

SALVATION BY FAITH
and other sermons

By

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INTRODUCTION

Here is another volume of radio sermons by Bro. S. C. Kinningham. These sermons, as well as those in preceding volumes, were presented originally over Radio Station, W.K.C.U., in Corinth, Mississippi, U.S.A. Our special thanks go to Bro. Kinningham for allowing us to print these sermons in Singapore

We urge you to read these sermons and to study them diligently along with your Bible. The author is not attempting to lead you away from the God of heaven but to the truth of his word. Each sermon is plain, to the point, and scriptural. While truth is held up, error is put down. I am confident you will be richly rewarded through reading and studying these sermons. If you find them helpful, please share them with others.

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NOT SAVED IN ANSWER TO PRAYER ALONE

When Saul of Tarsus became a Christian, he received a commission from the Lord to preach the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. He was to preach it to all the nations of the earth. In Romans 10:11 — 13 he said, “The Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Prayer is a great thing. It is one of the greatest privileges that man has upon this earth. The scripture says that “whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” The Lord himself encourages man to pray, and he wants us to call upon him for salvation; but this is not to say that man is saved just merely for the asking. The Bible does not teach anywhere that man is saved in answer to prayer alone. He must pray — yes. But there is more to it than that. He must also DO what the Lord says. Jesus said in Luke 6:46, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Our calling will be in vain unless we are willing to obey him.

Prayer is no substitute for obeying the commands of Christ. When Peter said, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,” no amount of praying could get them around doing these things. When Jesus said in Mark 16:15 — 16, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and baptized shall be saved, but he that

believeth not shall be damned," There is no amount of praying that will save one without doing what Jesus said. Praying will neither excuse one from believing the gospel, nor of being baptized in obedience to it. When baptism is mentioned in the scripture in connection with salvation, it always precedes salvation, and never follows after. The apostle Peter said in 1 Pet. 3:21, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us. Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The apostle said, "Baptism doth also now saves us." Preachers for denominational churches say it does not. What will you believe? An inspired apostle, or a preacher for a church that cannot be found in the Bible? When the apostle said baptism saves us, he did not mean to rule out everything else; but at the same time, we cannot rule it out either. Saul of Tarsus himself is an example of one being saved by baptism as it was accompanied by prayer. After he had seen the Lord face to face and heard the voice of his mouth, he was sent into Damascus where someone would come and tell him what he must do to be saved. No one ever had a stronger faith in Jesus Christ than Saul did from the very time the Lord appeared to him and he was permitted to look upon his face and hear him speak in person; but he was still not saved until someone went to him and told him what to do.

While Saul was waiting for somebody to come and tell him what to do to be saved, he spent the time praying. No student of the scripture will deny that he was a firm believer in Christ at that time, and he had truly repented. The man who came to him while he was in that state was a man whom the Lord sent. What did the Lord send Him for? — to tell him what he MUST DO. The Lord told him that he would find Saul praying. When he came in to tell him what he must do to be saved, and heard him praying, he said, "Now, why tarriest

thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," Acts 22:16. His sins were not washed away when he became a believer, nor when he repented, nor when he prayed. He had done all this, and still had his sins upon him. It was not until he arose and was baptized that his sins were washed away. There is no scripture any where that will offset this, and there is no line of reasoning that will get around it. And yet, preachers are trying with all their might to get people to believe that they can be saved simply in answer to prayer if they are true believers. Now if Saul of Tarsus could not, why should we think that we can today?

The penitent thief on the cross is very frequently referred to in an effort to show that one can be saved through prayer alone. People say they never read where the thief on the cross was ever taken down and baptized, and think that is conclusive proof that one can be saved in answer to prayer alone. It must be remembered that when Jesus said to the thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise," the last will and testament of Christ has not gone into force. Listen, please, as we read from Heb. 9:16 — 17. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity to be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." We are a New Testament people, and the scripture says that testament had not gone into force at that time.

The thief lived under the law of Moses, and not under the New Testament. That law under which he lived did not end until Jesus died, and he had not died at the time he made the promise to the dying thief. In Col. 2:14 the scripture says, "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 the cross." He could not have been under the Testament of Christ until the other law ended.

Another thing about the thief, the great commission had not been given while he was living. It was not until 43 days later that Jesus charged his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, saying, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The thief knew absolutely nothing about the charge. It was not until after the resurrection of Christ that he charged his disciples to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name among all nations," as recorded in Luke 24:46 The thief on the cross is not the example that one needs to prove that one can be saved in answer to prayer alone. To be able to prove that, one would need the example of somebody this side of the cross, and after the great commission was given, being saved by prayer and without baptism. That cannot be done. The various denominations argue that one can be saved without baptism, but at the same time, they are afraid to leave it off. Now why? Why not just leave it off altogether if one can be saved without it? There is nothing else that God has commanded that one can be saved without obeying; so why would one think he could be saved by prayer without obeying his command?

When the apostle said, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," he went on to explain how it is done. He said, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of God." From this, we learn that calling upon the Lord to be saved, means that the gospel first has to be preached, we have to hear it, believe it, and obey it. All of this is necessary to calling upon the Lord to be saved.

When Saul of Tarsus was praying and Ananias came and told him to arise and be baptized and wash away his sins calling on the name of the Lord, he arose immediately and was baptized. He later became an apostle of the Lord, and wrote of his baptism saying in Rom. 6:3 that he was baptized "into Jesus Christ." He also said in 2 Tim. 2:10 and Eph. 1:7 that this is where salvation is — in Christ. He was praying *before* he was in Christ, but was not saved until he got "into" him. And since he was "baptized into Christ," baptism stood between his prayers that he offered outside of Christ and the salvation that he received "in Christ."

Cornelius is also referred to as an example of one's being saved in answer to prayer alone. But the one who makes that claim has just not read far enough. When the angel of the Lord appeared to him, he said, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." When he repeated this in Acts 11:14, he said, "Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." He was praying when the angel appeared to him, but he was not saved until Peter should come to tell him "Words" whereby he and all his house should be saved. It was four days later before he heard those words, and while Peter was preaching to them the words by which they should be saved, he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord," Acts 10:48.

The command to be baptized was a part of the words by which Cornelius and his house were to be saved. We find this in perfect harmony with what Ananias told Saul, when he said, "Why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized calling upon on the name of the Lord." Cornelius was likewise praying, but was commanded to be baptized. If God were going to save him

in answer to prayer alone, there would have been no need for him to send for Peter. But we are told in the scripture that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and the command to be baptized is part of the gospel. Asking God for salvation without doing anything to obtain it would be like asking God for our daily bread without working for it. But God ordained that man eat bread by the sweat of his face, and also ordained that we “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.” Instead of waiting for God to save us in answer to prayer alone, we need to heed Peter’s admonition to “Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” This is done only through faithful obedience to the gospel of our salvation.

THE NATURE AND REWARD OF DISOBEDIENCE

I want to talk to you today about the matter of holding the law of God in disobedience. God has never given a law to man with the promise of reward for obedience to it without at the same time warning against, and pointing out the consequence of, disobedience to Him. God pointed out to Adam and Eve the fearful consequence of eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that was in the midst of the garden of Eden. He said, “Thou shalt surely die.” We know today that the penalty was assessed against them when they disobeyed, and their posterity has suffered ever since from it.

When God gave to Israel the law at Mt. Sinai, he said, “I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visitng the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing lovingkindness

unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments," Ex. 20:5 — 6. The subsequent history of that people shows that "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward," as stated in Heb. 2:2.

The disobedience of the people of Israel to the law that God gave them is pointed out by the writers of the New Testament scriptures as a warning to us that we may not fall after the same example of disobedience today. It was because of their failure to keep the law of God as he gave it that diseases were sent upon them, as well as famine, pestilence, war, and long stretches of captivity in foreign lands under the cruel hand of oppression.

When God sent his Son into the world to redeem man from sin and death, he gave to us exceeding and great promises based upon compliance with his divine law; but he likewise told us of the consequence of our failure to obey him. John 3:36 says, "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Faithful obedience will lead one into life, but the one who obeys not, Jesus said, shall not see life. The gospel is the means that he has given for our redemption; and the apostle Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation of every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek," Rom. 1:16. Then he turned around in the next breath and said, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." That is, the wrath of God shall be revealed from heaven against all who hold the gospel in disobedience. That is stated in 2 Thes. 1:8 — 9 in terms so clear that none can possibly misunderstand it. He said, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”

Though there are many people who will readily agree that one will be saved through his obedience to God, or be lost through disobedience, they will not always agree on what really constitutes obedience, and what disobedience is. It is a very common thing for people to contend that they have obeyed God when they have not done what he said at all. When God sent a prophet one time to the first king that Israel ever had, to ask him why he has disobeyed the voice of Jehovah, he said, “Yea, but I have obeyed the voice of Jehovah.” It took considerable effort on the part of the prophet to convince this king that he had actually disobeyed God. So I should like to point out some of those examples of disobedience in the Bible that we may more easily see just what it is. Many people understand the consequences of disobedience who do not really understand the nature of it.

One type of disobedience is so common and so obvious that it is not difficult to recognize; and that is, the sin of rebellion — just simply refusing to do what God commands one to do. God said to Israel in Jer. 5:23, “This people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.” They had simply refused to do what God said, and defied his authority. They had no regard for his word, and no fear whatsoever of any evil that might come upon them for trampling the law of their Maker under their feet. They had reached the point where they were no longer willing to listen to God’s word and demanded of the prophets that they get out of the way of Jehovah and preach only the things that they wanted to hear.

God said of them in Isa. 30:9 — 11, “It is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of Jehovah; that say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth

things, prophecy deceits, get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy one of Israel to cease from before us.” There are any number of people who are doing the same thing today. They have rebelled against the law of Jehovah and demand of the preachers that they get out of the way of Jehovah and preach the things they like to hear. When God says, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,” many rebel and say they will not do it. They demand that the preachers preach something they had rather hear. Sometimes one is heard to say that he will die and go to hell before he will be baptized for the remission of sins as the Bible says. When God sent a man to a penitent believer to tell him to “arise and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord,” many rebel and say they will not do it. When God’s own Son said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, “thousands of people say they will die and go to torment before they will do it. It was this kind of people that God was talking about when he said. “It is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of Jehovah; that say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits, get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy one of Israel to cease from before us.”

Next, there are those who disobey God by substituting something else for what God has commanded. For instance, God told the priests under the law of Moses to get fire from off the brazen altar — fire that Jehovah had kindled, with which to burn incense in the tabernacle. In Lev. 10:1 — 2 the scripture says, “And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took each of them his censer, and put fire therein, and laid incense thereon, and offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them. And there came forth fire from before Jehovah, and devoured them, and they died

before Jehovah.” They died for substituting fire that had not commanded them for the fire that he DID command. And people think it a light thing to do the same today. The baptism that God commanded is a *burial* in water. The scripture says in Col. 2:12, “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” There is no other kind of water baptism in the Bible than a burial in water; and instead of that, people come along and substitute the sprinkling of water on the head of an individual instead of the burial that God commanded. This is not baptism at all in the sight of God, and the one who has practised that has only disobeyed the law of God.

Then, people disobey God by adding to his word. God said in Deut. 4:2,, “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, *that ye may keep the commandments* of Jehovah your God which I have commanded you.” But it was not long after that law was given until we have an example of their adding to what God spoke. In Num. 20:8 God told Moses to speak to the rock in the wilderness and it would bring forth water for the people and their cattle. Verse 11 says, “And Moses lifted up his hand, and smote the rock with his rod twice:” Then God said, “Because ye believed not in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.” This was a simple addition to what God said. He said, “Speak to the rock,” and Moses in addition to that, “lifted up his hand and smote the rock.” Now, you may look upon this act any way that you will; but God said it was infidelity, and because of it, he would not be permitted to bring that people into the promise land.

In the New Testament, God said, “Speaking to yourselves

in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord," Eph. 5:19. But like Moses, many good people are not satisfied to do just what God said. They want to add something to it. They want to *play* when God said, "Sing." You may say whatever you will about it, the one who adds instruments of music to his worship when God said, "Sing" is guilty of disobeying the law of Jehovah.

Then last of all, people disobey God by leaving off something he has commanded. In 1 Sam. 15:1-24 God told Saul to go and destroy the Amlekites—every man and woman, infant and suckling, camel and ass, ox and sheep. But Saul saved the king alive, and the best of the flocks and herds. Though their intention may have been good in saving them, they disobeyed the commandment of God. He said destroy ALL of them, and they lacked a little doing what he told them to do. Then God said to Samuel, "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be King; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments," 1 Sam. 15:11. He was rejected of God for the small failure.

God has commanded today that we believe and be baptized to be saved, (Mark 16:16). Many want to leave off the baptism; and when they do, they have disobeyed Jehovah. God requires all who would be saved to obey the gospel, and said those who fail to will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. He has ordained that Christians meet on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's supper, (Acts 16:4; 20:7). When the Lord's day comes, the Christian who leaves it off has turned back from following the Lord and has not obeyed his commands. Our entrance into holy city at last, will depend on our keeping his commands, we are told in Rev. 22:14. His commands are strict, and we must keep them as he has given them.

THE REGENERATION AND THRONE OF GLORY

In Matt. 19:28 Jesus said to his apostles, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Jesus had just been talking about the things one must give up in this life to be saved and how hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. Then Peter said, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" The Lord wanted them to know that the blessings of the kingdom of God are far greater than houses and lands and that one must be willing to sacrifice of these things to enjoy the blessings of the kingdom. He wanted them to know that the kingdom of heaven was to be a spiritual kingdom, and that men must submit to the authority of Christ and be subject to spiritual law to enjoy those blessings. And he wanted the apostles to know that they were to share with him in the rule in the kingdom that he came to establish.

The apostles were to receive the highest honor in the kingdom of heaven. They were to sit upon thrones and rule. Man has never served God for nought. God always rewarded man richly for the service he renders. When God called Abraham, he made to him exceeding great promises. He said, "I will make of thee a great nation." He said, "I will bless thee and make thy name great." He said, "In multiplying, I will multiply thee. I will bless him that blesseth thee, and him that curseth thee, will I curse." The subsequent history of this man shows that God did bless him exceedingly, and made him great indeed.

God promised to Israel the land of Caanan as an

everlasting possession for their service to him — a land flowing with milk and honey. He promised to make them fruitful in that land — to cause their enemies to cease from before them, to take away disease from among them, and bless the fruit of their land, of their body, and of their flocks and herds. All this he did for them as long as they were faithful to him. And to Christians, he has promised eternal life in the world to come, with all the glories of heaven itself. But now let us take a look at the promise that Jesus made to the apostles.

He said, "In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This passage of scriptures is very often misread by preachers in an effort to make it say something the Lord did not say. When people build up false systems of religion, they have to mis-handle the scripture to give to it. This passage is often read by preachers like this: "Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, they also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." That is vastly different from the way it reads in the Bible, and makes a tremendous difference in the matter of salvation.

Jesus did NOT say, "Ye which have followed me in the regeneration," as if the "regeneration" were something into which men had already entered. They want to put "The regeneration" in the past tense. But it is not put that way in the Bible. "Ye which have followed me" is in the past tense in the Bible; but not, "the regeneration." "The regeneration" was in the future tense, as even the casual reader may observe if he will only stop to take a look at the pointing, and the punctuation, as it occurs in all versions of the scripture. If one did not have a false doctrine to support he would never think of trying to put "the regeneration" in the past tense. They had already been following Jesus, but the period of

“regeneration” had not begun — and would not begin until Jesus sat on the throne of his glory.

The apostles were to sit upon twelve thrones at the same time that Jesus was to sit on his throne, and this was to be **“the regeneration.”** We are told very plainly in the scripture **WHEN** Jesus was raised up to sit on his throne. In Acts 2:30 — 32, Peter speaking by the guidance of the Holy Spirit concerning David, said that he **“Being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witness.”** This was spoken on the day of Pentecost and Peter said David was talking about the resurrection of Christ when he spoke of God raising up Christ to sit on his throne.

Then the apostle Paul said in Eph. 1:20 — 23 that God **“raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”** There can be no doubt then about when Jesus was placed on his throne to rule in the kingdom of God. And that is the time the apostles began their rule. It could not be when he sits on the throne of judgement, because there will be none to rule over then. At judgement, the wicked will go away into eternal punishment, and the righteous into life eternal. Christ will no longer rule over men then, but will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father.

“The regeneration” began at the time Christ was raised up to sit on his throne, and as the apostles were placed on their thrones. “The regeneration” is simply the period of the “new

birth," when people are born again. It is the period of the new creation, the new man. No one was ever "born again" before the apostles began to rule on Pentecost. Though Jesus spoke to Nicodemus before he died about the necessity of being born again, the new birth was not made possible until after the death and resurrection of the son of God. This will become obvious when we consider the things that are essential to the new birth. Paul said in 1 Cor. 4:15 that man is begotten by the gospel." Then in chapter 15:3 — 4 he says the gospel includes the death of Christ for the sins of man, his burial, and his resurrection. Since one must be begotten before he is born again — since one is begotten by the gospel, and the gospel includes the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, it is obvious that one could not be born again until after Jesus was raised from the dead.

