads, "Don't even sit down to eat with such a person." Fourth, 2

Thess. 3 : 6, 14 : "Withdraw yourselves from"—retreat, go away from; "Note that man"—a mark by which a man may be known...distinction : Cause him to "be ashamed." The fifth passage is 2 John 10, "Receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

Withdrawing from erring brethren is an unpleasant task, for we must sever ties that bind Christians closer than any blood relationship. It is a more solemn occasion than the procession to the cemetery : nevertheless, those who sin must be purged, delivered back to Satan.

The whole church is to do the withdrawing (1 Cor. 5; Acts 15 : 22; cf. Phil. 2 : 5.) We are to be of one mind. Matt. 18 : 17 shows that it is the church, no members excluded that does the withdrawing. Elders, in being over the flock, should lead in the proceedings, and the flock should follow (cf. Heb. 13 : 17; 1 Pet. 5 : 2; Acts 20 : 28; 1 Thess. 5 : 12, 13; Tit. 1 : 7-13). Churches without elders are not exempt from this work. Some of the men should take the lead, and all others follow. Unless the whole church executes the discipline, it hasn't a chance of being as effective as it would be otherwise. If a disgruntled few who have not the backbone to stand for the truth hold back, the lost will become proud. They will not repent, and therefore, will remain lost. Those who refuse to note them will have contributed to their damnation. (cf. Ezek. 3 : 18-21). Let every member make the offender feel all that withdrawing suggests.

Those from whom we retreat are not to be counted as enemies, but as brethren. We are still to admonish them (2 Thess. 3 : 15). This suggests that we may still have a particular, limited contact with the purged, else how are

we to admonish them? Paul defined the relation with them—to admonish them. There are two dangers connected with our contact with such persons. One danger is to completely ignore the person. How can one admonish a fallen brother in this manner? The second danger is to be too friendly, to the point that the brother or sister feels no shame. Let us pray for wisdom that we will not be guilty of destroying the discipline in either of these ways. (cf. Jas. 1 : 5).

To extend fellowship to those from whom the church has withdrawn is to be partaker of their evil deeds (2 John 11). We would, thus, set ourselves against God and the church. This would place us in the same position as those who had been noted. If they had been cut off because of their evil deeds, should not all who are partakers with them also be cut off? If not, why not? *It is a serious matter to keep company with any who have been marked.*

There are many examples of discipline in both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, Achan (Josh. 6, 7), the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath (Num. 15 : 32-36), and Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10 : 1-3) are a few mentioned. In the New Testament, Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5 : 1-11), Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim. 1 : 20), the man at Corinth (2 Cor. 2 : 1-11), and others who sinned were purged. God has always provided a way to maintain purity. Even the first couple felt His wrath in this respect, when beautiful Eden was cleansed of Adam and Eve.

What is the faithful relatives' role in such matters? Their first obligation is to God, but they also have an

obligation to function as members of a family. The husband would not leave home if the wife were noted, or he would break another law (1 Tim. 5 : 8). The wife would remain at home, else she would violate the command to be an help meet and mother (cf. 1 Cor. 7; Eph. 5 : 31). Obviously, children should not leave home (Eph. 6 : 1-3). The family relationship is not to be broken in such matters. Each member of the family must function according to the will of God. It seems almost unnecessary to say that the members of the family would not sympathize with a member of the household who had been noted. It is, then, a grave matter to punish delinquent members, both on the part of those doing the correcting and those being made ashamed.

PURPOSE OF WITHDRAWING FROM THE DISORDERLY

We deliver the unfaithful to Satan to save his soul (1 Cor. 5 : 5; Jas. 5 : 19, 20; Gal. 6 : 1). Discipline isn't to "get rid of" or to "run off." It is to aid one in seeing his deplorable condition, and therefore, to help him to return. Sometimes we have to get to the very depth of sin before we can see where we are (cf. Lk. 15: 11-32). We are trying to help the sinner. When we fail to discipline, we hurt him—we leave him lost (Rom. 6 : 23). The soul which isn't pure enough to remain in the body, cannot be suited for heaven, thus, the need for helping the lost.

We note the erring brother to maintain the glory of Christ before the world (Jas. 3 : 16-18).