Another reason why we know "the regeneration" did not begin before Pentecost, one cannot be born again, or become a new creature, without being brought into Christ. Paul said in 2 Cor. 5:17, "Now if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." But one cannot be "a new creature in Christ" until he is baptized "into Christ" as we are told in Gal. 3:27, and no one was ever baptized "into Christ" before Pentecost. People were baptized before that time all right, but not "into Christ." There is a difference. That is one of the fundamental differences between the way people are baptized into Christ and the way they are baptized by most other churches. Other churches do not baptize people "into Christ," and one cannot become a new creature without it.

On the day of Pentecost people who had come to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God were told to "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," Christ had been raised up to sit on his throne, and they had begun their rule now upon the thrones

promised them. The things they commanded become bound upon all men. When the people did the things the apostles told them, they were saved. And the 47th verse of the same chapter says, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

The people who obeyed the commands of the apostles were submissive to the authority of Christ, and Peter said in 1 Pet. 1:22 — 23 that their souls were purified in this obedience and were born again by the incorruptible seed as they obeyed the truth. In Titus 3:5 this is called "the washing of regeneration." He said, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit." When one is baptized in water in obedience to the commands of the apostles, he is baptized into Christ for the remission of sins, and becomes a "new creature in Christ." This is what Paul calls here "the washing of regeneration," and is the way people are born into the family of God.

SALVATION BY FAITH

One of the greatest principles among men is that of faith. Faith is a principle that is known by all people of all ages. There has never been a normal human being of any age who has not known what it means to believe. Everybody believes in something, or in somebody. All men have not known what it means to believe in Jehovah God, but they know what it is to believe nevertheless. In fact, there are millions of people in the world who do not even know about Jehovah, much less to believe in Him.

Today I want to talk to you about believing in God in connection with the salvation of the soul. Not all people who believe in Him will ever enjoy that salvation. A great many people will talk about what God does and what he does not do. They talk about the Bible that he has given, but at the same time, they put forth no effort whatsoever to serve him and make no pretensions in religion. They are convinced that there is a supreme Being — a great power that rules the universe. They are convinced that He exerts His power among men in various ways; but at the same time, they have not yielded to the power of the gospel.

That faith is a fundamental principle in the salvation of mankind is seen a great number of passages of scripture relating directly to it. I shall not attempt to give all of them by any means, but I should like to set a few of them before you at this time that tell of the essentiality of this principle, and then show how the principle works to bring about the salvation of the soul.

Eph. 2:8 — 9 says, “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” Rom. 5:1 says, “Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then Acts 15:9 says, “And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.”

The verb form of this word is “believe.” In its noun form, it is called “faith,” and in the verb form, “believe.” Now let us look at some of the passages that mention believing in connection with salvation.

When the jailer at Philippi brought Paul and Silas out of their prison cell after the earthquake that opened all the doors and loosed their bands, he said, “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. In Jn. 5:24 Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." 1 Jn. 5:1 says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." Let me say in regard to this passage before going on to another, that the apostle did not say, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, or is at that instant born into his Family." He is simply saying that faith is the principle by which one is "begotten." The word from which "born" is translated is used three times in this passage, and in a different form each time in the English. It is rendered "born," "begat" and "begotten." To be rendered consistently, it should be "begat" and "begotten" all the way through. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is "begotten" of him. He is saying simply that "every one who is begotten of God believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

But since we are talking about the necessity of believing in God in order to be saved, let us take a look at one other passage. Jesus said in Jno. 3:18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." These, and many other passages that connect faith with salvation, have been used a lot of times to show that this is all one has to do to be saved. And men who preach salvation by faith alone have labored hard to prove that nothing else is necessary — but that God will save all who believe on him, regardless of whether they obey a single command he has given. They generally add one thing more, but contend that one does not do anything when he does it. They add, "and trust him as your personal Saviour." Now all that I know about whether this is right or wrong is what I read

in the Bible. With it as our authority, let us look at this claim in the light of what the Bible says.

James 2:14 says, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" The advocates of the doctrine of salvation by "faith only" say, "yes," if he has faith he will be saved. — "if he is a true believer." Remember, James is not talking about the "kind" of faith. He is simply talking about FAITH.

Let us notice what he says about it in verse 18. He said, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." My friends, there is no way in the world that one can convince another of this faith without demonstrating it. There is no way in the world that one can convince another that he believes in God without doing what God says. The same writer goes on to show us that by saying, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture as fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," 21 — 24.

This inspired writer said in plain, simple terms that a man is justified by works, though theologians say not. This inspired writer says we are NOT justified by faith only. Modern theologians say, we are. Why will men go just the opposite to what the Bible says when the salvation of the soul is at stake and all eternity is involved? What is to be gained by fighting the Bible in this matter — in fighting against God. People know they cannot win in their fight against God, so why be rebellious enough to keep up the fight? When the Bible says we are justified by works, and men fight against that, they are fighting against God. And when the Bible says we are not

justified by faith only, and men labor to prove that we are, they are fighting against God. Why would you, as an individual, accept that doctrine, knowing that it contradicts the Bible? I, too, subscribed one time to that doctrine, but I gave it up when I learned what the Bible says. It was a matter of not knowing in my case: and that has most likely been true in your case. But now you know, and I hope you will be willing to do what the Bible says.

The Bible tells us that when one comes to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ he receives the power to become a son of God. He is not a son of God, but simply receives the power to become one. Jno. 1:11 — 12 says, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not: but as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name." They believed on him first, then received the power, or right, to become the sons of God.

Rom. 1:16 says the "gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." One must be a believer before the gospel has the power to save him. 1 Cor. 1:21 says, "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The believer is not saved, but has to be saved. The gospel is the power to save him. God will save the believer by preaching.

Acts 11:21, says, "The hand of the Lord was with them and a great number believed and turned to the Lord." Man is not saved until he turns to the Lord, and he does not turn until he believes. He believes first, and then turns. Acts 19:18 says, "And many that believed, came and confessed, and declared their deeds," They believed first, and turned to the Lord. When they turned to him, they came confessing their deeds. They were not saved till they did this. Now listen to Acts 8:12. "When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts 18:8 says,

“And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.” Now Jesus said these are the ones who shall be saved. In Mark 16:16 he said, **“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned.”** So, according to the Bible, this is what it means to be saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It means to do what he says, doubting nothing.

CONVERSION

In Acts 3:19 the scripture says, **“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”**

“Conversion” is a great thing. It has to do with where we will spend eternity. Many varied opinions have been held concerning it, and men’s ideas have changed, and are changing in regard to this matter. This simply speaks of a greater failure on the part of so many to truly grasp and fully appreciate the meaning of the term. Many have failed to learn the truth of God along this line. Truth never contradicts itself. What is true in one place about conversion is true in all places. And what is true in one age regarding it, is true in other ages. The things that were taught by the apostles and other men in their day have no less force today than when first spoken.

Many doctrines have grown out of the ideas advanced by men, and various systems of worship, and systems of doctrine

have been built up around them. I think all of us know that those systems must stand or fall with the theories upon which they are built, and upon which they rest for their very foundation. If the theory is false upon which a system is built, it simply means that that system must fall when the theory upon which it rests is exploded. Only that which is built upon the eternal truth of God will stand throughout time, and will stand in the day of judgement. Shall we take a look now at some of those theories advanced by man in connection with the salvation of man.

One theory says man is born into the world in sin, totally depraved, a child of the devil, and that if he dies in infancy he will be lost. It was out of this idea that "infant baptism" emerged. To keep the babies from being lost according to this theory, the idea was conceived of baptizing them as early in life as possible. There was no such practice until that idea of total, inherent depravity was conceived long after the days of the apostles. But in 1910, in a General Conference of the Methodist Church at Ashville, N. C., that idea was changed in the religious body and their Discipline was changed accordingly. Instead of saying that one is born into the world in sin, the Discipline was made to read thenceforth, the man is born in the world in Christ Jesus free from sin. Now if their theory was right to begin with, all who have adopted the later view are wrong; and vice versa. Both of those ideas could not be right. As a matter of fact, both ideas are wrong according to the Bible. According to the Bible, one is neither born into the world in sin, nor in Christ Jesus. One is born into the world an innocent being until he reaches the state of accountability where he is capable of knowing right from wrong and is responsible before God and man for his actions. He then obeys the law of Christ and is baptized "into" him, or refuses to obey and becomes a sinner.

Another theory says that God foreordained certain

individuals to be saved and others to be lost. Out of this have grown certain doctrines and practices peculiar to Calvinism. But a great many have changed their minds on that and no longer believe it is the way Calvin suggested. Another theory is that man went away from God of his own volition and that conversion, therefore is wholly of man. Out of this idea came the mourners bench, and other doctrines and practices of like import. However, the mourners bench is not popular any more and has just about faded out.

Another theory says that man does not have the power to come back to God, and that if he is saved, God will have to do all of it. Thus, a direct operation of the power of God upon man in a miraculous way is advocated. Men are taught to pray for God to send his saving power into their heart that they might be regenerated, or born again. They completely ignore the power of the gospel and want God to send his power into their heart in a miraculous way. Out of this idea grew the practice of telling an "experience of grace" — how they felt when the power hit them, and how they knew they were saved. And that would not be "The full assurance of faith," but an halucination based upon "feeling." They tell us they KNOW they are saved by the way they FEEL.

The only way we can know what true conversion is, is by the Bible itself; and according to it, there are two elements involved—a human and a divine. Let us take a look at a few of the scriptures bearing directly on this. John 3:16 says that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but should have everlasting life." There is the gift of God on the one hand, and faith of man on the other. Eph. 2:8 — 9 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast." Again, we see the divine and human elements— the grace of God and the faith of man. Rom. 5:1

says, "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through Our Lord Jesus Christ." Again, it is both God and man. 1 Cor. 3:9 says, "For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building,"

In this last passage, more than merely believing on the part of man is suggested. The apostles said, "We are laborers together with God." There are many other passages indeed, that speak of things man must do to be saved. In Acts 2:40 the apostles urged the people to "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." The very next verse says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." That is also in complete harmony with what Ananias told Saul of Tarsus in Acts 22:16 when he said, "And now why tarriest thou; arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord." All of this is involved in man's being saved in Christ.

Man in the beginning was free from all sin and on intimate terms with God. He walked and talked with God and was constantly blessed by His presence. But all that has been changed. Man fell from that High and holy state and his relationship to God was no longer the same. When we look back over the change that took place and see the things involved in man's turning away from God, we can understand more clearly what is involved in our return to Him.

There were six distinct steps involved in man's turning away from God, and they must all be re-traced, one by one, in our return. 1. There was the preaching of a lie by Satan. 2. Man listened. He heard the lie. 3. He gave credence to it. He believed the lie. 4. He acted upon it. He obeyed the lie. 5. He became guilty before God. Sin is a transgression of the law. 6. Being guilty, he was banished from the garden and from the presence of God. Sin cannot dwell with God. One who commits sin is a sinner. Jesus came into the world to save sinners; but

to the people who did not believe in him, Jesus said, "Ye shall die in your sins; and "Where I am ye cannot come."

Christ established his kingdom for the salvation of man; but he said in Matt. 18:3, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." But to be converted, or turn again to God, man must retrace the steps taken in turning from him. 1. As a lie was preached in the beginning, the truth must be preached. 1 Cor. 1:21 says "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 2. As man heard the lie, he must hear the truth. 3. As man believed the lie, he must believe the truth before he can return to God. Jesus said, "The truth shall make you free." 4. As man obeyed a lie, man must obey the truth. Peter said in 1 Pet. 1:22 that "Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth." 5. As they were guilty in obeying the lie, we are made free from sin when we obey from the heart that form of doctrine delivered us, we are told in Rom. 6:17—18. 6. As they were banished from God because of their guilt, we are accepted of God today when that guilt is removed in Christ Jesus. Pauls says. "Wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved," Eph. 1:6.

If anyone is ever lost today it will simply be because he is not willing to retrace those steps that man took in his departure from God that he might be accepted of him once again. Let me urge today that you repent of your sins, confess your faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and be baptized into him for the remission of your sins in obedience to his commands that your soul may be saved in the day of judgement.

HOW GOD SPEAKS TO MAN TODAY

I want to talk to you today about how God speaks to man. There is no doubt that God does speak to man — but **HOW**? Have you not known of men who claimed that God spoke to them in a dream? or in a vision? Have you not known of someone who claimed that God spoke to them as they were driving down the highway in their car? It is a very common thing to hear some preacher get up and say that God called him to preach — that is, that God spoke to him in some mysterious, direct way, and told him to go preach.

My friends, when you hear any preacher make such claim, you can put it down for sure that God had not spoken to him. That one is self appointed and is going forth deceiving the hearts of the innocent. In the first place, if God had called all these preachers who claimed that God called them, they would all be preaching the same thing. They would not be out contradicting one another and trying to get people into different churches. In the second place, they would be able to show conclusive proof of such call. They would have something more to offer than their mere word. They would have their credentials to present — I mean credentials from the one who called them, and not from some religious assembly that has endorsed them.

Now the Bible tells us exactly how God speaks to man. And you may rest assured that he speaks to all men the same way. Listen while we read it. It is found in Heb. 1:1—2 and says, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in the time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” Here, the scripture says that God has spoken. There is no doubt about it. He has spoken, and he speaks today! Now, here are

two questions that I should like for you to think about. How did God speak to people in times past? And how does he speak today?

So far as the past is concerned, the apostle said God spoke to the fathers in times past by the prophets at sundry times and in divers portions. But he also hastened to say that he is not doing it that way today. According to this apostle of the Lord, we are told that God has spoken to us today through his Son. That is the only way he does it today. There is absolutely no indication that God has, does, or will speak to man in this age in any other way. It is true, that God spoke to people in various ways before the coming of his Son, but not any more. That was God's choice to it that way; and who am I, or who are you, that we should question the way God does it?

There was a time when God spoke to man directly from heaven. Man heard the voice of God, coming from God's own mouth. God walked and talked with Adam in the Garden of Eden. Later, God revealed his word to the prophets, who in turn spoke to the people. However, God told Moses, the great prophet and law-giver of Israel, that the time would come when He would no longer speak through the prophets — that he would raise up one prophet, referring to his Son, Jesus, and he would speak the words which God would place in his mouth. This prophetic declaration is found in Deut. 18:15 — 19. Listen as we read it. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me. They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall

command him.”

In this quotation, God declared that the time would come when he would raise up another prophet (one prophet — not prophets) through whom he would speak to man. Beyond any shadow of a doubt, this prophet was the Christ, the Son of God. This is in full accord with Heb. 1:1—2 where the apostle announced that God did speak unto the fathers, through the prophets in the past, but in the last days had spoken to us through his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things.

While Christ was on earth, he taught the word of God. God actually put the words in his mouth. Remember, God declared that he would do that. Jesus himself stated that he did. He said, “Think not that I came to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” Everything that Christ taught was from God. Jehovah put the words in his mouth. The doctrine of Christ is therefore the word of God.

My friends, there is no doubt about it. God not only spoke through Christ while he was on earth, but the apostle definitely declared that God speaks to man through his Son in this last age of the world.

At the time of the writing of Hebrews, in which the apostle declared that God speaks unto us through Christ, it is obvious that Jesus was no longer on the earth. Christ had already ascended to the Father in heaven. Then, the question arises, “since Christ is no longer on the earth, how does he speak to man today? Does Christ speak to man directly from Heaven?” Let us continue our study of the Bible for an answer to this question. I am sure you want to know on the matter, and will be satisfied with nothing but the truth.

While Jesus was on the earth he chose certain men as his apostles and schooled them in the word of God. In 2 Cor. 5:18 — 20 the venerable apostle Paul declared that they, the apostles, were ambassadors of Christ, and that God had given unto them the word of reconciliation. As ambassadors of

Christ, the apostles were the legally authorized spokesmen of the Lord. An ambassador of a government must have his credentials, having been legally and duly authorized to represent his government. The apostles of Christ were divinely chosen as the authorized representatives and spokesmen of Christ to men of the earth. No other man, or group of men, on the earth received such authority from God. Furthermore, there never has been any succession of that authority.

To be sure that the apostles of Christ, as his ambassadors, would speak only God's word, and not misrepresent Christ upon the earth by teaching their own doctrine, as many do today, Jesus promised them that he would send the Holy Spirit to bring to their remembrance the truth he had taught them while on earth, and furthermore, guide them into all truth, Jno. 14:26. He said, "But the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said unto you." Also, in Jno. 16:13 — 14 he promised the apostles that "when he the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak; and he shall declare unto you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you."

From these two quotations it is evident that Jesus went back to heaven, but before leaving he chose the apostles to become his spokesmen. He promised them the Holy Spirit, who would come and bring the words of God from Christ to them. The Holy Spirit not only would bring to their remembrance the things he taught them while on earth, but would guide them INTO ALL TRUTH.

My friends, you may be sure that the Lord has fulfilled every word of his promise. He truly speaks to us today, but not directly from heaven. He chose the apostles as his spokesmen.

By the Holy Spirit, he revealed his word to them. The miraculous works of the apostles by the power of the Spirit, were the inspired credentials of the apostles, establishing proof of the fact that they were the ambassadors of Christ, speaking only as Christ spoke through them. God, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit, spoke his word to the apostles, the only revelation of God to men of this last age. The word of the inspired men was confirmed by the signs, miracles and wonders, we are told in Mark 16:20 and Heb. 3 —4. The words spoken by them are written in the Testament of Jesus Christ; and I tell you today, the only voice of God you will ever hear on this earth is his word revealed in the New Testament. As evidence of this fact, look to the heathen lands where the Testament of Christ has not gone. They are groping in darkness and despair. The only way they can hear heaven's voice today, is for interested men and women to take the gospel of the Son of God to them as recorded in the Testament of Christ. He speaks to all men today in this way.

Will you listen today to some of the words that came from the lips of our Master, remembering that God put the very words in his mouth? Listen, as he says in Jn. 8:24, Verily, I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Who said that, my friend? Those are the words of Jesus, and God put the word in his mouth.

Listen, again. "I tell you nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Who said that? Jesus himself, recorded in Luke 13:3. That is the voice of God speaking today. Again, he said in Matt. 10:32, "Whosoever there shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Then in Mark 16:15 — 16 he said, "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." Who said that? God's own

Son. And the Father put the word in his mouth. My friends, that is the voice of God speaking from heaven to men yet in sin. Will you hear that voice today? There is no other voice that you may ever expect from heaven on how you must be saved. It is either to obey this voice that speaks today, or it is to reject the word he has spoken and die in disobedience. This is not the voice of Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, or some other reformer; but it comes to us through men who are known to have been inspired of God to bring his word to us. The last thing he told his apostles before his ascension into heaven was, to "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and Lo, I am with you alway; even to the end of world. When we do this , we know we are right and cannot be wrong.

THE ANCIENT LANDMARKS

I announce to you nothing new when I tell you that we are living in an age of change. Things around us are rapidly changing from day to day. Customs are changing and moral standards are not the same as they were a few years ago. Governments are changing; business methods and practices are changing; the ways of travel and communications are changing; and religion is constantly changing. But there are some things that do not change, and man cannot change them. The heavenly bodies remain in their places as God fixes them and men cannot alter their course in the universe. The laws of nature are fixed and man cannot change them.

There are things in the spiritual realm that God has established and does not intend for man to change — things that God intended to remain the same through the ages. Men

have tried to change these things but has always brought the curse of the Almighty upon themselves in doing so. When we attempt to change the things in the spiritual realm that God has established, we rob ourselves of the spiritual blessings of God and of the salvation of our soul. He has established landmarks to be observed by man in his sojourn upon this earth, and in his worship and service to God. Today, I want to call your attention to those ancient landmarks.

In Deut. 19:14, as Israel was preparing to cross the Jordan river and go into the promised land, they were given this charge. "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have set, in thine inheritance which thou shalt inherit, in the land that Jehovah thy God giveth thee to possess it. Then in 27:17, as they stood between the mount of blessing and the mount of cursing said, "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen."

The Israelites all received their own inheritance that was established to them in the land that God brought them into. Each tribe, each family, each household, and each individual. Their inheritance was marked out and the boundaries were fixed. They might be marked by a pillar made of rocks, or by a single stone. But no one was allowed to move one of these pillars, or stones, that marked the boundaries of their inheritance.

Several hundred years later, when Solomon was on the throne in Israel, he said in Prov. 22:28, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Then in 23:10, he said again, "Remove not the ancient landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless." With all the changes that had been wrought in government, in business, in their customs, and in society about them, these were not to be removed. They were to stand as long as that nation stood. But we have instances in the scripture of the violation of God's

order on the part of men. Job 24:2 says, "There are that remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed them. They drive away the ass and the fatherless; they take the widow's ox for a pledge."

This was a great evil among the people; but worse still, the princes of Israel were guilty of removing the spiritual landmarks that God had established. Hos. 5:10 says, "The princes of Judah are like them that remove the landmark: I will pour out my wrath upon them like water." It is these spiritual landmarks that I am particularly concerned about today. Men think it a light thing to tamper with the pillars that God has erected and remove from society the bounds that he has established. When we do this, we become guilty before God, and not only rob others of their inheritance before God, but also lose our own.

In the very morning of time, God established the home as the landmark of society. This was not done for the fowls of the air, for the fishes of the sea, nor for the animal kingdom. It was done for the human family alone. When God made the fowls of the air, the fish, and the animals, then he made man in his own image and after His likeness. Of all the creatures that God had made, man stood alone in the world. And God said "It is not good that man should be alone: I will make him a help meet for him . . . And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and took one of the ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh," Gen 2:18 — 24. This is the establishment of the home with husband and wife joined together as one flesh. Christ said in Matt. 19:6 that God joined them together, and it was not

God's will that man should separate them.

The purpose in establishing the home as the foundation of society, was that children should be born in it and taught the ways of God. When the law of God was given to Israel, he said in Deut. 6:6 — 7, "These words which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the day, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." He wanted the home to be a place where his law was taught the children from their infancy. Then after the law of Christ was given and his church was established, the apostles said "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

When the home is destroyed by an unfaithful companion, and no longer exists as God established it: or when the teaching of God's word is neglected in the home and the children are no longer brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord — are not trained in the ways of God, man has been guilty of removing the ancient landmark of society; and society about us is left without a solid foundation, and thus crumbles and falls.

Next, there is the land mark of divine revelation, or of Bible facts. The first and fundamental fact of divine revelation, is the existence of Jehovah God as creator of heaven and earth and all the host of them, the creator of man and of every living creature. Remove this fact from the teaching of mankind and he is like a ship on the ocean under a cloudy sky without chart or compass. He is like a blind cat in a dark cellar without the ability to find his way out. The Bible affirms him to be "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and

all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts 17:12 — 28. Thus, he is proclaimed to be the creator of heaven and earth, the creator of man, and the giver of life. In Heb. 12:9 he is said to be the Father of our spirits.

Evolutionists have tried to destroy this fact by the teaching of organic evolution. This theory is being taught in the schools all over our nation today, but it is impossible for one to believe it and be a Christian. For one to believe the theory of organic evolution is to disbelieve in God. That theory cuts man off from God and denies the very existence of God. The scripture tells us that it is impossible for such a one to please God. Heb. 11:16 says, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe in God. That theory cuts man off from God and denies the very existence of God. The scripture tells us that it is impossible for such a one 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."

Another fact of revelation is the completeness and all-sufficiency of the scripture. Its completeness is affirmed in Rev. 22:18 — 19, which says, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." The all-sufficiency of it is declared in these words: "All scripture given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for

correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all God works," 2 Tim. 3:16 — 17. Men remove that landmark when they start tampering with the word of God; either by adding to, taking from, or altering in any way the things stated therein.

Then there is the landmark of divine law. God has always commanded men to believe in him, and commands men today to believe in His Son. Jesus said in Jno. 8:24, "Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Another command of divine law is repentance on the part of all. Acts 17:30 says, "In the time of this ignorance God winked at, but now commands all men everywhere to repent." All have sinned, and all need to repent.

Another command of divine law is a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. God did not command men to simply make a confession — but a specific confession. Rom. 10:9 — 10 says, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." It must be a confession of faith in Christ. Before the eunuch from Ethiopia was baptized, he said in Acts 8:38, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Most denominations have taken away that landmark and are requiring candidates for baptism to make some other confession instead. Another command of divine law is baptism into Christ for the remission of sins. When Peter preached the gospel to the Gentile the very first time, the scripture says, "He commanded them to be baptized into the name of the Lord," Acts 10:48. The same apostle said in Acts 2:38 that this is "for the remission of sins." Men have taken away this landmark today and are not baptizing people for the reason given in the Bible, nor upon the confession given in divine law. God said, "Remove not the ancient landmarks."

SOME THINGS THAT NOBODY KNOWS

Perhaps greater emphasis is being placed on education today than in any previous period in history. In America and throughout the world, more and more stress is being laid on learning. There are probably more P. H.D.s in America today than there were high school graduates a half century ago. We boast of a great literary and technical knowledge, as well as in the various sciences and arts that have challenged the thinking of man. But with all our boasted knowledge of things within the realms of nature and of human relations, there are some things that no man knows. And no school has been established among men from which they may be learned. I want to talk to you today about some of those things that nobody knows.

If you think it presumptuous on my part to talk to you about the things that nobody knows, I urge you to listen and see. This can be an extremely important thing with us, for there definitely is something that we can do about them. We may not know about them, but we can do something about them. If it became apparent that a can of poisoned food had inadvertently been placed in a case of other food all bearing the same label and nobody knows which one it was, is there nothing we could do about it? Surely, everybody agrees that there is something that we could do to protect ourselves in such case. And so it is in connection with things that will effect our eternal destiny.

One thing that nobody knows is how long he will be permitted to live on the earth. When we go to the cemetery and look around, we find graves of all sizes. When we read the marker that tells of the one buried there, we find them varying in length of time spent on the earth from infancy to the century mark, and past. When David said in the 90th psalm, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten, or even by reason of strength fourscore years; yet is their pride but labor

and sorrow," he was not saying that all people will live to a range within the limits he mentioned; for he himself had lost a little son of tender years. He too, could speak of his forefathers who had lived to a much riper age than that. He simply spoke of what was then considered a normal life span for one of reasonable health; and even then, one does not know at what time within those limits he might be taken if he should reach them.

Solomon said in Ecc. 8:3 "There is no man that hath power over his spirit to retain the spirit: neither hath he power over the day of death." That is something that we simply cannot know. Whether Jesus comes to all the world at the same time, or whether he comes to the individual, no one knows the day nor the hour when it will be. Jesus said in Mark 13:32 — 37, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

This, of course, has reference to the time when the Lord will return in the end; but it applies with equal force to the time of one's departure from this life. People have done a lot of specualting about when the Lord will come again, and a lot of fantastic claims have been made regarding it. Many prophecies and other statements in the scripture have been grossly misapplied and related to the return of Jesus, when there is no relation between the scripture cited and that event. The Lord simply says, "of that day and that hour knoweth no man, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but

the Father.” Since no man can know it, why try to figure out and set a date for it? Man only shows himself to be a fool when he does.

So far as the day of death is concerned, no man knows when it will come. Men often make plans as if they were going to live for ever on the earth, or as if they had a guarantee that the day of death would be considerably delayed. James said, “Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away,” Jas. 4:13 — 14. Now since we cannot know this, what can we do about it? The thing that we can, and must do about it, is to make preparation for it now. Tomorrow may be too late; for the scripture says, “Ye know not what shall be on the morrow.” God has not promised to save us tomorrow, but only today. The scripture says in 2 Cor. 6:2, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation,” Tomorrow could well be too late. You need to take care of your soul’s needs today.

Another thing that nobody knows, is that the Lord will give man a second chance. People who speculate on the second coming of Christ often claim that man will have a second chance when he comes again. In the first place, if we pass up the chance to be saved now, why should one think that he would do any better with a second chance if it were given him? But according to the scripture, there will be no second chance. In Luke 16:19 — 31 we read about a man who died and went to a place of torment. In that place, he begged for mercy, but no mercy was extended to him. He had wasted his life and his opportunities in life, and now the door of mercy was for ever closed to him. Solomon said in Ecc. 11:3, “As a tree falls so shall it be.”

No, I say that nobody knows that he will ever have a

second chance. The scripture says in Heb. 9:27. It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement.” Not a second chance, but the judgement.

One thing that nobody knows is, that God will accept “sprinkling” or “pouring” for baptism. Many churches practice one or the other of these, but nobody knows that God will accept it. The fact that powerful and prominent churches among men teach or practice a thing does not make it right in the sight of God. The holy scripture is the only standard of right and wrong that God has given for everybody. We can know what God will, or will not, accept only by consulting it. Rom. 6:3 — 4 says, “As many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ, are baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Then again in Col. 2:12 the scripture says, “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead.” Thus a water burial and a resurrection from it is described in the scripture as baptism, and no one knows that God will accept anything else. Why take a chance anyway, when we know what IS acceptable with him?

No one knows that God will accept the use of instrumental music in worship to Him. We know that Jesus said he would build his church. We read about the church in the Bible that he built, and the way the members of it worshiped God. But we do not read about their using instrumental music. The scripture says in Act 2:42 that “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayer.” So the things they continued in were the things the apostles taught. If they did not teach instrumental music, they did not continue in it.

The apostles taught quite a lot about music in the church, but it was always *vocal* music. They said in 1 Cor. 14:15, “I

will sing with the Spirit and I will sing with understanding also." In Eph. 5:19, the scripture says, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." Col. 3:16 says, "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." Emphasis is placed on "singing" but nothing is said about mechanical instruments. On the contrary, they were told to "make melody in your hearts" unto the Lord. Heb. 13:15 is even more explicit when it says, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." We know that he will accept our singing when done in the right spirit and melody is made in the heart, but no man knows that God will accept the music on mechanical instruments.

Another thing that no man knows, is that he can be saved outside of the church. Many claim they can, and different churches teach it; but God has not said it. God DID say he would save man in Christ, but did not say he would save him outside of the church. Paul said in Tim. 2:10, "I therefore endure all things for the elect's sake that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." There it is — salvation in Christ. One may say, "I accept that, but do not believe that one has to be in the church to obtain that salvation." That is because people have a misconception of what the church is. It is sometimes thought of simply as the place where people meet to worship, and sometimes thought of as a mere human organization. But according to the scripture, the church is the body of Christ. Col. 1:24 speaks of "the church, which is his body."

In view of this, one cannot be in the body of Christ without being in the church; and everything that God has promised through Christ, one gets only in the church. I am aware of the

fact that this leaves out all human denominations, but none of them existed in the days of the apostles, and Christ made no provision for them in his system at all. In their day it was simply "the churches of Christ" everywhere, as we read in Rom. 16:16. Everywhere the church of Christ existed, it constituted the body of Christ in that place. It was made up of all who were saved by the blood of Christ as stated in Eph. 1:7, and Acts 2:47 says, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." We know that we can be saved in the church that Jesus built, but no one knows that God will save him outside of it.

IF WE HAVE LOVE FOR CHRIST

In Jno. 14:15 Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is eternal, omniscient and omnipotent. He is the bread of life that came down from heaven, which if a man eat he shall live for ever, Jesus said in Jn. 6:51. He is the head of the body, the church. He is the ransom for our souls, through whom we may obtain salvation. He is the resurrection and the life through whom we may have immortality. And one of his apostles said, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience through the things which he suffered; and being made perfect through suffering, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, (Heb. 5:8 — 9)

Our faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is not a blind, unreasonable — a leap-in-the-dark type of faith. It is conviction based on the strongest sort of evidence. He was of a virgin and proven to be the son of the living God by his

perfect character, his divine knowledge, and miraculous powers. The events of his birth, his life and death, are shown to be at the center of God's purpose in redemption by the fact that over three hundred prophecies of the Old Testament are fulfilled in those events. The tomb, in which only a defensible explanation for the absence of his body, is the disciples' claim that he arose from the dead.

The life and work of Jesus Christ comprise the greatest of all proofs that God does love sinful men and that he desires their salvation. God has, therefore, made Christ the one and only Savior through whom we may have the remission of sins. Faithful followers of the Lord in this age acknowledge the absolute authority of Jesus Christ over their lives, and in obedience to his Great Commission, they are constantly striving to carry the good news of salvation through Christ into every part of the world. They present the evidence of Christ's unique Sonship, urge their hearers to believe on him and to obey his commands for salvation, and stress the fact that he is coming again to call all men into judgement according to the written word of God.

Can one who seriously investigates the evidence deny the fact that Jesus is the Son of God? Can he call our faith unreasonable?

Men of every generation in history of the world have been affected by Christ. Even men who lived before Christ came into the world were affected by him. Through the writing and speaking of the prophets who predicted the coming of this unique man, he influenced men who lived and died hundreds of years before his birth. During his lifetime on the earth, whole families, cities and races of people were influenced by his powerful life. In the centuries following his earthly life, men have continued to be drawn to Jesus and have lived and died for their faith in him. Kings and slaves, rich and poor, black and white, yellow and brown, young and old have all

been attracted to him.

How can it be explained? His influence is not due to money, political power, social position, formal education, nor traits which men have generally thought to be the "keys" to power. The Bible explains his influence in terms of his daily life. The apostles taught that Jesus was not merely a man among men, but *God* among men. Peter said of him, "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel of God, ye by wicked hands have crucified and slain," Then went on to say, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified both Lord and Christ," (Acts 2:22 — 24, 36).

Not only is Jesus Christ the object of our faith, but the object of our love as well. It would have been possible for Jesus to have demanded our faith to him as a divine being and yet, not evoke our love. If he had chosen to give primary emphasis to the severity of God, as opposed to the mercy and longsuffering of the Father, we would have been compelled to believe that what he said was true, and to obey him lest heaven's wrath be unleashed against us. He could have demanded, as head of the church, that we simply conform to his desires or else suffer the inevitable consequences. But he chose the more difficult path of making a supreme effort to win our deepest affection through an exhibition of divine mercy and love of mankind.

He bestowed his love upon the sons of men when there was no reason that he should. We were not lovely, obedient children he could not help loving. We were not obedient servants who had merited the love of the master by faithful service. We were not humble creatures pleading for mercy. On the contrary, we were a proud, rebellious and disobedient

people. This makes his love for us all the more remarkable.