Purging is done to keep the church spotless (1 Cor. 5 : 6, 7; Eph. 5 : 26). The church must be kept pure of error (1 Cor. 1 : 10, 13). All false teachers who will not repent must be purged, marked, noted from the least to the greatest. To leave one in the body will lead the church into apostasy. Cancer spreads. So does false teaching. The church must be cleansed of ungodliness (Tit. 2 : 11, 12). The church is wounded when we fail to mark the unfaithful. A little leaven leavens the whole lump (1 Cor. 5 : 6). A single sin which is permitted to remain in the body will destroy the whole body (Rev. 2 : 5; 18 : 4). It is like destroying all but a little cancer. Exodus 12 : 15, 20; 13 : 7 reveals that Israel searched the darkest places of their homes to be sure all leaven was removed. The whole body will be destroyed if a leg infected with gangrene isn't removed, when all attempts to save it have failed. The "little" appendix will poison the whole body if it is left in the body when it becomes inflamed. The author's brother would have died within twelve hours, if his appendix had not been removed. Lepers were to be removed from communities (Num. 5 : 1-4). We have seen the church hurt many times because sin was left in it. How many times have you heard people say they would not attend our services because of some pretending Christian? People would not have these *excuses* if we would be obedient to God and purge such individuals when they will not repent. The sinner is preaching against Christianity, saying that it does not interest him enough to keep him faithful. Are we to leave such persons in the body? When purging is not done, the church becomes a breeding ground for lawlessness to God. If we do not discipline more in the

future than we have in the past, the church will soon be no more than a social club.

We must mark the sinner to keep the church's identity as being subject to Christ in all things (2 Cor. 2 : 9; Rev. 2 : 5).

When churches have corrective programmes, all are made to fear (Acts 5 : 11; 1 Tim. 5 : 20; cf. Deut. 21 : 18-21). From bulletins, remarks to the author, and personal observation, we see congregations which discipline, improved. It is not uncommon to hear of increased attendance, contribution, etc. when discipline is carried out in the right way.

WITHDRAWAL IS AN ACT OF LOVE IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

"As many as I love I rebuke and chasten" (Rev. 3: 19). Solomon said, "He that spareth the rod hateth his son : but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." (Prov. 13 : 24). Notice the words LOVE and LOVETH in those verses. In Heb. 12 : 5ff, the writer stresses LOVE behind the chastening. (Comp. Heb. 12 : 10 to 1 Cor. 5 : 5). The discipline is of LOVE because of what it attempts to do—destroy the flesh to save the spirit or make one a partaker of his holiness. It may not seem of love at the time. Children often do not see love in their chastisement, but it is there. Paul said his exhortation to deliver one to Satan was an act of love (2 Cor. 2 : 4). Two examples of love are seen in the attitude of two elders. One led in withdrawal proceedings against his daughter, reasoning that he wanted to see her in heaven. The other stated that he wanted to mark the disorderly, beginning with his

daughter. This will be our attitude when we have love for the lost. Let us do His will in meekness (Gal. 6 : 1).

DISCIPLINE WORKS

The fact that God commanded discipline is sufficient to prove the point. 2 Cor. 2 : 3-11 is an example of one being restored, showing that correction worked at Corinth. Heb. 12 : 11 says, "It yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness." Guy N. Woods tells of one who was marked. The noted man asked a faithful brother to eat with him. The brother stated that he could not, as he was not to eat with such an one. The sinner was overcome with much sorrow. He was restored in a gospel meeting that week. Many are the places where the church has been strengthened by obedience to this part of God's will, IT WILL WORK, IF WE WILL. It is God's plan. To deny that it will work is to doubt God.

We must not, however, think that all who are marked will return. God did not promise such. He states that some may be too far away to return (Heb. 6 : 4-6), while others may NOT endure such (Heb. 12 : 7). But let us not be afraid to do the Lord's will or think the programme unsuccessful because all do not return. The programme is meant to purify. The church will be cleansed whether the sinner is restored or forever purged.

WHEN SHOULD THE CHURCH WITHDRAW FROM THE DISORDERLY?

This depends on each individual. Some may need more teaching than others. There may be young members (either in age or faith). Some may simply not have

learned certain truths. Each case, even within a family, should be considered individually.

The fact that we have a command to withdraw necessitates a date to do the actual turning away. God was hasty in His punishments to many—Lev. 10 : 1-3 (Immediately); Acts 5 : 1-11 (Within a few hours). We are told to mark them after at least three visits (Matt. 18 : 15-17), after the first and second admonition (Tit. 3 : 10, 11). We do not wait years to punish our children. Why wait this long to correct souls? How many have died while we *waited* for them to return??? To fit the divine pattern for us, we will not be long in dealing with sinful persons. The longer we wait, the easier it is for their hearts to become hardened or for them to die lost. The time to begin restoration is when one sins.