Jesus showed his compassion for those who suffer in the body by the many acts of healing that he performed. There is not a single recorded instance of anyone coming to Jesus for help where he was ever turned away. He healed the blind, the dumb, the palsied, the epileptic and the insane. The scripture says, "And Jesus called unto him his disciples, and said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days and have nothing to eat; and I would not send them away fasting, lest haply they faint by the way." He took seven loaves and fed the "four thousand men, besides women and children," Matt. 15:32 — 38. As he was leaving Jericho, he heard the cries of two blind men as they said, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And Jesus, being moved with compassion, touched their eyes; and straightway they received their sight, and followed him," (Matt. 20:29 — 34). Mark tells us that Jesus was "moved with compassion" and healed a leper while preaching in Galilee, (Mk. 1:40 — 42).

Very often the expression occurs in the narratives about Jesus, "He was moved with compassion." He had an unequalled capacity for loving those who were in distress because of bodily affliction. It is no wonder that he drew such large crowds in every city he visited.

He had an even greater compassion for those who were in spiritual affliction due to their sins. Jesus' enemies meant to cast reflection on him by saying he was "a friend of publicans and sinners." But how grateful we are that their charge was true. He is a friend of sinners. He does not approve the sinner's actions and encourage him to continue in his sin. That would not be friendship for the sinner at all, for it would not to be his best interest to continue in sin. That would not make him a true friend at all, to counsel one to continue in the thing that was causing him so much grief and misery, and

which would ultimately cause his soul to be cast into hell. He is the friend of sinners in that he carries to them a message of hope and deliverance, and died to make it possible that man might be saved. Luke says, "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost," Luke 19:10. He came to show the path of holiness and happiness to men who were without God, and the way that would lead to heaven finally.

The Lord ultimately showed his love for sinners in the supreme sacrifice of himself on Calvary. Christ died for sinners. He provided for the justification of man through the blood that he shed for man. He made possible our escape from the wrath of God which will be revealed against sinners in the last day, Rom. 5:8-9.

God does not ask us to believe blindly, so he has given us incontestable proof that the claims of the Christ are true. God does not ask us to love blindly, so he allowed Christ ample time and opportunity to prove his sincere love for men to a skeptical world. Therefore, in view of the evidence which is clearly set before us, let us say with one voice, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and I love him for the love and mercy he has shown toward me."

But be not deceived, my beloved. A mere profession of faith and love must not be an end within itself. A mere profession is not enough. There must be a demonstration of them. The proof is in our obedience to God. Jesus said in Jn. 14:21, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." And as for faith James said in Jas. 2:20 that "faith without works is dead." Since our faith and love for God are shown in our obedience to his commands, we must learn what they are and do them.

For the one who believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, there are three commands that he must obey in order to be saved from past sins. The first is genuine repentance. Jesus said in Lk. 13:3, "I tell you nay; but except ye repent, ye shall

all likewise perish." Next, there must be a public confession of faith in Christ. Jesus said in Matt. 10:32, "Whosoever therefore that shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven." Paul said in Rom. 10:10 that this confession is made with the mouth unto salvation.

Then third, one must be immersed in water for the express purpose of receiving remission of sins. Jesus said in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, He that believeth not shall be damned." Then in Acts 2:38 Peter commanded those who had come to believe on Jesus as the Christ, the son of God, to "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

When a believer in Christ has lovingly obeyed these commands, he receives forgiveness of all past sins and has the promise of eternal life in the world to come if he is faithful to God in life and service until he closes his life upon this earth. Jesus said, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. 2:10. All the faith and all the love for God that one may profess, is but an empty profession unless backed up by sincere obedience to all His commands. It is only then that his faith and love are made manifest and will bring him into the loving favor of the Almighty. Let me urge that you obey him today and be cleansed by the blood of Calvary.

THE WAY OF LIFE

Jesus Christ came into the world that men might have life. Before he came, death had settled down upon the human

race and there had been none to free men from that sentence. The scripture says in Rom. 5:12, that "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so that death passed upon all men, for that all had sinned." Man in that state was without hope until God would send someone to bring life to the sons of men and give them hope. Jesus came that we might have that life, and he pointed out the way that men could enter into it.

In Matt. 7:13-14 Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." The Lord pictured here two ways set before the human family, one of which every individual must travel. Each one reaches out yonder into the eternal. The end of one is life, and the end of the other is destruction. According to the Lord, the vast majority of people are travelling the road to destruction; for he said the gate is wide and the way is broad.

If I were to tell you that the vast majority of people will be lost in the day of judgement and that only a very few will be saved, you might feel that I was deeply pessimistic, that I was not at all charitable, or perhaps even bitter toward others. But since the Lord himself gave us this picture and made the declaration, we must accept it as a correct representation of conditions among us. I am sure that no one would think for one minute that the Son of God himself was pessimistic, uncharitable, and unkind toward any. Instead of trying to justify ourselves, our friends, or anybody else, in the things they are doing in religion, the way they are living, or what they think, let us look at things as God gave them to us in the Bible and regard them as right and everything else as wrong. And instead of thinking of those who follow the way of God as it is in the Bible and speak out against the things in religion that are not in the Bible of being egotistical and thinking they are

the only ones going to heaven as all others as going to torment, we need to be comparing our own lives and our own ways and religious practices with the scripture itself to see whether we are in the way that will lead to eternal life in the end. It is narrow indeed, and there are not very many in it. It is right and everything else is wrong, according to the scripture.

The way of salvation and that leads to eternal life in the end is a matter of prophecy. God sent men to speak of it long before he sent his Son into the world to be the Savior of it. Over seven hundred years before the coming of Christ, a prophet said, "A highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. No lions shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk," Isa. 35:8 — 9.

According to the prophet, the highway of the Lord was to be an exclusive way. It was to be exclusively for the redeemed, and was to be characterized by holiness. One must be cleansed of all uncleanness before he can enter it, for "the unclean shall not be found there." And God determines who the clean and the unclean are. He does not leave it to man to make that decision, nor to set the standard. Jesus said in Jno. 15:3 that men are cleansed by the word of God. He said, "But now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." The apostle Peter said man is purified by obeying the word. He said in 1 Pet. 1:2, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth." So don't forget, my friends. All who obey the word of God are cleansed by it are travelling the same way and are the only ones who will enter into life in the end.

Another prophecy given concerning the way of life is given in Jer. 32:39. There, God said, "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them; and I will make

an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from following them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me.” You see how narrow God is in this? It was not the prophet who was narrow, nor is it the one who preaches what the prophet says about it who is narrow. This was God’s declaration of God’s way. I make no apology for the narrowness of that way, for it is God’s way. He has only given me the privilege of travelling it, and the responsibility of proclaiming it to others.

But according to the prophecy, God promised to give only one way. Now I know that men claim there are many ways to be saved — many roads leading to heaven and eternal life; but God says they are true. He said he would give “one way;” and my friends, that is it! He said it was for the good of men that he was doing this. When men attempt to devise ways in religion, they make a mess of things. They get men all divided, disagreeing among themselves, bitter toward each other, and hating each other. They fill the world with division and hatred; whereas God intended for the way of salvation to be one, and characterized by love — not hate. Not only did he intend for the way of salvation to be ONE, it IS one; and we are either in the way of life as set forth in His Book, or we are in the broad way that leads to destruction. Most of the people in the broad way are religious people, and a great many of them worship regularly; but just the narrow few are serving God in truth and will be crowned with life in the end.

I realized that a great many of people are confused when they read what God has said about there being a way of holiness in which all the redeemed shall walk, and when they read where he said he would give only one way, and then think of all the ways in religion that are around them on every hand. Sometimes people say they just don’t know what to do; that each one claims to be right, that all seem to be sincere, all use the Bible and cite scriptures to back up their claims. Well we

know this, that the Bible does not contradict itself, or else it would not be true. And we also know that since God said he would give "one way," somebody is misapplying some scriptures. That was done by false teachers before the apostles died. Paul said in Gal, 1:7 that "there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." Satan has always sought to corrupt the word of God and to turn man away from it. Paul spoke of those who "exchanged the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever," Rom. 1:25. That is what man does when he perverts the gospel of Christ. He changes the truth of God into a lie.

But now that you might not be turned away from God by the ways of men in religion, and by the doctrines and commandments of men, here is what God said do about it. The scripture says in Jer. 6:16, "Thus saith Jehovah, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls: but they said, "we will not walk therein." God said just look around you and see what men are teaching and doing in religion. Then ask for "the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." If you want to abandon the old for something that is new, then you will have to forget about God; for he is "The Ancient of days." He never changes, but is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. And why should you think that you change His word and his ways?

In your search for that which is right in religion, God said, "Ask for the old paths." Go back to the very beginning of Christianity. Go back to Pentecost when God sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles to guide them into all truth, and pick up the trail that was blazed by them and walk in it. There, they taught men to "know assuredly that God hath made this same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." When

they were “pricked in their heart” by that declaration, they cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Guided by the Holy Spirit, the apostles said, “Repent and be baptized everyone of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit; for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all them that are afar off.” My friends, that is “the old paths.” Every faithful child of God who came after them walked in their steps in teaching these things.

But the prophet said, “They said, we will not walk there in.” Does that not fit exactly the situation that exists today? Is the whole denominational world not carrying out today, “we will not walk therein?” Are they not saying, “We do not believe that one has to be baptized for the remission of sins”? You know they are. Thus, they are in a different way than that blazed by the apostles. But God said, “Ask for the old paths; where is the good way; walk therein and ye shall find rest for your souls.” Just what are you seeking in religion? the thing that is broad and popular, in or that which will lead to eternal life in the end? You know they all don’t. Only that which God had given will.

You may feel that you are alright, but don’t be deceived. Jeremiah said, “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” Don’t depend on what you feel in your heart. Solomon said in Prov. 28:26, “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.” Learn to trust in the promises of God, and not your feelings. His promises are all based upon condition and will be realized only when we meet those conditions.

That all men might know what the right way is, Jesus said in Jn. 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me.” The only way we can reach the crown of life is through him, and the only way to get into him is to be baptized “into” him. Paul said in Rom. 6:3 — 4, “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ have put on Christ?” We are either in him in obedience

to this command, or are in the broad way that leads to destruction.

THE WAY OF SALVATION

As Jesus was concluding the sermon on the mount, he said in Matt. 7:13-14, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." This exhortation was not intended for the people who sat before the Lord on that occasion only, but men of all succeeding generations.

Though the way that leads to destruction is broad and the gate that leads into it is wide, the narrow way that leads to life is so plainly set forth in the Bible that none can fail to find it if he will look for it. When the Lord was getting ready to leave the earth and go back to the Father, he said to his disciples, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me," Jno. 14:6. Which simply suggests to us that we must be in Christ and walk in him to enter eternal life in the end.

But a lot of people have never come to understand really when they are in Christ, or what it means to be in him; and others have been led to believe they are in Christ when they are not. The only way we can know absolutely about this is to find out what the Bible says about it. I am sure everyone realizes that one cannot be in Christ without being in his body. Being in Christ and being in the body of Christ is the same thing. It would be utterly impossible to separate this and make

two different things out of it. So if we can learn then what it means to be in the body of Christ, we can know for sure whether we are in Christ, and thus, in the way that leads to life.

Let me read you now some of the passages of scripture that tell us what the body of Christ is. We need not take the word of any religious leader for it, but we have the word of the inspired apostles and are not left to guess at it. In Eph. 1:20 — 23 the apostle Paul speaks of the things that God did when he raised Christ from the dead, and speaks of “Power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” He did not leave us to guess at what the church is. He said it IS the body of Christ. In Col. 1:18 he put it this way: “And he is the head of the body, the church.” Then in verse 24 he said, “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.” In view of these passages of scripture, can there be any doubt in the mind of any about the church being the body of Christ? Since the Bible says they are one and the same thing, one is not in Christ unless he is in the church. Now if you are wondering which church one should be in to be in Christ, I would say, which body must one be in to be in Christ? If you say, “The body of Christ,” then I would say, “The church of Christ;’ for the Bible says they are the same.

Now let me read you some passages of scripture that tell us why one cannot be saved outside of Christ, or the church. In 2 Tim. 2:10, the apostles said, “Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sake that they may also obtain the salvation

which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” That locates salvation for us. It tells us that salvation is in Christ; and since it is not both in Christ and out of him, one does not obtain it until he becomes a part of the church, which is the body of Christ, In Col. 1:13 — 14 the scripture says, “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”

We reach the blood of Christ in his body. His body is the church. Thus, one is not cleansed by the blood of Christ outside of the church. In him, we have redemption, which makes redemption in the church. Forgiveness of sins is in Christ. Therefore, we have no forgiveness outside of the Lord’s church. In Eph. 2:16 the apostles said, “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” Again, we are made to know that one cannot be reconciled to God outside of the church. In Eph. 1:3 the apostles said, “Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” According to this, one has no spiritual blessing outside of the church.

In 2 Cor. 1:20 the scripture says, “All the promises of God in him are yea, yea, and nay, nay.” People can say all they want to about the church not being necessary to the salvation of the soul, about people being saved out of it as well as in it, and about one church being as good as another; but my friends, according to God’s own word, one does not have a promise outside of the church. And no church that men have built is as good as the one the Lord built known in the Bible as the body of Christ. The body of Christ was complete long before men ever built the first protestant denomination. Membership in them is not to be equated with membership in the body of Christ, but membership in the church that we read about in the Bible is.

After having seen the need for being in Christ in order to enter into eternal life in the end, we need to concern ourselves now with the matter of getting into him. The Bible tells us in Isa. 59:2 that men are separated from God by sin. Romans 3:23 says that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." So all men need to come to Christ to be saved, but Jesus said in Jno. 6:44—45 that "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me, draw him. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Everyone therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Men must be taught of God and learn of him before they can come to Christ for salvation. Then the first thing that God demands of one when he is taught, it to "hear." In Mark 12:29 when Jesus was asked what is the first commandment he said, "The first commandment is, Hear O Israel, the Lord thy God is one." The one who will not do that is an abomination in the sight of God. Many will not listen when they are taught the word of God; but the scripture says in Prov. 28:9, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is abomination."

Hearing the word of the Lord will be of no profit to one unless he is willing to accept it. Jesus said, "Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," Jno. 8:24. This faith is necessary before one can come to the Lord. Heb. 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Faith itself is not the coming, but is necessary to the coming. Many hear the word and do not believe it; but Jesus said in Jno. 4:24, "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my word hath one that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." To reject anything that the Lord says is to reject him. — whether it is what he said about baptism or anything else.

After one is convinced that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, he is required to make a public confession of it with his mouth. Jesus said in Matt. 10:32 — 33. “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” There is either a confession of him, or a denial. There is no other action that one may take in this matter. There is no in between — no middle ground, or a neutral position. We are simply on one side or the other. We must confess him, or deny him.

When one reaches this point, he is required to give up his sins. He cannot enter into Christ until he does. Jesus said in Luke 13:3, “I tell you , Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” One cannot take his sins into Christ. He either repents of them, or remains in them. Remember, that sin is outside of Christ, and forgiveness is in him. So after one repents of his sins, he is then in position to enter into Christ — but not before. One believes before he repents, but he does not enter into Christ until after he repents. Neither one of these alone, nor both of them together, will put one into Christ. They simply put him into the condition where he is able to enter into Christ and have his sins all blotted out by his blood. This is done in baptism. Listen to what the scripture says about it. Rom. 6:3 — 4 says, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” One believes outside of Christ. He repents outside of Christ. But he is baptized INTO Christ, where he neither quits believing, nor ends his penitent spirit. These must go with one as long as he lives if he would be saved in the end.

The one who is willing to accept faith and repentance as

conditions of salvation, but rejects baptism, is rejecting the counsel of God. Luke 7 — 30 says, “But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.” You are not rejecting some preacher, nor some church, when you refuse to be baptized for the remission of your sins. You are rejecting the counsel of God. That is not the doctrine of some church, nor the idea of the some preacher. It is the doctrine of Christ and originated in the counsel of heaven.

When one is baptized into Christ, the Christian life begins; and there is a lot required of him. Col. 2:6 says, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” God has ordained the worship to be engaged in, the work to be done, and the life to be lived; and he expects the one who has entered into Christ to be faithful in all these things. Jesus said in Rev. 2:10. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” That my friends, is the way that leads of life.

RESTORING THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

In Matt. 16:18 Jesus said, “Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” In the 2nd chapter of Acts we read about the establishment of the church on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. With the infallible leadership of the inspired apostles the church was firmly established in

Jerusalem, and even throughout the world during their lifetime. By divine appointment, it had elders in every congregation to oversee it with deacons working under them ministering in temporal things and taking care of needs of the poor, as well of course, as teaching and preaching the gospel of Christ. The church also had evangelists and teachers. They continued in the apostles' doctrine and kept the decrees that were ordained of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem.

In the days of the apostles the church was the same everywhere. They all taught the same thing, believed the same thing, wore the same name, and worshiped God alike. But when the apostles died the church fell away as the Holy Spirit had predicted that it would. The organization of the church was changed. New doctrines began to be taught. New laws were made. Other religious names were introduced, and the worship was changed. It ceased to be the same church as it was in the days of the apostles, and many different ones were started. The whole world was filled with denominational churches, all differing one from the other.

Finally, men in those various sects began to recognize the need of going back to the Bible as their sole guide in religion and restoring to the world the church as it was in the days of the apostles. They believed that all sects had gone out of the apostolic way, and were for that reason, hostile to each other; and more particularly to the Bible. They believed a complete return to the Bible to be the only safe thing for man to do. They believed that when they taught as conditions of salvation, just those things that were taught by the apostles, that they would stand where the apostles stood. They believed that when men obeyed the commands of God as found in the Testament of Christ, they would be saved and be a part of the church that the Lord said he would build. They believed that if men would do in worship just those things directly stated in the New

Testament that their worship would be pure. They believed that all people who obeyed the commands of God should be called "Christians" to the exclusion of all other religious names of human origin. They believed that when all this was done, the church would be restored again as it was in the days of the apostles. That is why the church of Christ exist in the world today. It is not a new church that has sprung up within the past two centuries, but the same church that existed in the days of the apostles that has been restored to the world as it was then.

The restoration of New Testament Christianity was not just the work of one man, but of many. Men in various denominations came to see the errors of denominationalism and set out on a return to the New Testament order. I want to point out today some of those religious leaders that dared to break with denominationalism and take a lead in restoring the New Testament church to the world.

The first one that history records as leading men back to the New Testament way, and away from denominationalism, was a Mr. James O'Kelly in the state of Virginia. He was presiding elder in the Methodist Church and a popular preacher for that denomination. He came to deplore the tyranny of Methodism and believed that Christians ought to be free. In the old day Lebanon Church in Surrey County in Virginia in 1794 there was meeting of about twenty-five ministers in which the first break with denominationalism came. A Mr. Rice Haggard stood up in that meeting with a copy of the New Testament in his hand and said; "Brethren, this is a sufficient rule of faith and practice, and by it we are told that the disciples were called "Christians." I moved that henceforth and forever the followers of Christ be known as Christians simply." Then a Mr. Hafferty of North Carolina moved to take the Bible itself as their only creed. The following points were emphasized and adopted. (1) The Lord

Jesus Christ is the only head of the church. (2) The name Christian shall be used to the exclusion of all party and sectarian names. (3) The Holy Bible, or the scriptures of the Old and New Testament is our only creed, and a sufficient rule to faith and practice. (4) Christian character, or vital piety, shall be the only test of church fellowship and membership. (5) The right of private judgment and the liberty of conscience are the privilege and duty of all. There were a lot of things that these men had not learned yet about non-denominational Christianity, but this was a great step in that direction. As they learned the truth little by little, they turned from denominational error back to the truth.

The next man of prominence to take a lead in restoring New Testament Christian to the world and the church as it was in the days of the apostles was a Baptist preacher up in the state of Vermont by the name of Abner Jones. In the year 1800 he became greatly disturbed "in regard to sectarian names and human creeds." In 1802 he organized a church in Lyndon, Vermont, and another one at Bradford. He formed another at Hanover, New Hampshire in 1802, and in 1803 another at Piermont, in the same state. Elias Smith, likewise a Baptist of great popularity was preaching with much success at Portsmouth, N. H. His views were similar to those of Jones, and together, they established a number of churches on the Bible only.

Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian in Port Tobacco, Maryland received his education at Guilford Academy and later moved to Kentucky to preach in that state. He came to regard Calvinism as a great hinderance to New Testament Christianity and began a movement in that state away from denominationalism and back to the Bible. He later wrote: "Let me here speak when I shall be lying under the clods of the grave. Calvinism is among the heaviest clogs on Christianity in the world. It is a dark mountain between heaven and earth,

and is amongst the most discouraging hinderances to sinners from seeking the kingdom of God, and engenders bondage and gloominess to the saints." He later formed the Springfield Presbytery hoping to be free from the organization and system by which he had been bound. But he later came to realize that it also was denominational in its very nature and gave it up to be simple New Testament Christian. He then wrote, saying: "Under the name of Springfield Presbytery we went forward preaching and constituting churches; but we had not worn our names more than one year, before we saw it savored of a party spirit. With the man-made creeds we threw it overboard, and took the name Christian, the name given to the disciples by appointment first at Antioch."

Walter Scott, a Presbyterian who came to New York from Scotland in 1819 went to Puttsburg where he became engaged in teaching school. He became a serious student of the holy scripture and began preaching it as he found it written in God's book. He first abandoned "infant baptism:" and became noted for three things particularly. (1) his Insistence on the personal element in the preaching of Christ. (2) Insistence that baptism is the consumating act of the sinner's return to God. (3) Emphasis on the promises to baptized believers: remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the hope of eternal life.

A Mr. Thomas Campbell later came to America from Scotland as a Presbyterian and was joined a short time afterward by his son, Alexander. They also came to settle in Pennsylvania and were inspired by Mr. Scott to study the Bible from a non-denominational viewpoint. Mr. Thomas Campbell then resolved to "Speak where the Bible speaks, and to be silent where the Bible is silent." This is the same in substance as what the apostle Peter said in 1 Pet. 4:11 where he said, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." One cannot speak as the oracles fo God without

speaking where the Bible speaks and remaining silent where it is silent. If the world would do that today, there would be no denominationalism. There would only be taught which is stated in the Bible.

John Smith, a Baptist preacher of Kentucky, gave up denominational doctrine for the Bible only. After preaching the Bible only for a number of years, he wrote: "For several years past, I have stood pledged to meet the religious world, or any part of it, on the ancient Gospel and order of things, as presented in the words of the Book. This is the foundation on which Christians once stood, and ought to stand again. I will meet any man, or set of men, in the wide world on the Bible only. While, for the sake of peace and Christian union, I have long since waived the public maintenance of any speculation I may hold, yet not one gospel fact, command, or promise, will I surrender for the world."

These men all had one thing in common. They all saw the evils of denominationalism and resolved to turn away from it. They had a desire to be right in their religious activities and believed that the only way to do it was to get back to Jerusalem and to Pentecost and pick up where the apostles spoke and speak the same things that they spoke, and do the things that they taught all men to do. The apostles taught people to believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God; to repent of their sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. The scripture says in Acts 2:47 that when they did this the Lord added them to the church. The apostles then taught them to observe all things that Christ has commanded them, and they stood steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayers.

According to Acts 16:4 and 20:7, the apostles taught them to meet on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's supper. They were called "Christians" first at Antioch and the

apostles taught them to glorify God in that name (1 Pet. 4:16), and to do all things in his name, Col. 3:17. When we do these things today we will be members of the same church that the apostles were members of and the new Testament church will be restored to the world as it was in their day.

OPEN THOU MINE EYES

David said in Ps. 119:18, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." David was Israel's greatest king, and one whose throne God established. The Psalms that he wrote are read in more languages and dialects than any other production from mortal pen. They were inspired of God and are one of the masterpieces of all literature. This 119th Psalm rises to the greatest height of any that surrounds it. It glorifies and exalts the word of God, giving to us every aspect of it and setting forth the real power and nature of it in its relation to man.

David's love for and attachment to God's wonderful law is set forth in this chapter. He declared that he loved God's law above gold, even much fine gold. We have even greater reasons for loving God's law today, because we have a better law. Like David, we manifest our love for his word by engaging in a diligent study of it and endeavoring to do what it says. And like David, we need to make it the object of our meditation. We show our love for it by proclaiming it to others as it is written. David said, "With my lips have I declared all the judgements of thy mouth." Our love for it is demonstrated by our submission to the authority of it. We need to say with David, "Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall

keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law." The apostle John also said in 1 Jno. 5:3, "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments." The one who refuses to obey the commandments of God evidences a lack of love for him.

Another way we show a love for the law of God is by spreading abroad the truths it reveals. David said, "I will speak of thy testimonies before kings." We have the obligation today as Christians to make known the law of Christ to all that men might be saved by it. God causes rich blessings to flow into man's life because of such attachment to his word. It made David wiser than his enemies and will make one today wise unto salvation.

In view of all this, is it any wonder that David prayed for the Lord to open his eyes that he might behold wondrous things out of his law? The blindness of man has been great down through the ages. Men who have been able to behold the wondrous things of nature, and have been able to see the things that will make them politically, socially, or financially great, but have often been blinded to the law of God. Blinding man to the ways of God has always been the work of Satan. Paul said in 2 Cor. 4:3 — 4, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Satan blinds men to the truth by putting something between them and the truth; or he will blind man by distracting him and causing him to turn aside to something of lesser importance. He also blinds man by putting something within him to darken his understanding and warp his judgment. Listen to what that apostle Paul said in Eph. 4:17 — 19. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that we henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of

their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." He said man was cut off from God through his ignorance because of the blindness of the heart. Because of that, he said they are given to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness. One of the most effective ways that Satan has of blinding men's eyes to the truth of God today is denominational prejudice. Because of a zeal of denominational doctrine, many thousands of people have been kept from seeing the truth of God's word, and kept from obeying His law. When people try to look at the Bible through denominational doctrines and practices their eyes are blinded to the truth of it.

God's purpose in giving the gospel and in charging men to preach it to men of all nations is to destroy the blinding work of Satan and get men to see what that will of the Lord is. Paul said that "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory in God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. 4:6. Notice what the Lord said to Paul when he gave him his charge. When Jesus appeared to him he said, "Rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentile, unto whom now I send thee, to *open their eyes*, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me," Acts 26:16 — 18.

People have their eyes opened to the law and will of God through the preaching of the gospel. It is only when people are

willing to forget everything else and listen to the pure unadulterated gospel of the Son of God as it is set forth in the Bible that their eyes will be open to God's eternal truth. When Paul and Silas preached the gospel at Philippi, Lydia was willing listener. She did not let her former training nor her present religion keep her from listening to what these men had to say. Luke says in Acts 16:14 that she "Heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." She and her household were baptized immediately in obedience to the gospel even though none of her people had been baptized for the remission of sins or had ever heard the gospel before. She refused to let Satan blind her heart by prejudice or preconceived notions.

The reason that David prayed for the Lord to open his eyes, was that he might behold wondrous things in His law. Think of all the wondrous things in the law of God for man today! It is a perfect law and will liberate one from the forces of sin and make him a free man in Christ. James said, "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 deeds," Jas. 1:25. It does a perfect job in converting the soul. David said in Ps. 19:7, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." When the soul is thus converted, it is converted from Satan unto God — from sin unto salvation, where one can enjoy the glorious liberty that is in Christ Jesus.

Anything that is able to save one soul is wondrous, and that saving power is in God's word. James said in Jas. 1:21, "Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls." Human philosophy and denominational doctrines will not do it, but the word of God will. Neither human philosophy nor denominational doctrines are in the word of God, and both must be abandoned before

one can receive the word of God to the saving of his soul.

When Cornelius was praying to God, an angel was sent to tell him to send for Peter, "Who shall tell thee words whereby thou, and all thy house shall be saved," Acts 11:14. None of the things that he had heard before, nor his present religion would save him; but the gospel as preached by them will make Christians, and Christians only. It will not make denominational churches, nor denominational members. It would not do it when preached by the apostles, and it will not do it today. O that our eyes may be opened! That we may behold wondrous things out of his law.

When Ananias was sent to tell Saul of Tarsus what he must do to be saved, he found him a penitent, praying, believer in Christ. But he was still under the guilt of sin. He had never been cleansed from it. So Ananias said, "Why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," Acts 22:16. That is in the law of God today. Why can't people see it? When the people on the day of Pentecost cried out, saying, "Men and brethren, What shall we do?" they were told to "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." That is in the law of God for man today. Why can't people see it? Peter said, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us," 1 Pet. 3:21. That is in the law of God of man today. Why can't people see it? Is it because Satan "hath blinded the hearts of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them? O that our eyes might be opened today that we may behold the wondrous things in the law that God has given to us that we may be saved by it! I appeal to you today to not let prejudice nor denominational ties keep you from accepting the word of God as it is given in the Bible that you might be saved by it.

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

Among the parables spoken by the Lord, he said in Mark 13:34 that "The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch." Among the other things said here, we are told that the Lord "gave to every man his work." This is among the things said about the kingdom, and is one of the things to be found *in* the kingdom. The entire kingdom of God is characterized by work. One has to work to get into it, and work after he gets into it. It takes a lot of activity to become a Christian and a lot to be a Christian. The Christian religion is not something to be gotten, but something to be DONE. When people talk about "getting religion" it is quite obvious that they have not yet learned what the Christian religion is. We do not enter into the kingdom of God just merely for what we can DO in it.

Too many people want to be on the receiving end of the line instead of the "giving" end. They talk about what the church should do for them, and what the church has *not* done for them, when they ought to be talking about what they can do for the church, or do *IN* the church, and what they are *going* to do. The church is a working institution, and is the place where all Christian activities are to be performed. And until one is willing to enter into the serving of the Lord and work for him, he is not ready to become a member of the church. In fact, everyone in the church who is not willing to work will be cast out by the Lord as an unprofitable servant. Let us see what the scripture says along this line.

In Heb. 12:1 — 2, the scripture says, "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race

that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Here, Christianity is pictured as a race that is to be run. This suggests strenuous activity, a lot of it. There is not just a lot of activity getting ready to run the race, but in running it as well. One must get ready to run, and then run. The activity increases as the race continues. There is no stopping. There is no victory to be won unless the race is completed, and it must be completed successfully. There is no stopping along the way to relax, but the runner must exert himself fully every step of the way. The crown will never be reached by the one who stops along the way, nor by the one who expects someone else to run the race for himself. No one can take our place in this — it is set before us; and the runner must discipline himself and keep up the race all the way, or else he will be counted out. What are you doing today to receive the crown of life? Are you running to win the race? or, are you waiting for Jesus to run it for you? Are you waiting for somebody else in the church to run it for you? Jesus ran his race, and I must run mine. Others in the church may run theirs, but they cannot run mine.

It may be that you have not even started yet, but are still waiting to begin. Just when do you expect to begin? Have you made any definite plans yet to that end? Unless you start on time, you cannot hope to end out there in front. The time to start is NOW — not out there in the future sometime, but TODAY. If you don't get up and start now, just how could you hope to win? It may be that you have started, and stopped. How can you expect to be successful that way? How many did you ever see win a race by stopping before they reached the end? Jesus said, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Don't stop. Get up and say, “I am going to run the race to the end, and I am not going to give up. It

may be that you have started out on the Christian race and are now going the wrong way. It may be that you have turned back and are no longer going in the right direction. The crown is not in the place where the race begins, but out yonder on the other side of the finish line. Don't look back. One can't run looking back. The apostles said, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." We must run in his direction, and never take our eye off of him. All of this suggests a lot of activity, and that is all directed in the right way.

The Christian life is also pictured as a contest in which each one is striving for a crown. Paul said, in 2 Tim. 2:5, "If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." Here again, we see one who has entered the arena to compete against an opponent. It is going to require a lot of effort to overcome and win the crown. The opponent will constantly be striving for the mastery over us, and we cannot just sit down and wait for him to quit. He is not going to quit until he has completely overcome us. The one who overcomes is the one who uses all the strength he had and never relaxes his grip. It takes a lot of sweat, and sometimes blood; but no one is ever crowned in such a contest unless he exerts himself fully, and continues until he has overcome his enemy and gained the mastery over him. Jesus said in Rev. 3:21, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne." This is just another illustration that was used by the apostles to show that the Christian life is to be an active one, and that the Christian religion is a "Do" religion.

Let us look at one more of these illustrations used to show that the Christian must be up and doing. In 1 Tim. 6:12, Paul said, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." In 2 Tim, 2:3 he said, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus

Christ.” A soldier has to go through a great deal. He has a lot of battles to fight — and they are not easy. We think of the soldier as one who has gone through a lot of hard training, and then has his body hardened from the long marches he has to endure, the hills he has to climb, the swamps the briars and brush he has to wade through, the rocks and the fences he has to climb over, we think of him as having to go without food for long periods of time, without the sleep that he needs, and without a comfortable place to lie down to relax. He goes through all this that he might drive back the enemy and win the battle. The Christian soldier must likewise exert himself the battle. The Christian soldier must likewise exert himself in the army of the Lord if he would drive the enemy of the soul and win the battle against the one who seeks to destroy our soul in the end. Christ fought his battles and overcome; but we must fight ours. He will be our Captain to go before us in the great conflict, but we ourselves must enter the conflict and fight. He will not fight it for us, and we need not expect somebody else to do it. The other fellow has his own battles to fight, just as we have ours. We have to fight the liquor industry, gambling forces, forces of corruption in society, immodest dress, lust, selfishness, greed, etc.

Christ is our great example, and we cannot follow the example he set without every day in the service of the Master. He said in Jno. 5:17, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” In Jno. 9:4, he said, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” Jesus was never idle. He worked all the time. He came to “finish the work the Father gave him to do;” and now a work is given to each of us to do. He did for us the things we cannot do for ourselves; but on the other hand, he will not do for us the things we CAN do. There are things he expects of each of us, and if we do not do them they will not be done. Not only will they not be done, but we will have failed, and will be

cast out as unprofitable servants.

When it comes to entering into the kingdom itself, Jesus said in Matt. 7:21, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." So I know one cannot get into God's kingdom doing something. Then in the kingdom, Jesus said, "He gave to every man his work." In writing to the Philippian church, Paul said, "Work out your own salvation and fear and trembling," (Phil. 2:12). In Gal. 5:6 he said, "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." In 1 Cor. 15:58 he said, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." When one says he does not believe in salvation by works, he is saying he does not believe the scripture which says "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." He is saying he does not believe the scripture which says that in Jesus Christ nothing avails anything "but faith which worketh by love." He is saying he does not believe the scripture which says that one should always abound in the work of the Lord, and that we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. The one who is not willing to work for it does not deserve it. And the one who is sitting down waiting for the Lord to do it all, or for the church to do it for him, will never be saved. The Lord does not have room in his kingdom for one who is not willing to work, and there is no room in heaven for the one who refuses to work the works of God. If you have been waiting for the Lord to do it all, you had better get up and start doing something for yourself today; for some day it will be too late. The one who sows and cultivates and reaps is the one who is going to receive the reward.