OBJECTIONS TO WITHDRAWING

(1) "It is judging (Matt. 7 : 1-5)." Typical reaction by those who have been marked is, "Don't judge me!" Such objections show a lack of knowledge of the scriptures. Paul judged, and he told the Corinthians to do the same (1 Cor. 5 : 3, 12). Jesus told us to "make righteous judgments" (John 7 : 24). The judgment of Matt. 7 has reference to opinions or circumstantial evidence. This, we are not to judge. We are to make judgments based on fruits. We might guess at the type of a tree on the hill, but if we know that an apple came off it, we may judge it to be an apple tree (Matt. 7 : 20). The first judging we cannot do; the second we are told to do.

(2) "It shows that we do not love them (John 13 : 35)." We reason in religion like we do in no other

walk of life. Do we hate a child when we whip him for crossing the street against our will? Does the teacher hate our child when she whips him for breaking a rule? Do we hate a leper because we put him in a colony? Some show more love for a dog than for the Lord's Church: They will remove a thorn from the dog's foot, but leave thorns in the body of Christ. Reread the section, WITHDRAWAL IS AN ACT OF LOVE IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE.

(3) "We are to be forgiving (Matt. 18 : 21, 22)." True. And we will be when the erring repents. These verses do not deal with purging, but with what to do when one is penitent. It does not tell us to overlook faults. We can forgive only when one follows God's plan for forgiveness—repentance, confession, and prayer (Acts 8 : 22; Jas. 5 : 16). Jas. 5 : 19, 20, says the sins are covered *when one repents*. Jesus prayed for murderers to be forgiven (Lk. 23 : 34), but the prayer was conditional. When those conditions were met, the killers were pardoned. Likewise, erring Christians must meet certain conditions before they can be freed.

(4) "None of us are without sin, therefore, we cannot mark others (Rom. 3 : 23)." No Christian lives without sinning, but he who walks in the light, does not live in sin. (1 John 1 : 7). The Ephesians WERE dead in sin, but not now (Eph. 2 : 1). When we serve God, the blood keeps on cleansing us of our sins. If not, we have iniquity. Since nothing that defileth will enter heaven, a Christian could not enter the city, if he is a sinner. Those who walk in the light repent of their error, and are forgiven. The blood erases the faults of which we are not conscious.

Thus we are kept cleansed. This, then, is the difference between the purged and those doing the purifying. One strives to do His will. The former makes no attempt.

(5) "It may harden them so they will never return." Yes, it may. It is meant to either harden or soften. Instead of talking about what it may or may not do, talk about what the Bible says it did, and will do. It caused the man of 2 Cor. 2 to repent. Teaching baptism for the remission of sins may harden some. Shall we quit teaching it and quit baptizing???

(6) "The elders are taking too much authority." They are to oversee the flock (Heb. 13 : 7, 17). This is a part of that oversight. The objection would be valid if discipline were an invention of men, but it is of God. It is a fearful thing to accuse God's overseers of usurpation (cf. Num. 16). Fire consumed 250 princes of Israel who made a like complaint. Then, 14,700 people died in the plague of God's wrath, because they complained about the death of the princes. The elders must lead where God directs.

(7) "It isn't pleasant." It is not pleasant to remove a lung and work on it, but we will do so to make it work more efficiently. It is not joyous to Jesus when we leave His body spotted. How pleasant was His death on the cross? But Jesus had to die to remove sin.

(8) "I'm against it." It is not a matter of who is for it, or who is against it. It is a matter of right or wrong. Many are against immersion for the remission of sins. No Christian would want to cease immersing. The matter must be settled by God, not feeling.

(9) "We've never done it." or "I've never heard of it." Denominations have never taught the necessity of breaking the bread weekly. Would they be wrong to begin? Many churches have never purged the disorderly, but that is no argument that it is wrong. Authority proves it right or wrong. There is much to substantiate correction. We cannot attribute our failure to purge to a lack of teaching. God's word was taught. Space would not permit the naming of all who have taught and are instructing on the subject. Let us make haste to do His will.

RECEIVING THE BROTHER BACK

As was suggested before, the withdrawal is not "to get rid of" or "to run off," but to destroy the flesh that the soul may be saved. The noted person is to be received back when he has been made sorry to repentance (2 Cor. 2 : 1-11, esp. v. 8; 7 : 10). We should make the return as public as the announcement to withdraw. To fail to forgive and receive the returning brother is as wicked as not marking him in the beginning (2 Cor. 2 : 11). We look forward to the day when we can, with open arms, receive a once lost, but now found, brother back. What a day of rejoicing that will be!

CONCLUSION

Godly discipline has always been a note or mark of the true church at work. "If this were done in all cases, the

discipline of the church would have a purifying influence that would soon be felt and acknowledged by all her members." (Robert Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption*, p. 532). May God give us strength to do His will. May we love Him, and keep His commandments. Let us pray for wisdom in so important a work, and act with all humility (cf. Phil. 2 : 2).

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