When we stand before God in judgement we will be rewarded on the bases of what we have done, and not what we

have gotten. 2 Cor. 5:10 says, "We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Being rewarded on the basis of what you have done, what will your reward be? I beg you to get up and obey his commands today and enter into his service and put the best you have into it that the crown of life may be yours in the end.

THE SALVATION OF MAN

I invite you to think with me about the salvation of man. This is the theme of the entire Bible and the concern of all heaven. It is God's will that all men be saved. Paul said in 1 Tim. 2:3—4, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Christ came to effect the salvation of man and the Holy Spirit reveals his plan for doing it. He quickens all those who enter into it, and all the holy angels rejoice because of it. Jesus said in Luke 15:10 that, "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." In talking about the angels, Paul said, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. 1:14.

The salvation of man has been the eternal purpose of God. Since man was separated from God through disobedience, God purposed to save him through His Son. Paul wrote to Timothy and said, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the

afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," 2 Tim. 1:8 — 9. We are not only saved by the purpose and grace of God, but Paul said this purpose was given in Christ Jesus before the world began. That is, before the beginning of the ages. This salvation comes to us through Christ, and is only for those IN Him.

The apostle goes on and says in the second chapter of that epistel, v. 10, that "I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." The one who is outside of Christ is without that salvation. It cannot be obtained until one enters into him, for God has not promised to save man elsewhere. All the body of people who have entered into Christ can claim Christ as their Savior. No other can. In Eph. 5:23 the apostle said, "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the Savior of the body." He had already said in 1:22 — 23 that "the church IS his body." Hence, only those in the church are in his body and can claim Christ as their Savior. Only these are in the salvation that is in him.

No philosopher or human religious leader has ever claimed to be able to save mankind. They have claimed to be able to offer to men a better philosophy of life; but none has ever claimed that power to save people from the sins they have committed and bring them into a state of eternal bliss through the remission of sins. People do not get "into" other religious leaders. They can accept their teaching and express confidence in what they say, but none claim to enter into them. Christ says that man must be IN Him to be saved and the apostles say there is no other way. Listen to what they said in Acts 4:12. "Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we

must be saved." One is either "in him" and saved by his blood, or he is outside of him, cut off from God, and lost in sin.

One does not get into Christ merely through a desire to be in him, nor through an empty claim. One enters into Christ through a definite process given to us in the gospel. In this process one first comes to learn of him and the law he has given for our salvation. He then comes to believe in him with all his heart and confess him with his mouth as the Christ, the Son of the living God. He then repents of the sins he has committed and is baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins. According to the scripture, there is no other way of getting into him. Consequently, there is no other way of being saved through him.

Salvation is revealed to man through the gospel; and we could not know about it otherwise, nor how to obtain it. In writing to the saints at Ephesus the apostle said, "In whom ye also trusted after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation," Eph. 1:13. That is where the power of God is and how it reaches us. In Rom. 1:16 it is said to be "the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." God's power to save us does not come any other way. It is through the gospel, or not at all. He saves no man by a direct call from heaven, through a dream, nor by an angel. He has packed the power of salvation in the gospel and charged his disciples with the responsibility of preaching it to every creature on earth. We are saved only through obedience to it, and the scripture says that all who "know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the power of his might.

Have you obeyed the gospel? Do you know what the commands of it are? If you do not know what those commands are, and have not obeyed the gospel, you are in need of such obedience today that you might be saved through him.

As we consider the salvation of man, I should like for us to think of Christ in his relationship to it. First of all, we need to think of him as the author of it. In Heb. 5:8 — 9 the scripture says, "Though he were a Son, 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." If he is not the author of all that we believe and do in religion, we may be sure it is not of God and will not save our soul. All religious people cannot say that Christ is the author of their creed and the originator of their doctrine; for those creeds were written but religious leaders long after the death of the apostles and the days of inspiration over, and the doctrines preached by their adherents are based upon the creeds of human origin. Christ is the author of only that which is in the Bible, and not the perversions of the gospel that are so common among men. He is the **AUTHOR OF THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS** and not the author of all the faiths that claim to be based on the scripture. It must be the scripture, and not something based on the scripture if we are to be saved by it. James said, "Wherefore lay aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls," Jas. 1:21. We are not to receive something based on the word of God, but the word itself.

Christ is also called the "captain of our salvation." The apostle said in Heb. 2:10, "For it became him, for whom all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." The captain goes before others and leads them to victory, and for him to be the captain of our salvation, we must follow him all the way. We must follow him in a full surrender to the Lord. follow him in obedience, in sacrifice, and in service — as well as in the life that he lived.

Christ was raised up to effect our salvation. Zacharias was

filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied of him saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David," Lk. 1:67 — 69. Then Paul said he "was raised for our justification." But greatest of all, he died that our salvation might be possible. Heb. 2:9 says that "he by the grace of God tasted death for every man." Without his death, we would all have to die. That is, we would have to be cut off from God for ever in the day of judgment.

The salvation we receive through Christ is a Salvation by the grace of God. It is by his grace that we are saved, we are told in Eph. 2:8. It is also through the mercy of God. It is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy we are saved, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit," we are told in Tit. 3:5. But it is also through the faith and obedience of man. The jailor at Philippi was told to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," Acts 16:31; but since we are told that Christ is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, we know that the faith by which man is saved is an obedient faith. It is through this obedience that man's soul is purified. Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another from a pure heart fervently." 1 Pet. 1:2. The apostle Paul also says it is when we obey from the heart the form of doctrine that was delivered unto us that we are made free from sin and become the servants of righteousness, Rom. 6:17 — 18.

All of this means one thing: that to obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory, one must come to believe on him as the Son of God, confess his name before others, repent of all sins committed and be baptized into him for the remission of sins in obedience to the gospel, and there he is cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. He will then be in

position to join that blood washed through to stand before God in eternity if he is faithful until death calls him home. My prayer and my plea is that you will do it now while the Spirit calls to you.

WHAT MAN MUST DO TO BE SAVED

Jesus said in Jno. 8:32, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It will become obvious to all who read the entire account of this in the scripture that the Lord is talking about our being made free from sin. The Jews said they were Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man; but Jesus said. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant," v. 35.

The matter of being made free from sin that one might be saved is a very important matter indeed, and it behooves us as sinful creatures to find out what our part in this is that we might do it and be saved. There is no need for us to assume that because the power of salvation is with God that there is nothing at all that we can do, and then sit back and wait for God to save us whether we show any concern ourselves or not. We need to get busy and learn the truth on this matter and then do it, lest we be found continuing error, and then are lost in the day of judgment because we did not believe and obey the truth.

The scripture declares that all men are sinners before God. 3:23 says that "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Man's ignorance does not excuse him in his sins. Paul said in Acts 17:30 that "In the times of this ignorance, God winked at; but now, commands all men

everywhere to repent.” God has made the truth accessible to all men, and all who are willing may know it. Jesus said in Jno. 7:17, “If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” First, man must have a desire to know, and then put forth an effort to learn what the will of the Lord is. Paul said in Eph. 5:17, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

What is your desire concerning the truth of God? Do you want to know what it is? Or, are you satisfied to just go ahead doing the things that you like to do in religion? Have you ever come to accept the fact that God *has* a will, and that His will must be respected if we would be saved? Have you ever come to realize that man will be saved by God’s will, if saved at all? and not his own? When Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane the night before he went to the cross to bear the sins of the world, he prayed to the Father, saying, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.” Can you pray the same prayer with your present disposition of mind? Christ was willing to die that God’s will might be done. Are you willing to do it regardless of what it cost you? Or, had you rather go on doing your own will and die rather than do His will? Which way is it with you?

The truth of God is found only in his word. Jesus said in Jno. 17:17, Father, sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth,” It is an accepted fact then, that the only way we can know the truth of God on all things is to study the word of God and find out what the truth is on every matter. We are told in the scripture to, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Are you studying the Bible to find out what is on the matter of salvation, or do you let somebody else do your studying for you? It is your soul that you are dealing with, and you will have to answer to God for yourself in the day of judgment; so why not study the Bible for yourself and be sure

that you know the truth in regard to everything you do in religion?

Man is required to believe something to be saved; and what we believe is extremely important. It is only when we believe the truth that we are right. Believing something other than the truth will lead us into error in our religious activities, and the apostle John tells us in 1 Jn. 3:4 that such transgression is sin. Paul said in 2 Thes. 2:3 that man will be damned if he believes a lie in religion. In speaking about the revelation of the "man of sin," he said, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thes. 2:9 — 12. Yes, my friends, it is important that we believe the truth, and nothing but the truth. The truth is found only in the word of God and we can know it only through receiving the word as it is written in the holy scriptures.

What one must believe in order to be saved is summed up by the apostle Paul in Acts 16:31 when he said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, thou, and thy house." To believe on him is not just simply to believe in his relationship with God, but it means to believe what he says. The one who does not believe all that he says does not truly believe on him. Jesus said in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The one who does not believe that, does not believe on him; and Jesus said, "He that believeth not shall be damned." So when Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and one does not believe it, but believes he can be saved some other way, Jesus said, "He shall be damned." One is not a believer just simply

because he is willing to take the first part of the statement, but is a *disbeliever* if he does not accept it in its entirety.

Man must come to *feel* something in order to be saved. The scripture says in 2 Cor. 7:10 that “godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation.” If there is not that feeling of sorrow in one’s heart for the sins that he has committed against God, he is not in a position to be saved. God does not save people **IN** sin, but **FROM** sin. One must repent of his sins in order to be saved **FROM** them, but he cannot repent until he is sorry for the sins that he has committed. The people on Pentecost felt that sorrow so deeply that Luke says, “They were pricked in their hearts, and cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” When people have that same sorrow today for the sins they have committed, they will want to know what they must do to get forgiveness of them.

When they were told to “Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,” Luke says that “as many as gladly received his word were baptized, and the Lord added unto them in that day about three thousand souls,” Acts 2:38, 41. It was because of the sorrow that they felt in their hearts for their sins against God that they were willing to do that.

Saul of Tarsus felt such great sorrow in his heart for his sins that he fasted for three days and nights while he was waiting for someone to come and tell him what he must do to be saved. When he was convinced of the truth concerning Christ, he said, “Lord what wilt thou have me to do?” Acts 9:6. He was immediately told, “to arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.” Because of this great sorrow that he felt for his sins against God, when Annaias said, “And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord,” he arose immediately and was baptized. Likewise, all today who come to realize that a failure to do the will of God as

it is expressed in the Bible is a sin, and feel a sorrow in their heart for their sins, will do the same thing. We learn from the scripture that it is the will of God that men "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins," and when one comes to feel a sorrow in his heart for his sins he will obey the will of God immediately.

According to the scripture, man must also confess something to be saved. The very thing that we are to confess is specified. Jesus said in Matt. 10:32 that we must confess him. He said, "If any man will confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." That is what the eunuch from Ethiopia confessed before he was baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins, and is the confession that we must make today if we would be saved. When the eunuch said, If thou believes with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Acts 8:36—37. Since this is given to us in the word of God, it is the only confession that one makes in truth. Remember, Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Are you standing in the truth in this matter, or have you let some preacher, or some church, make you believe that it doesn't matter?

What man must do to be saved is summed up in a single statement made by the writer of the Hebrew epistle when he said of Christ, "Though he were a Son, yet learned obedience by 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. He is the Savior of none except them that obey him. This obedience is found only in a full surrender of one's will to the will of God and a faithful performance of all the things that are given in his law. When one preaches salvation by faith only, he is preaching salvation without obedience. When one gets up and starts telling people what

they do not have to do to be saved, he is seeking to turn them out of the way of obedience to God and is robbing them of the salvation of their soul.

Obedience to God is stressed all through the Bible; and it closes with a blessing pronounced upon those who obey the commands of God. Rev. 22:14 says, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city." But when one hesitates, and falters, at any command God has given, he is rejecting the truth of God and holding the truth in unrighteousness. My prayer and my plea is, that you will study the scriptures for yourself, learn what the truth of God is, and obey from the heart that Christ might be your Savior and heaven your home.

HOW WE GOT THE BIBLE

This will be the beginning of a series of lessons on the Bible and I trust that you will keep up with them and get the entire series. Our lesson today will deal with what the Bible is and how we got it. This is calculated to create a greater respect and appreciation for it, and greater reverence in handling it and speaking of it.

The word "Bible" does not occur anywhere in the sacred writings, or the text of the Book that we call the Bible. It is a term that has been adopted in later years referring to this sacred volume that we hold so dear and regard as being different from all other books. The word "Bible" is an Anglo-Saxon term derived from the Greek word "Biblos," which simply means, book. The term was originally applied to

any volume of writing; but because this volume of sacred writing came to be recognized as the Book of all books, the term "Bible" came to be applied to it exclusively and all others just simply called "books." So when the word "Bible" is used today, it conveys to our minds the idea of a volume of writing purported to have come from divinity and held as sacred to believers in God.

To say that the Bible is the Book of God would, within itself, necessitate a study of "how we got it." To this phase of it we are directing your attention through the rest of this period study today. And I do not know of a better way to do it than to refer you to what the writers of it themselves said about. They told us where and how they got the things they wrote, what God told them to do with them and what he said about the way men should regard it.

First of all, I call your attention to a statement made by the apostle Paul in 2 Tim. 3:16 — 17, "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." This reading is from the King James version and the word "is" found in verse 16, is in italics, which means that it was supplied by the translators. It is omitted in the Am. Standard version. The writer simply affirms the inspiration of the scriptures, which go to make up this volume that we call the "Bible." The word "inspired" comes from the Greek word, "theo pneustos," which means "God breathed." The word "Scripture" itself comes from the Greek word "graphe," which means "writing." Thus, the apostle tells us that the "writing" which he was doing was "God breathed," or, "breathed of God." Then any time you pick up this sacred volume, just remember that you are holding in your hand the writing that was breathed of God — that which he inspired men to write.

The same writer tells us in the Corinthian letters where he got the things he wrote and how he was told to write them. Listen, will you, as I read from 1 Cor. 2:9 — 10. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." The apostle is saying here that these things that we read in the scripture did originate with man, but that they were revealed unto us by God. Moreover, he said they were revealed by the Spirit of God. The same writer said in Eph. 3:5 that they were revealed "unto his holy apostle and prophets by the Spirits." They were not revealed to all men individually, but to the "holy apostles and prophets." They, in turn, wrote them to us by the guidance of the Same Spirit and are known as "the scripture inspired of God."

An apostle is one chosen by the Lord and sent by him on a special mission. The word "prophet" comes from the Greek word "prophetes" and means "a public expounder." He is more specifically an expounder of the things that God revealed to him — a mouth piece for God, or a spokesman of God.

Now listen as the apostle tells us "how" they spoke and wrote the things that were delivered to them. After saying that they received these things by the Spirit, he said, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual," 1 Cor. 2:12 — 13. They not only received the things of God by the Spirit of God, but spoke and wrote those things in the very words that the Holy Spirit taught. Thus, the very words of the Bible are inspired. This equals the plenary and verbal inspiration of the scripture. This makes it inerrant and

infallible. So much so that the apostle John said, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book," Rev. 22:18 — 19. Man is forbidden by the very God of heaven to alter a single word of the Bible. He cannot leave out a single word of it without condemning himself; nor can he add a word to it without being condemned.

Jude speaks of these things which were received from God and written by the inspiration of His Spirit as "the faith" that has been delivered to men and emphasizes the finality of it. Listen as I read the third verse of his short epistle. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." This verse contains four distinct assertions. 1. It asserts the existence of an organized and formal body of truth under the title of "the faith", not the act of believing, but that which is believed. 2. It asserts that this body of truth is complete and admits neither of change nor addition. It is a faith "once" delivered, and admitting of no repetition. 3. It asserts the authority due to the faith to be the authority of God. It was once "delivered." 4. The verse specifies the trustees — "the saints." The word refers to the whole company of the people of God, or the church itself. These four particulars meet in one general proposition. They involve the existence of a consistent body of truth, invested with the attributes of the Giver; that is, unity, perfection, and immortality. These things are characteristic of the Bible.

Now let me give you a statement by the apostle Peter,

who sums up the entire revelation of God to man. In 2 Pet. 1:16 — 21 he said, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. Until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, 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 the holy men of God speak as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

They did not follow “cunningly devised fables,” but received from the Lord the things they wrote. They were with Christ in the holy mount and heard the voice from heaven saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” This made the word of prophecy that had been given even more sure unto them. This prophecy was as light shining in a dark world until Christ, the daystar,” began to shine in the hearts of men. Then he said that “no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.”

There are few of scripture that have ever been more grossly misapplied than this one. The apostle is not talking at all about how the scripture is handled, but *how it came*. He is talking about the origin of it, and not the use of it. That is dealt with elsewhere, but he is talking here about where the things that they wrote came from. We have already looked at the words “Private” and “interpretation.” The Word “private” comes from th Greek word “*idias*” and refers to that which is peculiarly one’s own; and the word “interpretation” comes

from the Greek word “epilysis,” which means “explanation, or exposition.”

It follows from what the apostle said, that no prophecy of the scripture came into existence merely as the result of the prophet’s own personal explanation, but originated by holy men of God being influenced by the Holy Spirit. They wrote what the Spirit breathed into their minds. To say that this passage deals with the way the scripture is explained is to make it say something the apostle did not say.

The Catholics use this passage to support their claim that the pope has a right to interpret the scriptures for men, and that people cannot understand the scripture without the infallible aid of a God-given interpreter. That is reduced to an utter absurdity when we consider that, either one *can* understand this passage, and their contention is shown to be false; or if it is impossible to understand ANY scripture unaided, then one cannot understand THIS passage; and they stand guilty of admitting as evidence that which they concede is impossible to understand. If one cannot understand this verse, their theory is false. If one cannot understand it, how do they know that it teaches that one cannot understand the scriptures?

From what the three writers have said in the statements that we have introduced from them today, the Bible is a revelation from God, given to them by the Holy Spirit, and written in the words the Holy Spirit taught.

THE BIBLE AS THE WORD OF GOD, NO. 1

I believe the Bible to be the word of the living God. I believe it to be inspired of God and entirely reliable in every statement found in it. If there were any statement found in it that was not reliable, then of course, we could not claim inspiration for it. But I believe in the inspiration of it for a number of reasons that I should like to give you at this time.

First of all, I believe the Bible to be the word because of its insistent claim. No man can believe the Bible without accepting God as its author. More than twenty-six hundred times the Bible says that it is the product of God. It would be impossible for a book to be true in making this claim and at the same time not be given by God. Noticing this, I should like to call your attention to the similarity between the Bible as the *written* word of God and *Christ* as the *living* word of God.

Both the written and the living word are the express image of God. The writer of Hebrews, in giving to his readers the exalted position of the Lord, tells them in the first chapter that "God who in sundry times, and divers manners, spake unto the fathers in times past by the prophets, hath in these times spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power; when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of God." That is what he affirmed of the LIVING word. Now listen to what the apostle Peter says of the written word. "The prophesy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," 2 Pet. 1:21. Thus, the same thing is said of the written word that is said of the living word.

That there may be no doubt about Christ's being the Living word, let me give here what the apostle John says about him in the very beginning of his account of the life of Jesus. He says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Jn. 1:1 — 3. Then in v. 14 he says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." So when we talk Christ as the Living word, we have reference to him as the truth in a human body living among men — speaking with a human tongue, walking on human feet looking through human eyes and working with human hands. This is not to say that the WRITTEN word is not living also. It is. But I am simply making the distinction between that which is written down and the word which came into the world in human flesh and dwelt among us as a man. The things that may be said of one may also be properly be said of the other.

Both the written and the living word claim to be eternal in nature. It is affirmed of Christ in Heb. 13:8 that he is the same through all ages. It says, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever." This is used by men everywhere in reference to his eternal existence — along with the statement made by the apostle John in the beginning of his account of his life. Then the Lord affirms the same thing in regard to the words that he spoke, which words are recorded in this book that we call the Bible. He said in Matt. 24:35 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." And since they shall never pass away, they are eternal. After the heavens and the earth are passed away, the Bible will be opened in the judgment.

Both the written and the living word are given to a lost world. Jesus said in Luke 19:10 that "The Son of man is come

to seek and to save that which is lost." The angel that announced his birth also said this was the reason for his coming, Matt. 1:21. But he did not come to remain in the world in person always. So the written word is given today to do the same thing that he came into the world to do. The word is referred to in the Bible as the gospel. The apostle Peter said, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word by which the gospel is preached unto you," 1 Pet. 1:25. That gospel was given for the purpose of saving man. Paul said in Rom. 1:16, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." In Eph. 1:13 it is called "the gospel of our salvation." So again, we see that the same things that are said of the LIVING word, are said of the written word. We cannot reject the *written* word without rejecting the *living* word. Jesus said in Jn. 12:48, "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my word hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Both the written and the living word are both human and divine. That is, there is a human element involved in each. The prophet said that a virgin shall bring forth a son and his name shall be called Jesus, Matt. 1:20-23. When we turn to the account of the birth of Jesus, we find that this was true. And this is the one who is referred to by John as "The word becoming flesh and dwelling among us." He was just as human as his mother, but as divine as his Father. The same things then are said of the written word as it comes to us in the form of the Bible. Peter said, "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 Spirit." 2 Pet. 1:24 — 25. God used human beings to deliver his word to the world. They spoke it, and they wrote it as the Holy Spirit of God directed them. That is the Bible.

Both the written word and the living word are perfect. Perfection is affirmed of each by the writers of the scriptures themselves. With reference to the living word, Peter said, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth," 1 Pet. 2:21 — 22. His example was a perfect one, both word and in deed. That name perfection then is ascribed to the written word. James said in Jas. 1:25, that "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." It truly is a "perfect law of liberty." It is not marred by the imperfections that characterize human productions.

Both the written and the living word are the very source of all true light. When John was introducing to us the Christ who came into the world, he said, "In him was life and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not." Then he went on to say, "That was the true light, which lighteth everyone that cometh into the world," Jno. 1:4 — 5, 9. And as Jesus stood in the temple one day and taught the people, He said, "I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," Jno. 8:12. The same light is found in the written word. Paul said in 2 Cor. 4:3 — 4, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them." That light, he said, shines through the gospel, the written word. David also said of the written word, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light to shine upon my path," Ps. 119:105.

Both the living and the written word are TRUTH. Jesus said to himself shortly before his departure from this world, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the

Father, but by me, : Jno. 14:6. He was the very embodiment of truth. Truth expressed itself through him in every way. Then he said the same thing of the written word. In Jn. 17:17 he said, "Father, sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth." In Jno. 16:13 we are told how that truth would come to us. Jesus said to his disciples, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." They received the words from Christ through the Holy Spirit, and Paul said, "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual," 1 Cor. 2:13. Thus, the written word as set forth in the Bible is just as true as Christ himself.

Both the written word and the living word are food for the soul of man. In the 6th Chapter of John, the question of living bread came up. Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world," Jno. 6:51. It is obvious that the Lord was speaking of bread here in a spiritual sense — the food that will nourish the soul, the inner man. And then Jesus said the same thing about the written word. When he was tempted by Satan to turn the stones into bread to nourish his hungry body, Jesus said in Matt. 4:4, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." There is a hungering within the soul of man for those things that will enable him to really live — those things that will give him eternal life. These things are richly supplied by the written word of the living God.

Last of all, let me say that both the living word and the written word are to be preached. Christ, the living word, is to

be preached to a lost world. When the church in Jerusalem was scattered abroad, they went everywhere preaching the word. Acts 8:5 says that Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them." In that same chapter we are told of his preaching to the eunuch from Ethiopia. The eunuch was reading the scripture — the written word. The scripture says, "And Philip began at the same time scripture and preached Jesus unto him," Acts 8:35. Jesus had commanded that the gospel be preached to every creature with the promise that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

THE BIBLE AS THE WORD OF GOD, NO. 2

The Bible is the oldest book in the world today. It is the best selling book in the world, and is the most universally read. It has had a greater influence upon the lives of men and women everywhere than any production that has come from the fingers of man and is recognized as the greatest power among the nations of the earth. The Bible lives and continues to have such great impact upon the human family because it is the word of the Living God.

The word of God came to dwell upon the earth one time in human flesh and, thus, became the living word. Christ is the word that was made flesh and is "the living one." He is the heart and core of the Bible, the grand theme that was pursued from the beginning and runs throughout the entire Book. The Bible is the WRITTEN word of the living God. So when I talk about the living word and the written word I am talking about

Christ as the living word and the Bible as the written word.
And of course, the written word lives also, because it is as eternal as the God who gave it.

Both the written and the living word must be received by man. Jesus said in Jno. 12:48, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." One must either receive Christ, the living word, or be condemned in the day of judgment. It is utterly impossible for one to be saved in that great day of accounts if he rejects Christ, the living word, as he travels life's pathway. But James tells us that we must also accept the written word. Listen, as he says in Jas. 1:21, "Wherefore, lay aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." One cannot be saved without receiving the living word; neither can he be saved without receiving the written word. James says it "is able to save your souls." But again, it is impossible to receive one without the other. We cannot separate Christ from his word and say we will take one and leave the other. We either accept both, and obey both, or we reject and disobey both.

Both the written and the living word have been despised and rejected of men. The prophets who foretold the coming of Christ foretold also his rejection by men. The 53rd chapter of **Isalah** is recognized everywhere as one of the great Messianic utterances of the Old Testament scripture. There, the prophet said, "He is despised and rejected of men. A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." The gospel accounts of his life speak pointedly of that rejection. The 27th chapter of Matthew is replete with statements about his rejection by the Jewish nation. The Jewish leaders stirred up the multitudes to demand of Pilate and he be crucified. Truly, he had come unto his own, and his own received him not. They despised him because his teaching struck at the very root of their sinful

lives, and Pilate knew that “for envy” they had delivered him into the hands of the Roman court. No one could be persuaded to do to anyone what the Jews did to the Lord on any other ground than hatred. If they had not despised him they would not have crucified him.

The world at large has despised the Bible, even though they are afraid to try to get rid of it. Men have tried that and have failed; but the world in general, and the religious world particularly, despise the written word. One of the religious leaders in Jesus’ day, one who was skilled in dealing with the law of God, stood up and asked the Lord what he should do to have eternal life. And Jesus said, “What is written in the law? but he despised it. He set it aside for his traditions. Jesus told them in Matt. 15:6 that “Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.” The same thing is being done by religious leaders today. We are commanded in the Bible to “Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise is unto you and to your children and to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord thy God shall call,” Acts 2:38 — 39. But the very founder of the first Protestant denomination advocated salvation by faith only, and the whole denominational world accepted that one by one as they came into existence. The acceptance of that doctrine of salvation by faith alone has led them to despise the written word of the living God.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. I have before me the creed book of one of the very largest protestant denominations and should like to read to you from that book what they say about it. Here is the direct quotation: “Baptism is not essential to salvation, for our churches utterly repudiate the dogma of ‘baptismal regeneration;’ but it is essential to obedience since Christ has commanded it.” If that is not despising the written word of the living God, what could it

possibly be? Jesus said "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Mark 16:16; and the apostle Peter said, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, but this large denomination says "our churches utterly repudiate the dogma of baptismal regeneration." They refer to what Christ and the apostles said about baptism as "baptismal regeneration," and say, "we utterly repudiate it." They say, "It is essential to obedience, since Christ has commanded it," but "baptism is not essential to salvation." If that is not despising the written word of the living God, let someone tell us what it is.

Because men have despised the written word of God, they have sought to change it. That very same manual says on the very next page, "It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was 'one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,' and differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, 'baptism was the door into the church.' Now, it is different." Because they despise the word as it is written in the Bible, they are no longer willing to accept it as it was the apostolic age, and have sought to change it. What are people going to do when they stand before God in judgment and find that they are going to be judged by what is written in the Bible, and not by what is written in the manual? If people did not despise the word of God as it is written in his Book, other religious guide books would not be written, such as manuals, disciplines, catechism, confessions of faith, etc.

We may rest assured of the fact that we will meet both the written word and the living word in judgment. The apostle Paul said in Acts 17:31 that "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained. Whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raise him from the dead." Jesus himself said in

Matt. 25:31 — 32 that the “Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.” He also said in Jno. 5:27 that the Father “hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.”

But when the nations of the earth stand before Christ in judgment, it will be to be judged by the things that are “written in the Book of God.” In Rev. 20:12 we are told that “the dead are judged out of these things which are written in the books, according to their works.” The books here are books of divine origin — not of human origin. They are the books of the law of God, and everyone will be judged by the law under which he lived. The people who lived in the patriarchal age will be judged by the law that God gave for the people in that age. The people in the Mosaical age will be judged by the law of Moses; and the people who have lived in the Christian age, the one in which we live today, will be judged by the law of Christ. I call your attention again to the statement made by Jesus in Jno. 12:48 where he said, “He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my word, hath one that judgeth him; the word I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

Regardless of what you are taught in the denominational creeds and from denominational pulpits, we are all going to be judged by the law of Christ in the end. It does not behoove anyone to repudiate the words of Christ and his apostles and substitute something else in its stead. The one who thinks more of his denomination than he does the Lord is not worthy of him, and that is what one does when he lets denominational doctrine keep him from doing what is written in the law of God and set forth in the Bible.

According to the written word of God, one enters into Christ only through baptism. The written word says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death," Rom. 6:3. Again, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," Gal. 3:27. Regardless of what may be said of faith, and confession, and repentance, one does not enter into Christ until he is baptized into him. These things all must precede baptism, and one cannot be baptized INTO Christ until he has met these other conditions; but no one of these other conditions, nor all of them together, will get one into Christ without baptism. My friends, that is the way it is written in the Book of God and man cannot change it.

Since baptism is the step that brings one immediately into Christ, he cannot obtain the blessings that are in Christ until he is baptized into him. In Christ are all the blessings of salvation, eternal life, reconciliation, forgiveness of sins, peace, hope, joy, and every blessing of a spiritual nature. This is why it is so essential to be baptized into him as it is written in the word, and then live according to it.

REASONS FOR BELIEVING THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible has meant more to the human race than any other book that has ever been placed in the hands of man. This is true because it is given by the one who made man and contains a perfect knowledge of his origin, his make-up, his purpose for being on the earth, and the world that lies beyond which man will one day enter. It not only sets before man the

best way of life, but explains death and the state into which it will bring man. It is the oldest book known to man and continues to live as the most popular of all literary productions. When all things else are removed, it will remain. When heaven and earth shall pass away, and the time is declared to be no more; when the elements shall be dissolved; when the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up; when moon no longer shines and the sun ceases to give her light, this book will shine on in all its brilliance with her truths undimmed in a land of fadeless day. This is true because it is the word of the living God who is eternal in the heavens. There are a number of reasons why I believe it to be such, and I should like to give you some of those reasons today.

I believe the Bible to be the word of God because of its uncorrupted preservation. Throughout its history, the Bible has been hated by the thousands. In spite of this, it has been preserved by some unseen power, and handed down from generation to generation. It has come to us in that same state of preservation that has characterized its existence through the past, and I am persuaded will characterize it through ages yet unborn. It is the only book that has incurred the hatred of man, and yet, it has withstood all the attacks of its enemies. It is the same in all of its essential points as when it first left the hands of its authors. In all the accusations that the Master brought against the Jews, he did not accuse them of mutilation, or corruption of the Old Testament scriptures. There is no accusation to be found in the New Testament where any of the inspired apostles ever accused the Jews of corrupting their writings. In the charges that are brought by the Lord against the Jews, he never one time accused them of misquoting the Old Testament, or changing it in any way. Had there been any corruption of the Old Testament by the Jews, the Lord and the apostles certainly would have called their attention to it. We must conclude there were no changes made.

That the New Testament scriptures read today just as they did when they came from the pen of inspired writers, we have the most satisfactory evidence. Clement of Alexandria, who lived in the second century, quotes extensively from the New Testament in his two volumes of history. By comparing his quotations from the original with the New Testament now, we find no difference in the reading. Is it not a fact, that if there had been a change somewhere in the copying of those manuscripts, the reading from Clement's History, as he quotes from the original copies, would be different from the reading of the New Testament today? Since there is no difference, we conclude that there has been no change in the reading of the New Testament since its completion. Therefore, because of this uncorrupted preservation of the Bible, in the face of all its enemies and persecutors, we must believe it to be given to us of God.

While with his disciples in person, Jesus says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," Matt. 24:35. Though attempts have been made to take the Bible from man by piling and burning copies of it, it is printed in more languages today, and read by more people than any other book known. The enemies of the Bible are not enough in number, nor strong enough in influence to take the Bible from man. If every printed copy of the Bible, with all the plates, were destroyed, enough men could be found who would be able to reproduce the Bible from memory. I do not believe the time will come when it will be possible for the enemies of the Bible to destroy it.

I believe the Bible to be the word of God because of its irresistible influence. No other book known has had the same kind of influence upon men and nations that the Bible has had. Some who say that they do not believe the Bible to be given by God admit of its influence upon the development of men and nations. To see the Bible's influence, we need only to read, by

way of comparison, the history of those countries where the Bible is unknown and those countries where the Bible IS known. It will lift men from the lowest stages of life and plant their feet upon higher ground. It will purify the language as well as the soul. I will make man love both friends and enemies. It is irresistible in its influence: one will either follow its teaching or cast its message out of the heart. Meditate upon its truths and it will make you respectable, establish for you better habits, and build for you a greater character. It will solve our greatest problems, give to us our greatest comforts, and promises an everlasting home to those who obey its commands.

I cannot believe that error can have so great an influence. If the Bible is not true, we must admit the falsehood has done more for the world than the truth could do. I do not believe the infidel is willing to grant this. But this he must concede; or else acknowledge that the Bible is the word of God. It is contrary to the nature of man to believe the error is better than truth. Therefore, because of its influence upon the lives of men and women, I believe the Bible to be the word of God.

I believe the Bible to be the word of God because Jesus rose from the dead on the morning of the third day. This proves the truthfulness of the Bible. If the Bible is not true in its claim, Jesus was not even a good man, for he said he was the Son of God and the Bible says that he proved it by his resurrection from the dead, (Rom. 1:4). But, "if Christ be not risen from the dead," then he is not the Son of God and the Bible is not true. However, if we can prove that he was raised from the dead on the morning of the third day, then we are sure that he is the Son of God, that all the Bible says of him is true, and that the Bible is true in its claim that it is the product of God.

The world admits that the body of Jesus was gone from the grave on the morning of the third day, but there is a

disagreement as to how the body came from the grave. The disbelievers assert that it was stolen. The believers in the Bible contend that it was raised. The Roman soldiers, who were stationed to guard, are the ones used to testify as to the stealing of the body of Jesus. No others can be used, for they were the only ones present when his body disappeared from the grave. The disciples are the ones used to prove that he was raised. In the first case, the witnesses are at the right place at the right time, since they were at the grave when the incident occurred. But I propose to disqualify them as witnesses, and therefore, *their* testimony concerning the stealing of the body of Jesus cannot be used.

According to Matthew's record, the soldiers finally said that while they slept, the disciples came and stole the body of Jesus. If they were asleep, they cannot testify as to its disappearance. They might assert that it was gone, but they cannot say *how* it left the grave. They did not see the disciples steal the body of Jesus, for they were asleep. Then how did they know that it was stolen, and not raised? We cannot conceive of the disciples stealing the body of Jesus from the grave since they did not understand at that time that he would rise. If those people believed the story of the officers — that the disciples stole the body of Jesus while they slept, why did they not call upon the disciples to produce it? There is nothing in history, so far as we know, where this demand was ever made. The reason for this is that the authorities did not believe the story of the soldiers concerning the stealing of the body of Jesus by his disciples. In fact, the first report that was made by these Roman soldiers was that Jesus had been raised from the dead.

In Matt. 28:11 — 15, the scripture says, "Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all things that were done." What were the things that were done? Jesus had been raised from

the dead just as he said he would be. But, "When they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large sums of money and commanded that they, (the soldiers,) say, His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept." I believe that the first report made by these men, before they were influenced by the Jews, is more likely to be the truth. I claim that the first report of the soldiers is that the body of Jesus had been raised, for fear of this report, the Jews paid them to say that his disciples stole him away. We can see from this that there is no evidence as to the stealing of the body of Jesus by his disciples. This disqualifies them as witnesses and leaves all evidence in the case in favour of his resurrection. Truly, he "is declared to be the son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. 1:4. This is strong evidence that the Bible is the word of God.

Since the Bible is proven in so many ways to be the word of the living God, let us respect what it says in regard to the salvation of mankind. It affirms that God sent His Son into the world to save man who was lost in sin. It declares in 2 Tim. 2:10 that this salvation "is IN Christ Jesus with eternal glory." It affirms that all outside of Christ are in sin, without God, and without hope, (Eph. 2:12). It affirms in Jno. 6:44 — 45 that man is drawn to Christ by being taught of God, hearing and learning of Him. It tells us in Heb. 11:6 that the one who is thus taught must come to Christ in faith. Jesus said in Luke 13:3 that man must come by way of repentance, or die in his sins. And then the Bible affirms that man is baptized INTO Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, Rom. 6:3; Acts 2:38. If we are willing to obey it, we will be saved in that obedience.

MAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TRUTH

Religious thought and practice today is in absolute chaos. Truth is held to be either relative, non-existent. There is a general idea that whatever one believes to be right IS right, and that no one can be absolutely sure about anything. All the absolute certainty that most people have about things in religion is what they feel within themselves.

It should not be too surprising that mysticism has invaded the Protestant churches. The late Dr. James Pike in his attempts to communicate with his deceased son by means of seances and mediums was a symbol of the meaninglessness of liberal theology. But the chaos of religious thought in America is not confined to a few liberal seminaries of far-out individuals. It is widespread in this country and has affected the vast majority of people who hold to any sort of religious convictions. It shows itself in such statements as: "I believe that one church is just as good as another, and that each denomination is just another road to heaven." Or, "You and I may disagree on a number of doctrinal points, but that does not matter. We are one in the Lord and His Spirit." And, "All of our different churches are following the Bible and we just have different interpretations of certain things." Each of these statements is based on the presupposition that man cannot know the truth with regard to the will of God. They all deny the possibility of certainty in religion.

The Bible teaches that man can know the truth. The Bible declares that we can know what is right and wrong in matters of faith and practice. The word of God demands that we learn, believe, obey, teach, and defend the truth; and warns that those who fail to do so will be lost eternally.

The question of first importance in this matter is to define

the word "Truth." Just what is "truth?" That question was asked one day by Pilate, a Roman governor. And people have been asking it ever since. The popular notion of most Protestant people is that theology is composed of human concepts and opinions, and that truth is simply the way a person sees a thing. Thus, truth in religion would be nothing more than the way one person sees another's opinion. By this definition, the word "truth" means nothing at all; and would differ from one individual to another.

According to the Bible, "truth" is what God says about a thing. Any thing that God speaks is truth. Listen to what Jesus said in Jno. 17:17, "Father, sanctify them by thy truth. Thy word is truth." So when you ask Jesus what is truth, he will tell you that it is whatever God says about any matter. The word of God is truth.

Someone may say, "Yes, I will admit that anything spoken by God himself would be truth, but God does not talk to man today." "We do not hear his voice out of the heavens any more as man is said to have heard him in Bible time." The one making that objection is right only in the sense that God does not speak to man today directly from heaven so he can hear him with his physical ears. But he is tragically mistaken in saying that he does not speak to us, and that we have no communication from him. We are told in Heb. 1:2 that God "hath spoken to us through His Son." The Bible is the very word of God to men; so when we read its statement, commands and promises, we are receiving the very statements, commands and promises of God himself.

Let us notice the promise that Jesus made to his apostles just before his return to the Father as recorded in Jno. 16:13 — 14. He said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he

shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” The Lord fulfilled that promise by sending the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and other select men of the first century. It was by **that means that He guided them “into all truth.”** There was no new truth to be made known to man after their day. When these men spoke, they did not speak their opinions and give their personal judgments. They spoke that which was given them by the Holy Spirit — the truth of God. Notice what they said to the saints in Thessalonica about how they had received it. Paul said, “For this cause thank we God without ceasing, that when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God,” 1 Thes. 2:12. That is truth — absolute truth.

Truth in religion is thus seen to consist in the word of God only. That truth is independent of human beings and their subjective responses to it or does not change the fact that the word of God is truth. The Bible taught what it teaches before any of us were ever born, or were able to read and study it. Our study of it and our correct or incorrect conclusions about it do not change one thing it teaches. The Bible’s truth is objective and absolute.

Now some one may say, “All right, I will admit that the Bible is the word of God and is truth; but you and I are not infallible and cannot be certain that we understand it correctly. The Bible is perfect truth but you and I cannot know it to perfection.” Now if the objecter means that we cannot know everything the Bible teaches, he is dead wrong. But if he means that we cannot fully fathom some of the deep things of God, that is another matter. We do not contend that we can. But when one says we cannot arrive at the absolute certainty about anything the Bible teaches, he is wrong.

All the things that pertain to the salvation of our soul are so plain and simple that all can understand them. If not, the Bible would be a hoax, But Paul said in Eph. 3:4, “Whereby

when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." And then in 5:17 he said, "Be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." Why make statements like this if man cannot understand it? What good would it be to have the truth in the first place if one could not understand it? The idea that men cannot understand the truth originated with Satan in an effort to turn men away from it. But Jesus said in Jno. 8:31 — 32, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Numerous statements in the Bible make it clear that God intends for man to understand the scriptures and be united in faith and practice. John said in 2 Jn. 9 — 11, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If any come unto you and bring not his doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him good speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Then in Gal 1:6 — 8 Paul condemned the people of Galatia for receiving another gospel that the one he had preached to them. In 2 Pet. 2:20 — 22 Christians are told that if they turn from the holy commandment delivered them, they will be punished of God. Now why all this warning if it is not possible for one to know the truth? Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth." So why be influenced by somebody who says we can't?

One must understand the truth he can obey it, and it is only by obeying it that one is born again. Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another fervently. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which lives and abides for ever," 1 Pet. 1:22—23. How were these purified? By obeying the truth. How were they born again? By the same means.

Let us apply the test of truth to some crucial matters of religion. First, the plan of salvation. Jesus said in Jn. 8:24, "Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Acts 16 — 31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved, and thy house." But where is the passage that says man will be saved by this faith alone? In fact it says this cannot be done. Jas. 2:24 says, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." To teach that man is saved by faith is to teach the truth; but to teach that man is saved by faith only is to deny the truth.

Pursuing this matter still further, the Bible teaches men to "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," Acts 2:38. And Jesus said in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." This is truth absolute. It is truth pure and simple. But there are a number of religious groups that teach that baptism is unrelated to the forgiveness of alien sins. That is purely an assertion, wholly unfounded in Bible truth. Everytime baptism is mentioned in the Bible in connection with the salvation of man, it always precedes salvation and is stated as a condition upon which it is obtained. 1 Pet. 3:21 says, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." The salvation of Noah and his family was a type of our salvation today through baptism. Men tell us that baptism is the duty of one already saved, whereby he declares his salvation to the world. This doctrine is false. It does not meet the proof and test of the scripture. There is absolutely no record in the Bible of a saved man being told to be baptized and thus declare his salvation to the world. That originated with men long after the Bible was finished and sealed by the blood of the Son of God.

This same test of truth must be applied to the organization of the church and to every item and act of worship in it. Letters in the Bible were addressed to the church with its

elders and deacon, and instructions given to the evangelists and teachers. All of these were within the organization of the church in the beginning and is, therefore, according to the truth of God's word. To depart from this is to ignore the truth and 'build on another foundation. The worship engaged in must be that set forth in the word of truth as found in the days of the apostles. They were guided into all truth, and if a thing was not found in the worship among them, it is not in harmony with truth. That is the reason we do not use instrumental music in the worship. They did not use it, and it is outside of the realm of truth. Only men who obey the truth of God will be permitted to dwell with him in eternity.

THE IDENTITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

I want to talk to you today about the identity of the New Testament church. I say, The identity of the N. T. Church, because there was a church of the Old Testament, and a lot of people have not learned to distinguish between them. A lot of people have not learned when the first ended and the next one began. And a lot of people think that it would be perfectly all right to take some of the things that were found in the church of the Old Testament and make them a part of the church of the New Testament.

That you may know that there was a church of the Old Testament, let me read Acts 7:38. Stephen said, "This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us." He was speaking

of Moses and the system of worship that God ordained for Israel at Mt. Sinai. And it should be remembered that this church was composed of Israel altogether, and was purely nationalistic in every way. The law given them and the worship under it were limited to that nation; and neither the law nor the worship under it was ever intended for another people.

We need to know how to identify the church of the New Testament, not only to distinguish it from the church of the Old Testament, but also from the great host of churches that have been built by men long after the church of the Lord had been established upon the earth and the apostles had all finished their work and gone to their reward. There are so many churches in the world today that claim to be the church of the New Testament, that we need to learn how to identify the true one.

One of the very first things that strikes us in thinking about the church, is what it is called. From the earliest dawn of man's existence, things have been identified by name. That has never been the sole mark of identity, but has been one of the very first ways by which a thing is known. So it will help wonderfully in our study of this question to find out what the church of the New Testament was called in the days of the apostles. The Lord did not name his church, but we need to know how the apostles referred to it.

In Acts 20:28 it is called the church of the Lord. In 1 Cor. 1:2 it is called the church of God. In Gal. 6:10 it is called the household of faith. In Eph. 2:19 it is called the household of God. In 1 Tim. 3:15 it is called the house of God. In Eph. 1:22 — 23 it is called the body of Christ. And everywhere, they were known in the days of the apostles as the churches of Christ, as we read in Rom. 16:16. All of these designations identify the church with God and Christ.

The members of the church are called in the scriptures, saints, brethren, disciples, believers, and Christians. But the

church itself was never called "The saints' Church," "The Disciples Church," nor "The Christian Church." It was the Lord's church and only the members of it were known as saints, brethren, disciples, believers, and Christians. It would be quite improper to call the church after the members of it. It must be called after the one who built it, who bought it, who is the head and the Savior of it. And if anyone is disposed to think that it doesn't make any difference about the name, he should ask himself in the first place why the church was referred to as it was by the apostles, and why the members of it were referred to as they were; and next, if a person wants to be safe, he will stay with what he reads in the scripture and be satisfied to be known simply as they were known. To tack upon the church a name by which it was not known in the days of the apostles, and to refer to the members of it by a name by which they were not known in those days, is to go beyond the doctrine of Christ and depart from God.

Another important point by which the church of the New Testament may be identified, is the establishment of it. With some, this may not seem to matter. But with people who want to be right, it matters a great deal. God told us before exactly *where* the church would be built. Any church then that was not built at the place where the Lord said he would build his, is not, and cannot, be the one about which we read in the Bible. In Zach: 1:16 the scripture says, "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies, saith Jehovah, and my house shall be built in it." We have already read in 1 Tim.3:15 where "the house of God is the church of the living God." Therefore, God said, "I will build my house in Jerusalem." All students of ecclesiastical history know the Catholic Church and all Protestant denominations began somewhere else than the place where the Lord said he would build his church. The church of Rome did not begin in Jerusalem. The Lutheran Church, the very first Protestant denomination, began in

Germany. The Presbyterian church began in Switzerland. The Baptist Church began in Holland, and the Methodist Church in England. The Mormon Church and the Holiness churches began in America. Of all the churches that claim any connection with Christianity, the church of Christ alone began in the city of Jerusalem as the Lord said it would.

The New Testament church not only began in Jerusalem, but we can trace in the scripture the origin of it to the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ. On that day we read of the first additions to it, and read about the activities of it constantly from that time on. The churches therefore, that began after the death of the apostles could not in any way be a part of the church that existed in their day. Even though they might apply many things that characterized the early Christians to themselves, that would not mean that they belonged to the same church with the apostles and all early Christians. They were all known by different names, and the reason the different churches that men started were known by different names was to identify them with the movement that was started, and not with the New Testament church. Denominational names all identify the people who wear them with the denominations with which they are connected, and not with the Lord.

Another very important point of identity of the New Testament church is the worship in which they engaged. As God specified the things that should be done in worship to him by the Israelites at the very beginning of the Old Testament economy, he has likewise specified the acts of worship to be engaged in by the members of the New Testament Church. He has never left it to the worshipers themselves to decide what they would like to do in worship, nor how they would like to do it. He has given detailed instructions on what is to be done, and how it is to be done, and has inflicted the severest penalty upon those who have departed from his order in the least. For

instance, when Nadab and Abihu, two priests and sons of Aaron, offered strange fire one day that God did not command when they went in to burn incense before Him, they were killed immediately for their transgression. When Moses smote the rock one day after God had told him to “speak” to the rock, God denied him the privilege of going into the Promised land.

After Christ had died for the sins of the world and been raised from the dead, he told his apostles to “Go ye therefore and teach all 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 shall command you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” They were not only to teach all nations and baptize them; but they were to teach those baptized to observe all things whatsoever he commanded. On the day of Pentecost the first sermon was preached under that commission. The scripture says, “They that gladly received his word were baptized, and there were added unto them that day about three thousand souls,” Acts 2:41. The next verse then tells us what they did after being baptized in obedience to divine command. It says, “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.”

In their assemblies, the apostles’ doctrine was taught. This was considered by all to be the word of God. The teaching of the word of God was always a part of their worship. They continued constant in prayer. This likewise was a part of their worship. Frequent reference is also made to their singing spiritual songs in worship to God. Acts 20:7 tells us that they met on the first day of the week to break bread, or eat the Lord’s supper — not just occasionally, but Luke says they “continued steadfastly” in this. In 1 Cor. 16:1 — 2 we read about their giving of their means on the first day of the week. This was a simple form of worship, but was that which God

ordained. To add instrumental music to the worship, to fail to meet regularly on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's supper, or to try to raise support for the work of the church any way other than by the liberal voluntary contribution by the saints, is to identify one with something other than the church of the New Testament.

The New Testament church may be identified by its organization. It had elders, deacons, evangelists, teachers and members in the local congregation. There was no association of churches, no church councils, nor conventions. Each congregation was independent of the others except to cooperate in the preaching of the gospel and care for the needy. There was never an elder, a bishop, nor a priest over the church anywhere. Nor was there ever a board of deacons nor stewards over a congregation. There is no such thing in the Bible as "The pastor" of a church. Bishops, elders, pastors, or prebysters were all the same people; and there was always a plurality in each congregation. Preachers of denominational churches refer to themselves as "the pastor" of the church, and like to be known as "Reverend." Many are even insulted if one calls them "Mister" instead of "Reverend." I do not mean to offend any one, but Job said, "I know not to give flattering titles into men. Else would my Maker soon come and take me away." There were no such distinguishing titles in the New Testament church.

Last of all, the New Testament church is identified by the doctrine it teaches. It abides in the doctrine of Christ as set forth in the New Testament. They taught people to "Repent and be baptized, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts 2:38. They taught people to confess with their mouth their faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, Rom. 10 — 10. They taught people that when they were baptized in obedience to the command of Christ, they were baptized into him where we have redemption, even the

forgiveness of sins. These, my friends, are means by which we may identify the church of the New Testament and know whether we are members of it, or of something else.

“CHURCHES OF CHRIST SALUTE YOU” (Rom.16:16)

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